
LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on Wednesday 13 May 2015 at 7.45 pm at The Murray Hall, 106 Borders Lane, Loughton, IG10 3SB Present:

Present:

Councillors: S Weston (in the chair until Min no 212)
J Jennings (in the chair from Min no 212)
P Abraham J Angold-Stephens K Angold-Stephens
J Bostock M Chalk C Davies
T Downing L Girling J Mahoney
M Owen S Pewsey C C Pond
C P Pond E Stacey T Thomas
D Wixley

Officers: E K Walsh (Town Clerk)
S Haynes (Deputy Town Clerk)
P Bryce (Administrative Assistant)

20 members of the public

212 Election of the Town Mayor for 2015/16

Cllr S Weston invited nominations for the role. Cllr Jennings was proposed and seconded and, there being no other nominations, Cllr Jennings was elected Town Mayor. She took the chair and was presented with the Town Mayor's badge and chain of office. She thanked Cllr Weston for her work during her term of office as Town Mayor and presented her with the Past Town Mayor's badge.

Cllr Jennings duly executed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Cllr Weston reported that since the last Council meeting, in her role as Town Mayor, she had attended the following events:

The YES Partnership WOW Conference at the Marriot Hotel, Waltham Abbey, the opening of a new Audiology Room at Specsavers in Loughton High Road, the Redbridge Samaritans Open Day and the celebration of the Centenary of the Bus Operation in Loughton held outside Homebase the site of the old bus depot.

213 Appointment of Deputy Town Mayor for 2015/16

Cllr Davies was proposed and seconded, and, there being no other nominations, Cllr Davies was appointed Deputy Town Mayor and presented with the Deputy Town Mayor's badge.

214 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Beales, Lawrence, Mann and Murray.

215 Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were received.

216 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 22 April 2015 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

217 Appointment of Members, and Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman, of Council Committees for 2015/16**217.1 Planning and Licensing Committee**

Cllrs Abraham, J Angold-Stephens, Bostock, Chalk, Davies and Downing were nominated and appointed to the Planning and Licensing Committee with one vacancy remaining. Cllr J Angold-Stephens was elected Chairman and Cllr Davies Vice Chairman.

217.2 Recreation Committee

Cllrs Beales, Chalk, Girling, Mahoney, Owen, Thomas, Weston and Wixley were nominated and appointed to the Recreation Committee with one vacancy remaining. Cllr Wixley was elected Chairman and Cllr Thomas Vice Chairman.

217.3 Environment and Heritage Committee

Cllrs Beales, Davies, Downing, Jennings, Lawrence, Owen, Pewsey, C C Pond and C P Pond were nominated and appointed to the Environment and Heritage Committee. Cllr C C Pond was elected Chairman and Cllr C P Pond Vice Chairman.

217.4 Resources and General Services Committee

Cllrs J Angold-Stephens, K Angold-Stephens, Jennings, Lawrence, Mahoney, Mann, Pewsey and Stacey were nominated and appointed to the Resources and General Services Committee with one vacancy remaining. Cllr Pewsey was elected Chairman and Cllr Lawrence Vice Chairman.

Cllr Bostock asked for her concern regarding the vacancy on the Planning and Licensing Committee to be noted.

217.5 In accordance with Standing Order 16/a/x, it was AGREED that the following persons be authorised to make substitutions for their respective groups:

Cllrs J Angold-Stephens, Jennings and C C Pond
Cllrs Bostock and Owen

218 Nomination of Council Representatives for 2015/16

218.1 The Council representations on outside bodies for 2015/16 were agreed as below:

Organisation	2014/15 representative(s)
Lopping Endowment	Cllr S Pewsey
Loughton Parochial Charities	J Boucek S Short
Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) – Epping Forest Branch	Cllrs C C Pond and C P Pond
Local Councils' Liaison Committee	Cllrs C C Pond and C P Pond

EALC - Larger Local Councils Forum	Cllr D Wixley
ECC Parish Passenger Transport Meeting	Cllrs C C Pond and P Abraham
Tree Wardens	Cllr D Wixley
Loughton 1st (High Road Town Centre Partnership)	Cllrs J Bostock and S Pewsey (Cllrs I Lawrence and H Mann as substitutes)
Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership	Cllrs K Angold-Stephens, L Girling and M Owen
Citizens Advice Bureau Management Committee	Cllr J Angold-Stephens
Essex Police Local community meetings	Cllrs L Girling, J Mahoney and D Wixley Cllrs P Abraham, P Beales and M Chalk
Roding Valley Nature Reserve Consultative Group	Cllr M Chalk
Debden Tenants' Panel Meeting Alderton, Broadway and Fairmead Ward Councillors	Cllrs P Abraham, J Bostock, C Davies, L Girling, J Jennings, J Mahoney, M Owen, E Stacey, T Thomas and D Wixley
Roding Valley Management Committee	No appointment at this time as the committee has not been convened

218.2 Arrangements for reporting back on the activities of outside bodies

The Council AGREED that the current practice whereby representatives were requested to provide a written report, to be attached to the next Council agenda, on meetings which they have attended, should continue. It was NOTED that a verbal report could be made on meetings attended within ten days of the Council meeting and that members were also requested to provide an annual report for the final Council meeting of the municipal year where appropriate.

218.3 Joint Standards Committee

The Council APPOINTED Cllr C C Pond as its representative on the Joint Standards Committee for 2015/16 and Cllr Weston as his substitute.

218.4 Grievance Hearing and Disciplinary Appeal Panels

Cllr K Angold-Stephens was APPOINTED a third member to sit on both the Grievance Hearing Panel and the Disciplinary Appeal Panel.

219 Membership of Internal Council Groups

219.1 Strategy and Staff Group

Membership: Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor, Chairman of each committee and Cllrs Bostock and Owen as representatives from the minority groups.

The Council AGREED that, because of her knowledge of Council affairs, Cllr C P Pond should also be a member of this group.

219.2 Community Centres Working Group

Membership: Six members

Cllrs Abraham, J Angold-Stephens, K Angold-Stephens, Davies, Owen and Wixley.

219.3 Financial Assistance Working Group

Membership: Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Resources and General Services Committee and Cllr Stacey

Signed.....

Date: 22 July 2015

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 22 July 2015 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court

Present:

Councillors: J Jennings (in the chair)

P Abraham	J Angold-Stephens	K Angold-Stephens
J Bostock	M Chalk	C Davies
T Downing	L Girling	J Mahoney (until Min no 228)
H Mann	S Murray	M Owen
S Pewsey	C C Pond	C P Pond
T Thomas	S Weston	D Wixley

Officers: E K Walsh (Town Clerk)
P Bryce (Administrative Assistant)

220 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Beales and Lawrence. Members sent their best wishes for a speedy recovery to Cllr Beales.

221 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 10, the consultation on the Draft Homelessness Strategy 2015/16 to 2017/18, as a member of Epping Forest District Council.

Cllr C C Pond declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 10, the consultation on the Draft Homelessness Strategy 2015/16 to 2017/18, item 11, Local Plan, and item 13, Office Accommodation, as a member of Epping Forest District Council and Essex County Council.

222 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 13 May 2015 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

223 Public Representations

None were received.

224 Questions Without Discussion

No questions were received.

