
LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 6 June 2012 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present

Councillors: C P Pond (in the Chair)
P Beales T Downing J Jennings
I Lawrence M Owen S Pewsey
C C Pond

Also in attendance:

Councillors: K Angold-Stephens (from Min no EH2) J Angold-Stephens
S Murray (from Min non EH4) D Wixley

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

EH1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Davies.

Cllr K Angold-Stephens joined the meeting.

EH2 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2012 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

EH3 Public Representations

None were received.

Cllr S Murray joined the meeting.

EH4 Declarations of Interest

Cllr C C Pond declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 5.6, Speed Limits in the Debden Green area as a member of Essex County Council.

Cllr K Angold-Stephens declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda item 5.8, The Brook Project, as the Town Council's representative on the venture.

Cllr J Angold-Stephens declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 5.8, The Brook Project, as Cllr Angold-Stephens' wife.

Cllr Murray declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in discussions on the Roding Road Allotments owing to a long term friendship and political association with the Chairman and Secretary of the Roding Road Allotment and Leisure Gardens Association.

The Committee AGREED to take Agenda item 6 next.

EH5 Committee Responsibilities and Priorities for 2012/13

The Chairman guided members through the Committee's areas of responsibilities and list of priorities for the current year.

It was AGREED to undertake familiarisation visits to the following areas. The site visits would be preceded by an appropriate briefing.

- Loughton Cemetery
- Lady Whitaker's Mead
- Pyrles Lane allotments
- Roding Road allotments
- Willingale Road allotments

The Town Clerk was asked to acknowledge correspondence sent directly to new members of the Committee by the Chairman of the Roding Road Allotments and Leisure Gardens Association.

EH6 Matters for Report

6.1 Alleyway Name Plates – Min no EH193.2

Members NOTED the list of alleyway name plates already installed by the Town Council. The Services Manager confirmed that orders for new plates in Meads Path and Lowrey Path were in hand.

6.2 Community Tree Strategy for Loughton – Min no EH193.5

The Town Clerk reported that work had been delayed on the completion of the Loughton Community Tree Strategy but Mr Chris Neilan, Senior Landscape Officer and Arboriculturist at Epping Forest District Council, would shortly begin the preparation of an action plan.

6.3 Blue Heritage Plaques – Min no EH204.4

It was NOTED that a Listed Building Application would now be submitted to obtain permission for the erection of a plaque to commemorate William Brown Macdougall, 1868-1936 (artist) and his wife, Margaret Armour, 1860-1943 (author) at their former home, Elm Cottage in Debden Green.

If the proposal to erect a plaque commemorating Sir Geoffrey de Freitas (1913-1982) who had lived at Greengates, Albion Hill, could not be progressed within a month, consideration would be given to one for the former Braeside Military Hospital, at 1 Connaught Hill.

6.4 Loughton Cemetery – Min no EH204.8

The report on the condition of the Cemetery's boundary brick wall alongside Church Hill, prepared by a structural and civil engineer, was NOTED. The engineer has written he considered it unlikely that any parts of the wall were in danger of collapse in the near future but recommended that remedial work should not be delayed.

Quotations for the preferred Option iii, to buttress the wall at intervals and reduce the ground level behind the wall, would now be obtained by officers.

6.5 Staffing Report – Min no EH208

Members NOTED the recruitment of a part-time Project Officer on a 3-month short term contract, to progress the registration of village greens project, would now proceed.

The Town Clerk reported that, to cover the current staff shortages, an experienced local council officer had been employed on a temporary contract to assist with cemetery administration.

6.6 Speed limits in the Debden Green area – Min no EH215

Further to the Committee's support for the Davenant Foundation School's road safety campaign, it was NOTED that a letter to Essex County Council seeking a reduction in the speed limit to 20mph from Ripley View to Ripley Grange inclusive, and to 30mph all along Debden/Loughton Lanes and Clays Lane had received confirmation that the speed limits in Debden Lane would be reassessed.

6.7 Closure of footpath, Borders Lane/Rectory Lane – Min no EH217.3

Following the receipt of a substantial amount of evidence from residents that the footpath from Borders Lane to Rectory Lane via the former Debden Community Centre and Sports Hall had been used regularly over the past twenty years, the Committee authorised the submission of an application to Essex County Council for its designation as a public right of way.

Cllr K Angold-Stephens left the meeting.

6.8 Brook Project – Min no EH220

Cllr K Angold-Stephens' report on the improvement plans for the rose garden adjacent to St Michael's Church was NOTED.