225 Town Mayor's Engagements and Announcements

The Town Mayor, Cllr Judy Jennings reported that since her appointment she had attended the following events:

Jack Petchey's "Speak Out" Challenge! Regional Final for West Essex at Debden Park School, the YES Partnership WOW Conference presentations, Willingale Road Allotment Open Day and plant sale, Loughton Operatic Society's performance of the Mikado, Loughton Voluntary Care's Silver Surfer Pilot at Barclays Bank, LiberTeas celebration at The Broadway, two mock council meetings with St John Fisher Catholic Primary School, the Larger Local Council Forum held at Murray Hall, Epping Forest

College Art Exhibition, the Forest Creative Writers anniversary launch party and presentations at Loughton Club, Epping Forest on the Map at Loughton Library, Waltham Abbey Civic Service, the Epping Forest & Commons Committee Dinner, Oak View School Music Festival and the It's A Knockout community fun day on Jessel Green.

The Deputy Town Mayor Cllr Carol Davies reported that, since her appointment and on behalf of the Town Mayor, she had attended the following events:

The Revitalise, Summer Evening Celebration at Jubilee Lodge, Chigwell, and the Love Loughton event at St Mary's Church, Loughton.

The Town Mayor encouraged more councillors to attend council-run and public events as this provided an ideal opportunity to interact with residents.

226 Matters for Report

226.1 Review of Housing Allocations and Tenancy Policy – Min no 182

The Council NOTED that a copy of the revised Housing Allocations Scheme and Tenancy Policy, which would come into force on 27 July 2015, was available to view in the Council Offices or may be accessed from the following link: www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/index.php/residents?id=1087

226.2 The Broadway Post Office – Min no 198

The Council NOTED that the Post Office had confirmed the decision to move to new premises at McColls, 47-49 The Broadway. The opening date for the new premises had been delayed.

227 Reports from Members on Outside Organisations

227.1 Written reports on the following meetings were NOTED.

- i) Larger Local Council Forum – 23 June 2015 – Town Clerk
- ii) Larger Local Council Forum – 23 June 2015 – Cllr Wixley
- iii) Loughton First (High Road Town Centre Partnership) – 7 July 2015 – Cllr Pewsey*
- iv) Epping Forest District Citizens Advice Management Committee – 8 July 2015 – Cllr J Angold-Stephens
- v) Police Local Community Meeting – 6 May 2015 – Cllr Wixley**
- vi) Police Local Community Meeting – 8 July 2015 – Cllr Wixley
- vii) Debden Tenants Panel – 6 July 2015 – Cllr Wixley

* Cllr Pewsey was asked to take back to the Partnership the Council's comments.

** Concern was expressed about the service received from the non-emergency police telephone service, 101, when reporting incidents of anti-social behaviour.

227.2 A written report on the following organisation was tabled:

Broadway Town Centre Partnership – July 2015 – Cllr K Angold-Stephens

227.3 Broadway Town Centre Partnership – Cllr Owen provided a verbal report on the meeting held on 21 July 2015.

Members expressed their thanks to Judy Lovell of Restore and Luke Lowrie from the Red Balloon Foundation for their efforts in supporting the Partnership over the last fifteen months.

Cllr Mahoney left the meeting.

228 Reports from Committees

228.1 Planning and Licensing

The reports from the meetings held on 27 April, 11 May, 1, 15, 29 June and 13 July 2015 were NOTED.

228.2 Recreation

The report from the meeting held on 27 May 2015 was NOTED. Members congratulated officers on the excellent playground leaflet that was proving very popular amongst residents.

228.3 Environment and Heritage

The report from the meeting held on 17 June 2015 was NOTED.

228.4 Resources and General Services

The report from the meeting held on 8 July 2015 was NOTED.

229 Consultation – Draft Homelessness Strategy 2015/16 to 2017/18

The Council thanked Epping Forest District Council for the opportunity to comment on the draft Homelessness Strategy.

Members welcomed the comprehensive strategy and the wide range of prevention measures included. The District Council's work to successfully reduce the numbers of homeless across the district during the last three years was commended. The Council also supported the high priority given to ensuring that new large developments provided at least forty per cent affordable housing.

230 Local Plan

The District Council had asked local councils to comment on the contents of the documents to be used in Stage 1 of the Green Belt Review.

The Council agreed to respond and asked the Town Clerk to collate the comments including those drafted by Cllrs C C Pond and C P Pond. Members were invited to send any further comments to the Town Clerk by midday on Friday 24 July 2015.

231 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Council RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the remainder of the meeting under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as the following item contained confidential information relating to leases.

232 Office Accommodation

The feasibility report and the Heads of Terms offered by Lambert, Smith, Hampton, acting as agents for Essex County Council, were NOTED. Members thanked the Town Clerk for arranging the site visit which had been very useful.

The Council considered that it had insufficient information to make a decision on the move at this present time and AGREED to defer a decision pending the receipt of further information on issues of concern.

Those issues included additional office space and the cost implications of this, security arrangements for council meetings, access to the building outside the normal

opening hours of the library, car parking and the extent of its responsibilities for repair and decoration of the demised premises.

The Council also sought confirmation that the move would lead to extended opening hours by the Library Service and that the provision of public toilets inside the building would be considered as a priority.

It was also NOTED that Cllr Roger Hirst, Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Libraries, Planning and the Environment at Essex County Council, had offered to speak to the Council at an appropriate time to discuss concerns and help resolve outstanding issues.

Signed.....
Date: 21 October 2015

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 21 October 2015 at 7.30 pm at 1 Buckingham Court

Present:

Councillors: J Jennings (in the chair)
 P Abraham J Angold-Stephens K Angold-Stephens
 P Beales J Bostock
 M Chalk (from Min no 236) C Davies T Downing
 L Girling J Mahoney (from Min no 236)
 S Murray (from Min no 236) M Owen S Pewsey
 C C Pond C P Pond E Stacey
 S Weston D Wixley (from Min no 236)

Officers: E K Walsh (Town Clerk)
 V Messenger (Planning Committee Clerk) (until Min no 237)
 P Bryce (Administrative Assistant)

Kenneth Bean, Planning Policy Manager, Epping Forest District Council
 Luke Waterston, Planning Officer, Epping Forest District Council
 1 member of the public

233 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Lawrence, Mann and Thomas.

234 Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were received.

235 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 22 July 2015 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Committee AGREED to bring forward Agenda item 10 as guest speakers were present.

Cllrs Chalk, Mahoney, Murray and Wixley joined the meeting during the next item.

236 Local Plan

The Town Mayor welcomed Kenneth Bean, Planning Policy Manager at Epping Forest District Council, and his planning colleague Luke Waterston to the meeting.

The District Council officers provided a PowerPoint presentation on Neighbourhood Planning.

The Members were invited to ask questions and accepted the opportunity. The Committee thanked the District Officers for their presentation.

237 Public Representations

None were received.

238 Questions Without Discussion

No questions were received.

239 Town Mayor's Engagements and Announcements

The Town Mayor, Cllr Judy Jennings reported that ~~since her appointment~~ she had attended the following events:

Loughton Arts Centre Summer Exhibition, Loughton Abbeyfield Society AGM and Tea, unveiling of the commemorative planter to mark the 75th Anniversary of the WW2 bombing and fatalities at The Drive, the official opening of the new apiary at the Roding Road Allotments, Epping Forest College Learner Awards evening, Best Allotment awards evening at Willingale Road Allotments*, Epping Forest College tour of the new curriculums, the Forest Creative Writers Essex Poetry Festival at Loughton Library Jazz Archive room and the YES Partnership Investors in People Awards evening.

*The Town Mayor particularly thanked the Town Council officers for their excellent arrangements for this event.

The Deputy Town Mayor Cllr Carol Davies reported that on behalf of the Town Mayor, she had attended the Heritage Open Day at Lopping Hall.

240 Matters for Report**240.1 Accounts and Audit 2014/15 – Min no 209**

The Committee NOTED that as reported in detail to the Resources and General Services Committee at its meeting on 14 October 2015, a clear audit report for the financial year ended 31 March 2015 had been received from PKF Littlejohn, the Council's external auditors. In their opinion, "the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no matters had come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met".

240.2 Awards

The Town Mayor commended the Town Council and its staff on the following awards:

- i. Essex Association of Local Councils – the Acumen Wages Service Award for Community Work;
- ii. Essex Playing Fields Association – Best Kept Playing Fields Competition 2015 – five awards for play areas, playing fields and recreation ground; and
- iii. Green Essex Awards – Greenest Community Project – finalist.

241 Reports from Members on Outside Organisations

241.1 Written reports on the following meetings were NOTED.

- i) Loughton 1st (High Road Town Centre Partnership) – 29 September 2015 – Cllr Pewsey
- ii) Essex Association of Local Councils – 24 September 2015 – Cllr Wixley and the Town Clerk
- iii) The Lopping Endowment – 13 October 2015 – Cllr Pewsey

241.2 Written reports on the following organisations were tabled:

- i) The Broadway Town Centre Partnership – 8 September 2015 – Cllr Owen
- ii) Tree Wardens – 15 September 2015 – Cllr Wixley
- iii) Debden Tenants Panel Meeting – 14 September 2015 – Cllr Wixley
- iv) EALC 70th AGM & Conference – 24 September 2015 – Cllr Wixley
- v) Essex Playing Fields Association AGM – 15 October – Cllr Wixley
- vi) Epping Forest Citizens Advice Bureau AGM – 21 October 2015 – Cllr J Angold-Stephens

241.3 Verbal reports on the following meetings were provided:

- i) Larger Local Councils Forum – 20 October 2015 – Cllr Wixley and Town Clerk
- ii) Oakwood Hill Residents Association – Cllr Abraham

242 Reports from Committees

242.1 Planning and Licensing

The reports from the meetings held on 27 July, 17 August, 7 and 21 September and 5 October 2015 were NOTED.

242.2 Recreation

The report from the meeting held on 9 September 2015 was NOTED.

242.3 Environment and Heritage

The report from the meeting held on 23 September was NOTED.

242.4 Resources and General Services

The report from the meeting held on 14 October 2015 was NOTED.

242.4.1 Parish Basic Allowance

The Council considered the recommendation made by the Resources and General Services Committee and AGREED that the Parish Basic Allowance would remain at £108 for the financial year 2016/17. However, the Strategy and Staff Group were asked to revisit the remuneration scheme.

242.4.2 Standing Orders

Following the review of the Standing Orders carried out by the Resources and General Services Committee, the Council AGREED to amend the document by adding the following text SO no 30, Financial Regulations and Contracts, as follows:

The procurement and award of contracts covered by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which have an estimated value of £25,000 or more must also satisfy the requirements of the 2015 Regulations which include use of the Contracts Finder website and other light touch rules detailed in the 2015 Regulations.

243 Essex Police

Following the announcements about the future of the police estate and on a new model of local policing in the county, it was NOTED that Essex Police had also withdrawn support for the Annual Remembrance Sunday parades and services across the county.

There were significant concerns for public safety locally with the parade down Church Hill and the march off after the service along the High Road. Members were unhappy with the decision as this was a national event and its importance could not be overstated.

It was AGREED to write to:

- i. Chief Inspector Denise Morrissey regarding the safety issues associated with crowd control along the A121. Attendees were increasing year on year and it was not acceptable to ask volunteers to steward this event; and
- ii. Epping Forest District Council expressing concern that the time scales had not allowed for road closures to be arranged and to encourage them to ease the process for event organisers by using their powers under Town Police Clauses Act 1847 for special events.

244 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Council RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the remainder of the meeting under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as the following item contained confidential information relating to leases.

245 Office Accommodation – Min no 232

Members considered the report but, whilst they accepted in principle the terms offered by Essex County Council, in view of the Town Council's likely sizeable initial outlay in year one, the Town Clerk was asked to negotiate a substantial rent free period at the start of a tenancy.

Signed.....
Date: 16 December 2015

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 16 December 2015 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court

Present:

Councillors: J Jennings (in the chair)

P Abraham

P Beales

M Chalk

C Davies

L Girling

J Mahoney

S Pewsey

C C Pond

C P Pond

S Weston

D Wixley

Officers: E K Walsh (Town Clerk)

S Haynes (Deputy Town Clerk)

The meeting was preceded by the presentation of the awards by the Town Mayor to the winners of the Christmas card competition.

246 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs J and K Angold-Stephens, Bostock, Downing, Mann, Murray, Owen and Thomas.

247 Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were received.

248 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 21 October 2015, amended at Min no 239 to delete "since her appointment", were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

249 Public Representations

Cllr C C Pond declared a non-pecuniary and non-prejudicial interest in Agenda items relating to the work of Essex County Council, as a member of that council.

250 Questions Without Discussion

No questions were received.

251 Town Mayor's Engagements and Announcements

The Town Mayor, Cllr Judy Jennings reported that, since the meeting on 21 October 2015, she had attended the following events:

The opening of the Community Orchard at Willingale Road Open Space, the LADs performance of "Anne Boleyn" at Lopping Hall, the Remembrance Sunday Parade at Kings Green, the unveiling of the new interpretation board on Pump Hill Green, the Hills Amenity Society Autumn Lunch, Christmas Card Competition judging, the dedication of the new name plaques on the Kings Green War Memorial, the Light up Loughton carol concert at St Mary's Church, the YES Partnership Awards Ceremony at the Marriott Hotel, Waltham Abbey, the switching on of the Christmas lights and Santa's Sleigh ride around the Debden Broadway and Debden Estate, St Mary's Church Christmas Fayre, the Light up a Life service at Kings Green, the opening of the Christmas Craft Fair at Loughton Arts Centre, judging of the Christmas Window

Competition, the Christmas Carol Service at Chigwell Riding Trust, the Roding Road Allotment & Leisure Gardens Association presentation, the Civic Carol Service at Waltham Abbey Church, the YES Partnership Motivation Conference at the Marriott Hotel, Waltham Abbey, the lighting of the Menorah on Standard Green, Forest Creative Writers' Christmas Lunch Party and the draw and presentation to the winner of the Messy Nativity Sheep Trail at the Restore Community Centre.

The Town Mayor expressed her thanks to the Town Clerk and her team for their support throughout the year and also to those councillors and family members who had helped with the Santa's sleigh ride around the Debden estate.

252 Matters for Report

252.1 Chigwell Lane / Langston Road Improvement Scheme

The Town Clerk reported that details of the proposed improvements to the road network affected by the redevelopment of existing council depot site off Langston Road to create a new shopping park, had been received with the consultation period scheduled over the Christmas period to end on 14 January 2016.

An extension had been requested from Essex County Council to allow responses to be collated at the Environment & Heritage Committee meeting on 27 January 2016; otherwise the item would be included on the Planning & Licencing Committee meeting on 11 January 2016 in order to meet the original deadline.