The Committee requested a site visit in order better to assess the proposals for the area. Consideration would be given to making a financial contribution towards future maintenance of the garden as part of the Committee's autumn budget process. Any support would be dependent on there being permanent public access to the garden through its designation as a public open space.

Cllr K Angold-Stephens re-joined the meeting.

6.9 Town Signs

Members NOTED that following discussions with Highways Officers from the County Council, potential sites had been identified for two new town signs but that work on the designs had not progressed.

6.10 Allotments – Roding Road Allotment – Min no EH216.2

In response to a question by a member, the Town Clerk reported that it had not hitherto proved possible to arrange a time for the Council's contractors to repair the fencing in accordance with the resolution of the Committee, owing to the contractor's other commitments.

EH7 Financial Position

The Committee NOTED the end of year financial report for 2011/12.

EH8 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

Signed.....

Date: 1 August 2012

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 1 August 2012 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present

Councillors: C P Pond (in the Chair)
 P Beales C Davies (from Min no EH13)
 T Downing J Jennings I Lawrence
 M Owen C C Pond
 J Angold-Stephens (as substitute for S Pewsey)

Also in attendance:

Councillors: P Abraham K Angold-Stephens S Murray
 D Wixley

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

4 members of the public

EH9 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Pewsey. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr J Angold-Stephens had been nominated as his substitute for this meeting.

EH10 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2012 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

EH11 Public Representations

A member of the public with an interest in Agenda item 5.7.2, Report of the visit to the Roding Road and Willingale Road allotment sites, addressed the Committee.

EH12 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Owen declared a non-pecuniary and non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 5.7.2, Report of the visit to the Roding Road and Willingale Road allotment sites, as she was acquainted with the Chairman and Secretary of the Roding Road Allotments and Leisure Gardens Association.

Cllr Murray declared a non-pecuniary and non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 5.7.2, Report of the visit to the Roding Road and Willingale Road allotment sites, as he had been a close friend of the Chairman and Secretary of the Roding Road Allotments and Leisure Gardens Association.

Cllr J Angold-Stephens declared a non-pecuniary and non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 5.7.2, Report of the visit to the Roding Road and Willingale Road allotment sites, as she was acquainted with the public speaker who attended her church.

The Committee AGREED to bring forward the following item, as members of the public were interested in this item.

Cllr Davies joined the meeting.

EH13 Allotments

13.1 Best Allotment Competition 2012

The award presentation ceremony for this competition had been held before the start of this meeting. The Committee thanked this year's independent judges, Amy Pritchard and Teddy Higgs from the London Garden Club in Ongar Road, Abridge, for their work.

It was noted that the views of the chairmen of the allotment sites in Loughton would be sought on a suggestion to include a children's category in the competition in 2013.

Committee members commented that they would like to encourage plot-holders at the Roding Road Allotments to take part in future.

13.2 Report of the visit to the Roding Road and Willingale Road allotment sites

The report of the members' visit to two of the Council-owned allotments sites on 26 June 2012 was NOTED.

The Committee acknowledged the tremendous amount of work involved in managing an allotment site and carrying out all the administration for an association/society.

Members also recognised this work was carried out on a voluntary basis. In particular, the Committee recorded its appreciation for the work of the committee members of the Roding Road Allotments and Leisure Gardens Association over the past decades and the recent improvements made at the Willingale Road site by the new managers, the Debden Horticultural and Allotments Society.

Whilst acknowledging this year's difficult growing conditions, there were, however, serious concerns regarding the number of overgrown and/or un-let plots, particularly at the Roding Road site, as the resurgence in allotment gardening over recent years made it unusual to find any site with vacant plots.

In view of the issues raised in the report and at the meeting, the Committee AGREED action was now required as follows:

- A)
- i. the Chairman and Town Clerk were to seek a meeting with the managers of the Roding Road site to hear what they intended to do about the issues raised*; and
 - ii. if, in the opinion of the Chairman and Town Clerk, any issues remained outstanding after the meeting or if the managers declined to attend, the Clerk should give the managers a Notice to Improve requiring them to undertake the necessary changes, in default of which the Council would seek and appoint new managers; and
 - iii. that the managers were to report to the Clerk in December 2012, June 2013 and October 2013 if satisfactory progress was being made under any such notice.
- B) that the Town Clerk should write to the managers of the Willingale Road allotments asking for 6-monthly progress reports on efforts to eradicate the Horsetail weed and commending them for the improvements made hitherto on the site.