252.2 Local Bus Service Network Review Consultation – Min no EH185.6

Cllr C C Pond, Environment & Heritage Committee Chairman, reported that as a County Member he had "called in" Essex County Council's decision to withdraw the £580,000 subsidy paid to Transport for London to support bus services 20 and 167 serving the Loughton area. The Cabinet Member had confirmed the withdrawal of the payment, but had agreed to issue a statement of intent to replace these routes, if curtailed or withdrawn, with services of a comparable quality; details would be published and sent to county members during January 2016.

253 Reports from Members on Outside Organisations

253.1 Written report on the following meeting was NOTED.

- i) Broadway Town Centre Partnership – 10 November 2015 – Cllr Owen

253.2 Debden Tenants Panel

Cllr Wixley advised that the Debden Tenants Panel meeting scheduled for 7 December 2015 had been cancelled but following the appointment of a new Tenant Participation Officer it was expected that a meeting would be held shortly after he/she takes office in the New Year.

254 Reports from Committees

254.1 Planning and Licensing

The reports from the meetings held on 19 October, 2, 16 and 30 November 2015 were NOTED.

254.2 Recreation

The report from the meeting held on 4 November 2015 was NOTED.

The Town Clerk reported that the Council had been successful in its Essex County Council's Community Initiative Fund application with an award of £20,000 towards the refurbishment of the Traps Hill playground.

254.3 Environment and Heritage

The report from the meeting held on 18 November 2015 was NOTED.

254.4 Resources and General Services

The report from the meeting held on 9 December 2015 was NOTED.

255 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Council RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the remainder of the meeting under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as the following item contained confidential information relating to leases.

256 Office Accommodation – Min no 232

Members considered the report and expressed concern regarding the presence of Amosite asbestos in the former Connexions Room at the library identified in a report commissioned by Essex County Council in 2011.

The Town Clerk was authorised to seek expert independent advice on the presence of asbestos in the proposed working space, subject to a maximum budget of £5,000. In particular, the feasibility of encapsulating or removing the material was to be considered.

Subject to the outcome of the report and receipt of assurance from the independent expert that the remaining risk from this asbestos was within industry best practice, the Council RESOLVED:

- i) to accept the revised Heads of Terms offered by Essex County Council and relocate the Town Council's offices to Loughton Library;
- ii) that the present offices at 1 Buckingham Court were to be made available for rent under a tenant repairing lease;
- iii) to authorise the Town Clerk to
 - appoint agents in respect of ii) above; and
 - arrange for a survey and drawings of the proposed alterations to move the partitioning in the former Connexions Room at the library, a building regulations application and a schedule of works at a budget cost of £1,550 net of VAT.

Members further noted that a decision on whether planning permission was needed for these alterations in the library was dependent on those drawings referred to in iii).

Officers were thanked for their work to progress this move.

Signed.....
Date: 17 February 2016

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 27 January 2016 at 7pm at 1 Buckingham Court

Present:

Councillors: J Jennings (in the chair)
P Beales C Davies S Murray
M Owen S Pewsey C C Pond
C P Pond S Weston D Wixley

Officers: E K Walsh (Town Clerk)
P Hoy (Services Manager)

257 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Abraham, J and K Angold-Stephens, Bostock, Downing, Mahoney, Mann and Thomas.

258 Suspension of Standing Orders

The Council RESOLVED, in accordance with Standing Order 32, to suspend Standing Order 2 h(i)(iv) for this meeting only, as the meeting was a special one with only one main agenda item.

259 Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were received.

260 Public Representations

None were received.

261 Council Precept for 2016/17

Cllr Jennings invited Cllr Pewsey, the Chairman of the Resources and General Services Committee, to present the recommendations of his Committee from its meeting on 13 January 2016.

It was NOTED that, following the Government's replacement of Council Tax Benefit with the Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme in 2013, the adjusted tax base for 2016/17 had been confirmed as 12,090.4, a slight increase on that for 2015/16.

It was further NOTED that the District Council had confirmed that the LCTS grant to be paid to the Town Council with the first instalment of the Precept, the sum of £40,525, had been treated as income in the Estimates.

It was AGREED to use £121,000 from the forecast general reserves, which reduced them to £225,564 equivalent to 70.06% of the budgeted net core running costs meeting the Council's Reserves Policy.

The Estimates for 2016/17 were AGREED as follows:

Committee	Income		Expenditure including re-charges
	£	£	
Resources and General Services	10,310		236,164
Environment and Heritage	25,064		212,055
Recreation	132,180		767,760
Planning and Licensing	0		55,500
		167,554	1,271,479
Interest		10,000	
Use from earmarked reserves			
Resources & General Services	32,000		
Environment & Heritage	34,115		
Recreation	246,685		
Planning and Licensing	25,000		
		337,800	
Local Council Tax Support Grant*		40,525	
Use of General Reserves		121,000	
Total income		676,879	
Net requirement		594,600	

The Council unanimously RESOLVED to set the precept for 2016/17 at £594,600.

Members thanked the RGS Committee and Council Officers for their work in preparing this budget.

Signed.....
Date: 17 February 2016

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 17 February 2016 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court

Present:

Councillors: J Jennings (in the chair)

P Abraham	P Beales	M Chalk
C Davies	T Downing	I Lawrence
J Mahoney	S Murray	M Owen
S Pewsey	C C Pond	C P Pond
S Weston	D Wixley (from Min no 264)	

Officers: E K Walsh (Town Clerk)
P Bryce (Administrative Assistant)

262 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs J Angold-Stephens, K Angold-Stephens, Bostock, Girling, Mann, and Thomas. Members noted that Cllrs Bostock and Mann had been previously granted a leave of absence.

263 Declarations of Interest

Cllr C C Pond declared a non-pecuniary interest in all agenda items relating to the work of Epping Forest District Council and Essex County Council, as a member of those councils.

Cllr Downing declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 12.3, Parking Restriction Schemes, as he lived in the affected road and would be commenting on behalf of the residents.

Cllr Wixley arrived during the next item.

264 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 16 December 2015 and 27 January 2016 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

265 Public Representations

None were received.

266 Questions Without Discussion

No questions were received.

267 Town Mayor's Engagements and Announcements

The Town Mayor, Cllr Judy Jennings reported that since the Council meeting held on 16 December 2015 she had attended the following events:

Oak View School Christmas Carol Concert, Voluntary Action Epping Forest Launch, the Yes Partnership WOW Conference together with Cllr Davies, the LADs production of "Whipping it Up" at Lopping Hall and Loughton Young Artists Awards Presentation at the Loughton Arts Centre with Cllr Pewsey.

268 Matters for Report

No matters were reported.

269 Reports from Members on Outside Organisations

269.1 Written reports on the following meetings were NOTED.

- i) Parish Passenger Transport – 4 February 2016 – Cllr C C Pond
- ii) Local Police Community Meeting – 8 February 2016 – Cllr Wixley

Cllr C C Pond reported that there was a correction to the report which should read Essex County Council had been notified by the Traffic Commissioners not by Transport for London.

270 Reports from Committees**270.1 Planning and Licensing**

The reports from the meetings held on 14 December 2015 and 11 and 25 January 2016 were NOTED.

270.2 Recreation

The reports from the meeting held on 13 January 2016 were NOTED.

270.3 Environment and Heritage

The reports from the meeting held on 27 January 2016 were NOTED.

270.4 Resources and General Services

The reports from the meetings held on 13 January and 10 February 2016 were NOTED.

271 Financial Regulations

271.1 The Council RESOLVED to accept the recommendations of the Resources and General Services Committee and adopt the revised regulations as set out below.

Index

- 1 General
- 2 Annual estimates (budget) and precept
- 3 Budgetary control and monitoring
- 4 Accounts and audit
- 5 Banking arrangements
- 6 Payment of accounts
- 7 Petty cash
- 8 Payment of salaries and other employee related payments
- 9 Loans, investments and reserves
- 10 Income
- 11 Orders for works, goods and services
- 12 Contracts
- 13 Payments under contracts for building or other construction works
- 14 Stores and equipment
- 15 Assets, properties and estates
- 16 Risk management
- 17 Insurance
- 18 Revision of Financial Regulations

1 General

- 1.1 These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council. The Council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is

adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of financial control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk and for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption. These financial regulations are designed to demonstrate how the Council meets those responsibilities.

- 1.2 The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) is a statutory office and shall be appointed by the Council. The Town Clerk has been appointed as RFO for this Council and these regulations will apply accordingly. References to the RFO in the Financial Regulations in respect of specific duties (rather than overall responsibilities) shall be taken as extending to "or other delegated officer". The RFO, acting under the policy direction of the Resources and General Services Committee (RGS), shall administer the Council's financial affairs in accordance with proper practices. The RFO shall determine on behalf of the Council its accounting records and accounting control systems. The RFO shall ensure that the accounting control systems are observed and that the accounting records of the Council are maintained and kept up to date in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.3 The RFO shall produce financial management information as required by the Council.
- 1.4 At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the Council shall conduct a review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control, which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.5 In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or 'the regulations' shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.
- 1.6 In these financial regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall mean those which are referred to in the guidance to the relevant statutory Regulations.
- 1.7 Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.

2 Annual Estimates (Budget) and Precept

- 2.1 Commencing in the autumn, each committee having power and intending to incur expenditure shall formulate proposals for revenue services (including fees and charges) and capital costs, including the use of reserves and sources of funding, for the ensuing financial year. To facilitate this process the RFO shall prepare detailed estimates of all income and expenditure for the year, including the use of reserves and all sources of funding, to be considered by the committees. Committees whose only expenditure is a service cost recharge from central costs and which have no income will not be required to formulate such proposals. The committees' proposals will be submitted to RGS Committee normally by the end of November, or in accordance with the date of the RGS Committee (budgets) as shown in the agreed schedule of meetings.
- 2.2 The RGS Committee shall review the committees' estimates taking into account the Council's overall financial position and shall recommend to the Council, normally by the end of January, the precept to be levied for the

ensuing financial year. The Council shall set the amount of the precept. The amount of the precept shall be notified to the billing authority, along with any supporting information required by statute.

- 2.3 Once agreed, the estimates become the committees' budgets for the following year and form the basis of subsequent financial control.

3 Budgetary Control and Monitoring

- 3.1 Expenditure on revenue items may be incurred up to the amounts included in each approved committee budget for that class of expenditure.

- 3.2 If a committee wishes to incur expenditure which cannot be met from the amount provided under the appropriate budget heading then it may make a virement from another heading under its control. If the committee does not wish or is not able to make a virement then it must submit a request with supporting information to RGS Committee for a supplementary estimate, the costs to be met from the Council's resources.

- 3.3 Each spending committee shall receive periodic reports on its income and expenditure to date under the approved budget headings. The RFO shall report on any anticipated departures from the budgets and the committee will consider what action, if any, is required.

- 3.4 Expenditure may be incurred on behalf of the Council if in the Town Clerk's opinion it is necessary to carry out any repair replacement or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £5,000. Any necessary expenditure in excess of this limit must be referred either to the Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor, or the Chairman or Vice Chairman of RGS Committee or of the committee under whose aegis the item falls. Any such action is to be reported as soon as practicable thereafter to the appropriate committee.

- 3.5 Where expenditure is incurred in accordance with regulation 3.4 above and the sum required cannot be found from within the committee's approved budget, it shall be submitted to the RGS Committee for approval of a supplementary estimate.

- 3.6 No expenditure shall be incurred in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the committee concerned is satisfied that the necessary funds are available or the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.

- 3.7 All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the Council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.

- 3.8 Unspent provisions in the budget shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year unless placed in an earmarked reserve.

4 Accounts and Audit

- 4.1 The RFO shall determine the Council's accounting systems, form of accounts and supporting records in accordance with best practice and the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations or any subsequent amending legislation and any other relevant legislation.

-
- 4.2 The RFO shall maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the Council's accounting, financial and other operations in accordance with proper practice. Any officer or member of the Council shall, if the RFO or internal auditor requires, make available such documents of the Council which relate to their accounting and other records as appear to the RFO or internal auditor to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall supply the RFO or internal auditor with such information and explanation as the RFO or internal auditor considers necessary for that purpose.
- 4.3 The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work required by the Council in accordance with proper practices. The internal auditor, who shall be competent and independent of the operations of the Council, shall report to the Council in writing or in person on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report in respect of each financial year. The RFO shall circulate copies of the report to all members of the Council. In order to demonstrate objectivity and independence, the internal auditor shall be free from any conflicts of interest and shall have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the Council.
- 4.4 The RFO shall ensure the Council's annual accounts are completed in accordance with statutory requirements as soon as possible after the end of the financial year, and shall present the accounts and any accompanying report to the Council by 30th June.
- 4.5 The RFO shall make arrangements for the opportunity of inspection of the accounts, books, and vouchers and for the display or publication of any Notices and statements of account required by the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 4.6 The RFO shall ensure that arrangements are made for the annual external audit in accordance with statutory requirements and that the auditor is supplied with all necessary information to carry out the audit.
- 4.7 The RFO shall bring to the attention of the RGS Committee any significant correspondence or report from the auditor (internal or external).
- 4.8 The principles of separation of duties will be observed where possible in respect of financial transactions.

5 Banking Arrangements

- 5.1 The Council's banking arrangements shall be made by the RFO and approved by RGS Committee, and shall be reviewed as necessary.
- 5.2 The Council shall operate such bank or other accounts as it considers necessary and appropriate for the efficient conduct of its business. A current account shall be used for the payment of the Council's bills, and cheques and other orders drawn on this account will require the signature of two members from a pool to be determined by the RGS Committee.
- 5.2.1 Additionally, with regard to the Chip and Pin Banking Facility operated on this account, the Town Clerk and in her absence the Deputy Town Clerk shall be authorised to complete the end of day reconciliations and make refunds on credit and debit card payments where required.