*A list of the issues would be circulated to members for confirmation, prior to the meeting with the managers and the required standards were to be based on the guidelines of the National Allotment Society.

13.3 Roding Road Allotment Fencing – Min no EH6.10

The Committee CONFIRMED the reinstatement of the existing fencing.

EH14 Matters for Report

14.1 Remembrance Services – Min no EH203.3

The Town Clerk reported that she awaited a response from the Ceremonial Officer at the Loughton Branch of the Royal British Legion regarding a meeting to be attended by the Town Mayor, with representatives from Churches Together in Loughton, Essex Police, and Transport for London to discuss arrangements for the 2012 Remembrance Sunday Service.

14.2 Green Routes – Min no EH204.1

The Committee thanked the Services Manager for carrying out repairs to several of the cycle by-pass signs on the quiet route from the High Road to Goldings Hill.

14.3 Heritage Open Days 2012 – Min no EH217.1

It was reported that arrangements for the opening of the Loughton Cemetery and Chapel on Sunday 9 September from 11am – 4pm as part of the 2012 Heritage Open Days 2012 event were in hand. Councillors would be invited to volunteer to show visitors around the Chapel. Several other buildings in Loughton would also be open to the public.

14.4 Committee Responsibilities and Priorities for 2012/13 – Min no EH5

Councillors NOTED that dates for members' site visits to the Pyrles Lane allotment site, Loughton Cemetery and Lady Whitaker's Mead, and the Brook Project were to be arranged.

14.5 Blue Heritage Plaques – Min no EH6.3

A Listed Building Application for the erection of a plaque to commemorate William Brown Macdougall, 1868-1936 (artist) and his wife, Margaret Armour, 1860-1943 (author) at their former home, Elm Cottage in Debden Green had been submitted to Epping Forest District Council.

An approach had also been made to the owner of the property, 1 Connaught Avenue, the former Braeside Military Hospital, regarding the installation of a plaque.

14.6 Closure of footpath, Borders Lane/Rectory Lane – Min no EH6.7

The Town Clerk confirmed that an application for the designation of the footpath from Borders Lane to Rectory Lane as a public right of way to ensure its reopening and protection in future years had been submitted to Essex County Council.

EH15 Financial Position

The Committee NOTED the current financial position.

EH16 Winter Service 2012/13

Cllr C C Pond declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item as a member of Essex County Council.

The Committee CONFIRMED that the Town Council should again support the Essex County Council's winter salt bag scheme by enlisting the help of volunteers to clear snow and spread salt on minor roads and pavements particularly in the hillier parts of the town which were not covered by the Highways salt/gritting service.

The Town Clerk reported that the scheme would be publicised in the Winter edition of Think Loughton and personal accident insurance cover for the volunteers arranged.

EH17 Training and Conferences

The Committee APPROVED members' attendance at the following events:

- i. 17 September 2012 in Epping – Declaration and Registration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) and Other Pecuniary and Non Pecuniary Interests – Cllrs K Angold-Stephens and Owen;
- ii. 1 October 2012 in Epping – Code of Conduct – Cllrs Jennings and Owen;
- iii. 31 October 2012 in Epping – Introduction to Planning Enforcement – Cllr Bostock.

EH18 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

Signed:.....
Date: 10 October 2012

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 10 October 2012 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present

Councillors: C P Pond (in the Chair)
 P Beales C Davies J Jennings
 S Pewsey C C Pond
 P Abraham (as substitute for Cllr Downing)
 J Bostock (as substitute for Cllr Owen)
 D Wixley (as substitute for Cllr Lawrence)

Also in attendance:

Councillors: K Angold-Stephens

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

3 members of the public

EH19 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Downing, Lawrence and Owen. The Town Clerk reported that Cllrs Abraham, Wixley and Bostock had been nominated as their respective substitutes for this meeting.

EH20 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 August 2012 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

EH21 Public Representations

A member of the public with an interest in Agenda item 5.4, Roding Road Allotments, addressed the Committee.

EH22 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

The Committee AGREED to bring forward the following item, as members of the public were interested in this item.

EH23 Roding Road Allotments – Min no EH13.2

The Committee NOTED the report and that, as the Management Committee of the Roding Road Allotments and Leisure Gardens Association had not accepted the invitation to meet the Chairman of this Committee and the Town Clerk to discuss the Committee's concerns, a Notice to Improve had been issued on 5 October 2012. This required the Management Committee to provide a response to the issues and concerns detailed in the Notice within 28 days.