- 5.2.2 Access to the Internet Banking facility for the NatWest bank accounts shall be restricted to the Town Clerk and the Deputy Town Clerk.
- 5.3 A second account shall be operated on an imprest basis at a figure to be set and reviewed as necessary by the RGS Committee. This account shall be used primarily for (i) the payment of salaries and related payments and (ii) for payment of small bills or those requiring payment prior to invoice, or for urgent payments. The limit of payments made under (ii) shall be set and reviewed by RGS Committee. Signatories on this account shall be any two people, from the pool as in 5.2 above plus the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and one other officer.
- 5.4 The operational parameters of any further accounts to be operated by the Council shall be set by the RGS Committee. Accounts which are operated by the Council and on which officers are signatories shall be operated on an imprest basis at a figure to be set and reviewed as necessary by the RGS Committee.
- 5.5 Transfers between any account (except on any accounts on which officers are signatories) and the current account may be effected by officers. A transfer into any accounts on which officers are signatories shall be treated like a cheque on the current account and shall require two member signatures.
- 5.6 Bank statements shall be received on a regular basis and reconciled with the Council's books.
- 5.7 The balance on the current account shall be kept at a minimum level commensurate with ensuring sufficient liquidity to meet the Council's commitments.
- 5.8 Any funds not required to defray immediate expenses shall be held in accounts to maximise interest received, commensurate with accessibility of funds, reliability of institution and need for liquidity.
- 6 Payment of Accounts**
- 6.1 All payments other than petty cash shall be effected by cheque or other order drawn on the Council's bankers.
- 6.2 Accounts for payment shall be checked to ensure they match the official order, that the goods, services or works have been received and are satisfactory and that the account is arithmetically correct. The RFO shall then authorise the account for inclusion on the schedule as in 6.3. Accounts which are in order shall be paid as soon as possible in accordance with the Council's procedures.
- 6.3 A schedule of accounts for payment will be drawn up on a regular basis. Cheques will be written and signed in accordance with the schedule.
- 6.4 Information to support the payments made will be available to the members at the time of signing cheques or orders for payment.
- 6.5 A member who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment in question.

- 6.6 The signatories of the cheques shall sign the schedule to indicate confirmation of the details on the cheque and agreement with the schedule of accounts for payment.
- 6.7 A report of the total of payments made since the last meeting will be made to RGS Committee. The schedules of accounts for payment included in that total and information to support the payments will be available for inspection at the meeting.
- 6.8 If an urgent payment is necessary, in order to avoid a charge for interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 or for other urgent reasons, then as long as there is no reason to withhold payment the RFO will take all necessary steps to settle such invoices.
- 6.9 If thought appropriate by the Council, payment of accounts may be made by variable Direct Debit provided that the initial instructions are signed by two members from the pool of authorised cheque signatories and any payments are reported to Council or a committee as made. Use of a variable Direct Debit shall be reviewed on a regular basis.
- 7 Petty Cash**
- 7.1 A petty cash float up to a limit specified by RGS Committee may be held to defray small expenses. A separate account of the petty cash shall be kept and vouchers supplied to substantiate the payments.
- 7.2 A cheque to maintain the petty cash float shall be drawn on the current account in the normal way.
- 7.3 Cash income should not be paid into the petty cash float other than for insignificant sums received for miscellaneous purposes.
- 8 Payment of Salaries and Other Employee Related Payments**
- 8.1 The Town Clerk shall make salary and other payments to employees in accordance with the agreed rates of pay and other allowances, and shall ensure deductions are made as required. Payments to other bodies shall be made as necessary in respect of income tax, National Insurance, pensions and any other requirements. The appropriate records shall be maintained and periodic returns made as required by other bodies.
- 8.2 Payments to employees shall be treated as confidential information.
- 9 Loans, Investments and Reserves**
- 9.1 All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Council and shall be for a set period in accordance with Council policy.
- 9.2 The Council shall consider the need for an Investment Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any such policy shall be regularly reviewed.
- 9.3 All investments of money under the control of the Council shall be in the name of the Council.
- 9.4 All borrowings shall be effected in the name of the Council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by the Council or RGS Committee as to terms and purpose.

- 9.5 All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 9.6 The Council shall maintain such level of general reserves as it considers prudent for the conduct of its business.
- 9.7 The Council may retain such earmarked reserves as it requires to defray the future cost of specific items of expenditure.

10 Income

- 10.1 The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 10.2 Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the Council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Council.
- 10.3 The committees will review all fees and charges annually as part of the process to agree the estimates for the following year. If found necessary, a supplementary review will be carried out at another interval.
- 10.4 Bad debts shall be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Bad Debt Policy.
- 10.5 All sums received on behalf of the Council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO except as provided for by 7.3. In all cases, receipts shall be deposited with the Council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- 10.6 A means of reference to the origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 10.7 Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.
- 10.8 The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall normally be made quarterly.
- 10.9 Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the Council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the Council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues where relevant, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

11 Orders for Work, Goods and Services

- 11.1 An official order or letter shall be issued for all goods, services and works supplied to the Council unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.
- 11.2 Order books shall be controlled by the RFO.
- 11.3 All members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimis provisions in Regulation 12

below. The officer shall accept the quotation which is, in his opinion, the most satisfactory one. Purchases made through a recognised local authority supplier which has been subject to a prior competitive procedure shall not require additional quotations or estimates.

- 11.4 The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order.

12 Contracts

Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:

- 12.1 Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that these regulations shall not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below, or where an exception has been granted under 12.2 below:

- (i) for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage, telephone and like services;
- (ii) for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants;
- (iii) for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;
- (iv) for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council;
- (v) for additional audit work of the external auditor up to an estimated value of £750 (in excess of this sum the RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of RGS Committee);
- (vi) for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and/or are only sold at a fixed price.

- 12.2 When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the RGS Committee.

12.3 The Public Contracts Regulations 2015

- a. Where the Council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (“the Regulations”) which is valued at £25,000 or more, the Council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations¹.
- b. The full requirements of The Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time)².

- 12.4 Where it is intended to enter into a contract exceeding £50,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted

¹ The Regulations require Councils to use the Contracts Finder website to advertise contract opportunities, set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the award of new contracts

² Thresholds currently applicable are:

- a. For public supply and public service contracts 209,000 Euros (£164,176)
- b. For public works contracts 5,225,000 Euros (£4,104,394)

as set out in paragraph 12.1 the RFO shall invite tenders from at least three firms to be taken from the appropriate approved list or in response to public advertisement.

- 12.5 Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the RFO shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state the name and address of the person to whom tenders must be addressed and the last date and time by which those tenders should reach that person in the ordinary course of post, and that the tender should be enclosed in a plain sealed envelope bearing the word "Tender" and the title of the contract but no name or mark indicating the sender. The sealed envelopes shall remain sealed until the prescribed date and time for opening tenders for that contract.
- 12.6 All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Town Clerk in the presence of at least one member of the Council. A record of all tenders received shall be maintained. Subject to 12.6 and 12.9 below, the officer(s) and/or member(s) authorised to make the decision shall accept the tender which is, in their opinion, the most satisfactory one.
- 12.7 If less than three tenders are received for contracts above £50,000 or if all the tenders are identical or otherwise unsatisfactory the Council may make such arrangements as it thinks fit for procuring the goods, materials or services or executing the works.
- 12.8 Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall contain a statement to the effect of Standing Orders 36 and 37 as if the person making the tender were a candidate for appointment.
- 12.9 When the Council is to enter into a contract less than £50,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph 12.1 the RFO shall obtain three quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £10,000 and above £2,000 the RFO shall strive to obtain three estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 11.3 above shall apply.
- 12.10 The Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- 13 Payments under contracts for building or other construction works**
- 13.1 Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).
- 13.2 Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum by 5% or more a report shall be submitted to the relevant committee.
- 13.3 Any significant variation or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the relevant committee and the approval given to the contractor in writing, the committee being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the

financial provision. Approval to all variations, additions or omissions must be given to the contractor in writing.

14 Stores and Equipment

14.1 The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section.

14.2 Delivery Notes should be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.

14.3 Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements and shall be checked periodically by the responsible person.

15 Assets, Properties and Estates

15.1 The Town Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds of properties owned by the Council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of the details of all properties owned by the Council.

15.2 No property shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the RGS Committee, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £250.

15.3 The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually.

16 Risk Management

16.1 The Council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Town Clerk shall prepare, for approval by the Council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the Council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be regularly reviewed by the Council.

16.2 When considering any new activity, the Town Clerk shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the committee.

17 Insurance

17.1 Following the risk assessment (per Financial Regulation 16), the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers.

17.2 The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the Council and the property and risks covered thereby and review it annually, reporting the review to RGS Committee.

17.3 All appropriate employees of the Council shall be included in a suitable fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined by the RGS Committee.

18 Revision of Financial Regulations

18.1 It shall be the duty of the RGS Committee to review the Financial Regulations from time to time and recommend any revisions to the Council. The Town Clerk

shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the Council of any require

271.2 The Council AGREED to submit item 15.2 of the Financial Regulations concerning the disposal of property, to the Strategy and Staff Group for further consideration.

272 Governance and Accountability

The Council NOTED its responsibilities with regard to the completion of Section 2 of the Annual Return, the Annual Governance Statement, for the year ended 2015/16 scheduled for the Council meeting on 21 April 2016.

Members were also encouraged to refer to “Governance and Accountability, A Practitioners’ Guide”, which provided guidance on the accounting practices to be followed and set out the appropriate standard of financial reporting to be followed. Any members requiring a paper copy were asked to contact the Town Clerk.

272.1 Internal Audit – Annual Review

272.1.1 Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Audit

Members considered the detailed report and reviewed the effectiveness of the system of internal audit, including the current system of internal audit, the independence and competence of the internal auditors, the scope of the internal audit and audit planning and reporting systems.

The Council AGREED that the system of internal audit, which had been in place during 2015-16, was satisfactory.

272.1.2 Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Control

Members considered the detailed report and reviewed the effectiveness of the system of internal control.

The Council AGREED the following statement:

STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL

1 Scope and Responsibility

Loughton Town Council (hereafter called “the Council”) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

2 Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk at a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risks of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and

the impact should they be realised, and to manage them effectively and economically.

The system of internal control has been in place at the Council for the year ended 31 March 2016.

3 The Internal Control Environment

The system of internal control is based on a framework consisting of the Code of Conduct, internal regulations (including but not limited to financial regulations) and administrative procedures. It is further enhanced by the regular provision of management and financial information as appropriate to fit the Council's policy of delegation and responsibility. The system is constantly monitored by members as well as officers within the Council. In particular the system incorporates:

- comprehensive budgeting systems, project evaluation and management appraisal
- regular reports of service delivery and project performance
- preparation and dissemination of regular financial reports measuring actual expenditure against forecasts for both revenue and capital projects
- regular review of such reports by officers, and by members in committee and full Council.

4 Review of Effectiveness

The authority has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of:

- the Council and its committees, especially the Resources and General Services Committee
- the Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer and other staff
- the internal auditor
- the external auditor
- any other review agencies and inspectorates in their reports.

272.2 Risk Assessment and Management

The Council carried out the annual review of its Risk Assessment and Management document.

No amendments to the document agreed at the meeting on 25 February 2015 were considered necessary at this time.

273 Highways

The Council commented on the proposals as follows:

273.1 New Parking Restrictions

The Council supported the proposal made by the North Essex Parking Partnership to introduce new parking restrictions in Loughton High Road. However, some councillors were not in favour of charging for the first hour of parking under the new Pay and Display scheme.

273.2 Alderton Hall Lane

The Council expressed support for the Essex County Council’s proposal to extend the existing “No Stopping on School Keep Clear” markings in Alderton Hall Lane.

273.3 Parking Restriction Schemes

273.3.1 Smarts Lane/Forest Road/High Beech Road Loughton

The Council AGREED to respond that whilst it supported the proposal to introduce a residents parking scheme in Smarts Lane, Forest Road and High Beech Road in principle, it was against plans to ban parking from one entire side of Forest Road as there would be insufficient capacity for residents.

Whilst acknowledging that a suitable scheme was a priority, members considered the real problem to be commuter parking on Mondays to Fridays and expressed serious concerns that the proposal would have a knock on effect to nearby roads including Connaught Avenue, Connaught Hill, Forest View Road, Nursery Road, Ollards Grove, Shaftesbury and Staples Road. The area under consideration should therefore be extended.

Clifton Road, which already had a residents parking scheme in place, should remain as a separate zone.

273.3.2 Loughton Station

The Council supported the prevention of illegal parking on the central reservation and requested a sympathetic solution to include the use of bollards and/or flower baskets and trees rather than the introduction of double yellow lines.

Members expressed concern that the area outside the station had become neglected with a litter and rat problem and abandoned highway materials.

274 Office Accommodation – Min no 256

The Town Clerk provided a brief update on the forthcoming move to the library.

The Council NOTED that Martyn Pattie Architects & Designers had been engaged to prepare drawings and a Schedule of Works associated with the increase in office space at the library at a net cost of £1,550 plus expenses.

It was AGEED to delegate decisions connected with the move to the Town Clerk in discussion with the Strategy and Staff Group so that matters may be progressed.

Signed.....
Date: 21 April 2016

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Thursday 21 April 2016 at 8.15pm at 1 Buckingham Court

Present:

Councillors: J Jennings (in the chair)

P Abraham	J Angold-Stephens	J Bostock
C Davies	T Downing	L Girling
I Lawrence	S Murray	C C Pond
C P Pond	S Weston	D Wixley

Officers: E K Walsh (Town Clerk)
S Haynes (Deputy Town Clerk)
P Bryce (Administrative Assistant)

Also present:

John Wheeldon and Louise Fuller

The meeting was preceded by a minute's silence in memory of Cllr Ken Angold-Stephens, a dedicated Town and District councillor since 2004, who passed away on Friday 8 April 2016.

Members paid tribute to the dedication and devotion to duty shown by Cllr Ken Angold-Stephens and offered sincere condolences to his widow, Cllr Jill Angold-Stephens.

Presentation

The presentation of a framed certificate and small gift was made to Mr John Wheeldon to mark his outstanding service to the Council. Mr Wheeldon had acted as the Council's webmaster since 1997.

275 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Beales, Mahoney, Owen and Pewsey. Members noted that Cllr Mann had been previously granted an extended leave of absence.

276 Declarations of Interest

Cllr C C Pond declared a non-pecuniary and non-prejudicial interest in Agenda items 7.1, Essex Children's Centres Consultation, and 12, Office Accommodation, and any other matters relating to the work of Epping Forest District Council and Essex County Council as a member of those councils.

Cllr Murray declared a non-pecuniary and non-prejudicial interest in any items raised in the minutes of the Resources and General Services Committee referring to the Financial Assistance awards.

277 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 17 February 2016 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

278 Public Representations

None were received.

279 Questions Without Discussion

No questions were received.