If no satisfactory response had been received from the RRALGA by 5 November 2012, a special meeting of the Environment and Heritage Committee would be called to consider removing the current managers under the terms of the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908.

The Committee expressed concern that a Notice to Quit had been issued to an allotment tenant, who had addressed this Committee under “Public Representations” at the 1 August 2012 meeting, and invited the Resources and General Services Committee to consider what could be done to protect public speakers.

EH24 Matters for Report

24.1 Christmas Lights on Kings Green – Min no EH193.7.1

The Committee CONFIRMED that further improvements to the Christmas lighting display on Kings Green would be undertaken this autumn at a net cost of £502 with funding from the Street Furniture budget. The annual testing of the lights and electrical supply would also be carried out at a net cost of £660.

Members also NOTED that this year’s Light up a Life Service, in partnership with St Clare Hospice, would take place on Saturday 1 December 2012, meeting at the Loughton Methodist Church from 4.30pm for the short procession to Kings Green.

24.2 Village Green Registration – Min no EH193.10

The Committee NOTED that the Planning and Licensing Committee, in its response to the District Council’s Community Choices – Issue and Options Consultation for the Local Plan, had requested the designation of several green spaces within the town. Under the new National Planning Policy Framework, by designating land as Local Green Space this would allow local communities to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances.

24.3 Proposed Closure of Fairmead Road, Waltham Abbey – Min no EH206

Cllr C C Pond reported that following the Committee’s objection to the proposed closure of Fairmead Road from a point approximately 50 metres south of its junction with Cross Roads for its entire length to the Epping New Road, Essex County Council and the City of London had reviewed the proposal and decided not to close the road below the car park.

24.4 Remembrance Services – Min no EH14.1

The Town Clerk confirmed she would be meeting representatives from the Loughton Branch of the Royal British Legion on Tuesday 16 October 2012 to discuss arrangements for this year’s service.

24.5 Heritage Open Days 2012 – Min no EH14.3

This year’s events in Loughton were well received by local residents. Properties that had opened in September 2012 especially for visitors included Forest Hall Church, Loughton Cemetery and Chapel, Lopping Hall, Loughton Methodist Church, the National Jazz Archive and St Mary’s Church.

The Committee thanked the Town Clerk and those councillors who helped show visitors around the Chapel and Cemetery on the Sunday.

The Committee AGREED to support this scheme again in 2013, noting that the events would take place during the period 12 – 15 September.

24.6 Committee Responsibilities and Priorities for 2012/13 – Min no EH14.4

Members NOTED that dates for members’ site visits to the Pyrles Lane allotment site, Loughton Cemetery and Lady Whitaker’s Mead, and the Brook Project would be arranged shortly.

24.7 Blue Heritage Plaques – Min no EH14.5

The Listed Building Application for the erection of a plaque to commemorate William Brown Macdougall, 1868-1936 (artist) and his wife, Margaret Armour, 1860-1943 (author) at their former home, Elm Cottage in Debden Green had been successful and installation of the plaque by the Services Manager would take place in the coming week.

The owner of the property at no 1 Connaught Avenue had also given permission for the installation of a heritage plaque on the building to commemorate its use as the Braeside Military Hospital in World War I. The order for this plaque had been placed and a small event would be organised to mark its installation.

24.8 Closure of footpath, Borders Lane/Rectory Lane – Min no EH14.6

The Committee NOTED that Legal Services at Essex County Council had confirmed the case study work on the Town Council's application for the designation of this footpath as a Public Right of Way would commence in 2013/14.

24.9 High Beach Visitor Centre

The Town Clerk reported that the Head of Visitor Services for the City of London had confirmed that this Visitor Centre would remain open on Wednesdays to Sundays from 12 noon until 5pm for the foreseeable future.

24.10 Highways and Parking Issues

Members NOTED Cllr C C Pond's report on the recent meetings of the Local Highways Panel and the North Essex Parking Partnership, and the arrangements for the reporting of faults to Essex County Council.

24.11 The Brook Project

Cllr K Angold-Stephens tabled a report on the plans to improve the rose garden adjacent to St Michael's Church in Roding Road.

EH25 Financial Position

The Committee NOTED the current financial position.

EH26 Committee Priorities

26.1 As part of its overall plan and to complement the budget-making process, the Committee reviewed its priority list and AGREED on the following:

Environment and Heritage Committee		
Current Priority	Main Function	Greater Detail/Current Position
Current activities		
High	Heritage Open Days	Cemetery opening Sept 2013
High	Tourist Brochures	In preparation
High	Registration of Village Greens	Research and collation of evidence, prior to application
High	Town signs	Plans to be finalised – CIF funding in place
High	War Memorial, Kings Green	Additional names

High	Conservation Areas / Areas of local landscape merit	Proposals submitted to EFDC
Medium	Lady Whitaker's Mead	Development of new cemetery
Medium	Alleyway nameplates	Site surveys, permissions, purchase and installation
Medium	Salt/grit bins	Site surveys, permissions, and ordering – subject to ECC policy
Medium	Vehicle Activated Signs/Speed Indicator Device	Sites proposed, awaiting input from ECC
Medium	Flower baskets	Permissions, contract, installation
Medium	Interpretation Boards	In preparation
Medium	Seats (new)	Site surveys, permissions, purchase and installation
TBC	Brook Project	Awaiting approach from the organising group
On-going activities		
High	Running the committee	Agenda, reports, research, minutes, finance, admin
High	Broadway toilet and Community Lavatory scheme	Cleaning and maintenance, initial research and approaches to businesses
High	Cemetery (Church Lane)	Burials, administration, maintenance
High	War memorials	Inspect and maintain
High	Heritage plaques, drinking fountain, seats and other street furniture; Lopping Hall clock	Installation and maintenance
High	Allotments	Lettings, licences, administration
High	Christmas lights on Kings Green	Maintenance
High	Christmas Window Competition	Admin and arrangements
High	Parish Paths Partnership	On-going
High	Responding to consultations	Variable
High	Any other matters within the Committee's terms of reference	

26.2 The Committee CONFIRMED the following item for consideration by the Planning and Licensing Committee, as being suitable for a developer's Section 106 contribution should the opportunity arise.

- i. Public toilets

EH27 Estimates for 2013/14

27.1 Income

The Committee AGREED that the following fees and charges should be increased by three per cent:

- i. Cemetery
- ii. Allotment rents (noting that the Pyrles Lane site is not available for letting at the present time)

iii. Licence for vehicle access to Roding Road allotment site

27.2 Rolling Programme

The Committee AGREED to the Rolling Programme as presented in the Agenda noting that the budget for Heritage Plaques allowed for only two plaques in 2013/14.

27.3 Estimates for 2013/14

The estimates for 2013/14 as presented in the Agenda were AGREED such that the net figures were as follows:

Environment and Heritage Committee	£
Total budget expenditure**	181,200
Income	20,358
Net expenditure	160,842
Transfers from earmarked reserves*	26,170
Total net expenditure	134,672
<i>*Details of transfers from earmarked reserves:</i>	
<i>Cemetery memorial fund</i>	<i>6,000</i>
<i>Lady Whitakers Mead</i>	<i>10,000</i>
<i>Bus shelters</i>	<i>1,000</i>
<i>Community toilet scheme</i>	<i>1,000</i>
<i>Salt & grit bins replacement</i>	<i>400</i>
<i>War memorial insurance & maintenance</i>	<i>770</i>
<i>Pyrles Lane project</i>	<i>2,000</i>
<i>Village Greens – legal expenses reserve</i>	<i>5,000</i>
	<i>26,170</i>

** **NB:** The total budget expenditure currently included a service recharge of £78,000 (the 2012/13 figure). The 2013/14 figure would be confirmed by the Resources and General Services Committee at its meeting on 14 November 2012 and a revised budget provided to the Environment and Heritage Committee at its next meeting if appropriate.

EH28 Christmas Windows 2012

The Committee NOTED that all shops and businesses within the Town Council's boundaries were automatically entered in this annual competition. The competition was publicised through posters, press releases and the website and had already been promoted in the autumn issue of Think Loughton.

The window displays were required to be in place by 1 December 2012 with the judging period kept to seven days to enable the charity shops to sell items from their displays. Officers would visit the smaller shopping parades on 3 December to check for any noteworthy displays and report these to the judges.

Members volunteered to distribute A5 flyers to the various shopping centres/parades in Loughton.

EH29 Green Routes

Cllr Pewsey provided details of the Roding Hub Project Brief for members' consideration. This project, already supported by Sustrans and Buckhurst Hill and Chigwell Parish Councils, aimed to develop a safe, off-road cycle network connecting these local communities including Loughton.