280 Town Mayor's Engagements and Announcements

The Town Mayor, Cllr Judy Jennings reported that since the Council meeting held on 17 February 2016 she had attended the following events:

The unveiling of the blue plaque for Ruth Rendell, the Civic Service and Citizenship Awards at the Loughton Methodist Church, the unveiling of the dedication plaque and bulb planting at Lady Mary's Path, Borders Lane for resident Dennis Jones, Fly the Flag for the Commonwealth, the Annual Town Meeting at the Murray Hall, the YES Partnership Conference, the presentation of the Loughton Building Design Award to Staples Road School, Oak View School 'Has Talent', a performance by LADS of An English Tragedy at Lopping Hall, the Essex Millennium Fund Awards Ceremony and cheque presentation to Loughton Youth Project at ECC Essex Record Office, the annual fun run on Roding Valley Recreation Ground, a reception at the Palace of Westminster (Clean for the Queen - Keep Britain Tidy Toast), the memorial service for Cllr Ken Angold-Stephens, the launch of the Taylor Centre at St Clare Hospice and the lighting of the Beacon on Hillyfields Open Space for Her Majesty the Queen's 90th birthday.

The Deputy Town Mayor Cllr Carol Davies reported that, on behalf of the Town Mayor, she had attended the Music@LMC event.

The Council thanked the Town Mayor for her excellent work this year. Cllr Jennings responded that she had been honoured to be the mayor and had thoroughly enjoyed her year in office.

281 Matters for Report**281.1 Essex Children's Centres Consultation – Min no RC190**

The Council CONFIRMED the response submitted by the Town Clerk and thanked Cllr Girling for his work in this regard. Cllr Girling reported that, because of the Town Council's detailed response, he had been invited by Essex County Council to sit on a panel to review the proposals.

282 Reports from Members on Outside Organisations

282.1 Written reports on the following meetings were NOTED.

- i) Larger Local Council Forum - 25 February 2016 – Cllr Wixley and the Town Clerk
- ii) Local Council Police Partnership – 15 March 2016 – Cllr Jennings

282.2 Written reports on the following meetings were tabled:

- i. Tree Wardens' Meeting – 15 March 2016 – Cllr Wixley
- ii. The Forestry Tree Commission Seminar – 23 March 2016 – Cllr Wixley

282.3 A verbal report on the following meeting was presented:

Epping Forest Citizens Advice Bureau – April 2016 – Cllr J Angold-Stephens

283 Reports from Committees**283.1 Planning and Licensing**

The reports from the meetings held on 8 and 22 February, 7 and 21 March, 4 April 2016 were NOTED. The Chairman, Cllr J Angold-Stephens, thanked Cllr Davies for chairing the recent meetings in her absence.

283.2 Recreation

The reports from the meeting held on 9 March 2016 were NOTED.

283.3 Environment and Heritage

The reports from the meeting held on 23 March 2016 were NOTED.

283.4 Resources and General Services

The reports from the meeting held on 6 April 2016 were NOTED.

284 The Annual Governance Statement

The members acknowledged their responsibilities with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2016 and made positive responses to each of the nine statements show on the Annual Governance Statement as follows:

1 We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.

The accounts are prepared by the RFO on an income and expenditure basis in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations and guidance in Governance and Accountability for Local Councils, A Practitioner's Guide. This has been scrutinised by the Resources and General Services Committee and through the internal audit process.

2 We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.

The Council had ensured proper arrangements were in place and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge. This was further demonstrated by the annual review of its systems of Internal Audit and Internal Control and their effectiveness at its meeting on 17 February 2016 (Min no 272) and the agreement of a Statement of Internal Control (Min no 272.1.2).

At that meeting members also reviewed and updated the Council's Risk Assessment and Management document (Min no 272.2).

3 We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and proper practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the council to conduct its business or on its finances.

The Council continued to operate within a robust set of governance arrangements, resulting from controls identified in the Risk Assessment which were reviewed annually. Measures also included regular reviews of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, training for councillors and staff and the identification of powers for all council payments.

4 We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

The Council published the audit notices and supporting papers for the Accounts 2014-15 in 2015 and has agreed to provide an inspection period commencing on Monday 6 June 2016 and ending on Friday 15 July 2016 for the exercise of electors' rights this year (Min no RG288.5). This entitled any person interested to inspect and make copies of the Annual Return, books, invoices, receipts etc at the Council Offices in normal working hours during this period.

Notices to this effect will be displayed on the Council's noticeboards around the town and on the Council's website where the Statement of Accounts and accompanying documentation will also be available to view.

5 We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this small authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and / or external insurance cover where required.

At its meeting on 17 February 2016, the Council carried out the annual review of the Risk Assessment and Management document (Min no 272.2) which included details of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required. The Council's level of insurance cover was reviewed on 10 February 2016 (Min no RG281).

6 We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.

Following the annual review of the system of internal audit and its effectiveness in April 2015, Auditing Solutions were re-appointed as the Council's internal auditors for a five-year period 2015/19 (Min no RG235.6). There have been three visits during the financial year including an inspection of the annual accounts. The scope of their work followed the outline programme drawn up in 2015 with councillors and officers afforded the opportunity to request coverage of particular areas especially when new working procedures or responsibilities were introduced. The reports from the internal auditor were presented to all councillors and any issues raised by him reviewed at the next meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee.

During 2015/16, the Council has continued the practice of appointing a member to carry out spot checks on the accounts throughout the year. The reports on these visits were also minuted.

7 We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.

No issues were raised by the external audit for 2015/16.

The only issue raised by the internal auditor was during 2014/15 with a suggestion that the Council should consider the use of a fireproof safe to hold the Burial Records and minimise the risk of the records being destroyed. As the Council's records in this regard had already been digitised for reasons of business continuity, this was not viewed as a priority but further action would be considered once the proposed move to the library was completed.

- 8 We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this smaller authority and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.**

The RFO has considered these matters to ensure all items relating to the Council's business activity have been disclosed. Where necessary all debtors and creditors have been included in the end of year accounts.

- 9 Trust Funds – in our capacity as the sole managing trustee we have discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the funds / assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.**

Not applicable.

The Council CONFIRMED that the Town Mayor, as chair of the meeting, and the Town Clerk should sign the statements on the Annual Return.

285 Accounts and Audit 2015/16

285.1 The Annual Return, the document that forms the Council's statutory accounts for the year 2015/16, and the following supporting papers were considered:

- i) Income and expenditure reports by committee;
- ii) The balance sheet as at 31 March 2016;
- iii) Details of the transfers to and from earmarked reserves together with the supporting notes.

285.2 Reserves Policy

The Council NOTED that the actual level of general reserves as at 31 March 2016 stood at £346,555 which, at 70.06% of the estimated net running costs for 2016/17, was within the limits set by the Council's Reserves Policy.

285.3 Accounting Statements 2015/16

Having considered the documents provided in the Agenda, the Council APPROVED Section Two, Accounting Statements 2015/16, as shown and instructed the Town Mayor (as Chairman of the meeting) to sign the statement at the bottom of Section 2 to confirm that the accounting statements presented fairly the financial position of the Council and its income and expenditure for the year 2015/16.

The Council thanked the Town Clerk and her staff for their work in this regard.

286 Office Accommodation – Min no 256

The Town Clerk reported that she was still waiting for a response from Essex County Council to her request for the recommendations in the external asbestos report to be carried out.

287 Town Mayor's Closing Remarks

The Town Mayor thanked the councillors for their attendance, hard work and support during her term of office.

As this was also the final meeting of the 2012 – 2016 term, Cllr Jennings thanked all those councillors who had served during this period and particularly those who had chosen not to stand for re-election for their service to the community.

Members also expressed their thanks to Cllr Margaret Chalk for her 12 years of service on the Council and noted her attendance at more than 240 meetings of the Planning and Licensing Committee.

The Town Mayor invited all present to join her for an informal reception.

Signed.....
Date: 18 May 2016