The Committee AGREED that the Town Council should express its general support for this scheme subject to a feasibility study and further consultation. Members also asked for details of the cycle routes in Loughton already signposted by the Town Council to be included in the project.

EH30 Future Work of the Committee

Members asked for a further report on parking restrictions. Cllr C C Pond offered to write a report for the next meeting

Signed:.....
Date: **23 January 2013**

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL**ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 23 January 2013 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present

Councillors: C P Pond (in the Chair)
P Beales T Downing J Jennings
M Owen S Pewsey C C Pond
P Abraham (as substitute for Cllr Lawrence)

Also in attendance:

Councillors: J Angold-Stephens K Angold-Stephens D Wixley

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

8 members of the public

EH31 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Davies and Lawrence. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Abraham had been nominated as Cllr Lawrence's substitute for this meeting.

EH32 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2012 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

EH33 Public Representations

As a member of the public with an interest in Agenda item 5.4, Roding Road Allotments, had registered to speak, the Committee AGREED to take this item following Agenda item 4, Declarations of Interest.

EH34 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Owen declared a non-pecuniary and non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 5.4, Roding Road Allotments, as she was acquainted with members of the Association.

Cllr C C Pond declared a non-pecuniary and non-prejudicial interest in Agenda items 5.3, Winter Service 2012/13, 5.6, Proposed Closure of Fairmead Road, Waltham Abbey, and 5.10, Green Routes, as a member of Essex County Council.

EH35 Roding Road Allotments – Min no EH13.2

The Chairman of the Committee introduced the report on the meeting she had held with members of the Management Committee of the Roding Road Allotments and Leisure Gardens Association (RRALGA) on 8 January 2013 also attended by Cllrs Jennings and C C Pond, and the Town Clerk.

It was NOTED that once the Association's Committee had commented on the detailed notes of the meeting on 8 January 2013, the document would be circulated to all members of the Council.

A plot-holder from Roding Road Allotments addressed the Committee.

Members welcomed the report of the meeting describing it as a positive step forward. The Town Clerk confirmed that the outstanding issues of concern would be taken forward and discussed with the Association's Committee informally.

The Committee recognised the work of the RRALGA over the last 29 years and, acknowledging the importance of the site, reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring the Roding Road Allotments thrived for the benefit of all Loughton's residents.

Agreement had been reached with the RRALGA on the following targets:

- A formal inspection of the site would be carried out in March by Eddie Boatman, Ann Andrews and the Town Clerk. (*This had been arranged for 6/7 March 2013 and further regular meetings would ensue.*)
- Details of the identity numbers of the plots not able to be cultivated or let would be provided to the Council.
- The numbering of individual plots by tenants would be required.
- Arrangements for the use of Community Payback Teams to clear a small number of plots to encourage new tenants were to be discussed by Eddie Boatman and the Town Clerk.
- The Association would continue its work to encourage new tenants with publicity a priority.

The Town Clerk would provide regular updates to the Committee on progress to improve the site.

Members expressed concern regarding the Notice to Quit issued by the RRALGA to an allotment tenant who had addressed this Committee on 1 August 2012. It was reported that an apology had now been tendered by the tenant to the Association's Committee and AGREED that the Town Clerk should offer assistance in resolving this matter with both parties.

EH36 Matters for Report

36.1 Seats and Benches – Min no EH204.9

The Committee NOTED that an order had been placed to replace the wooden bench and litter bin at the junction of Potters Close/York Hill. The design had been approved by the Hills Amenity Society. The Services Manager was thanked for his work to progress this.

36.2 Community Tree Strategy for Loughton – Min no EH6.2

It was reported that the Loughton Community Tree Strategy would be published on the District Council's website in the near future. The Chairman and Vice Chairman of this Committee and Cllr Wixley in his capacity as a local Tree Warden, together with the Town Clerk, would be meeting Chris Neilan (Senior Landscape Officer and Arboriculturist) and Abigail Oldham (Countrycare) to begin the preparation of an action plan, and also to consider print publication. Public consultation on the draft action plan would follow this spring.

36.3 Winter Service 2012/13 – Min no EH16

The Services Manager provided an update on the operation of this volunteer scheme, which involved some fifty volunteers spreading salt and grit on residential roads and paths across the town.

It was NOTED that the additional insurance costs incurred by the Council this winter due to the high demand of volunteers had seen a pro rata increase of £37.91 including IPT to the annual premium of £119.25. This provided public liability and personal accident cover for up to sixty volunteers for the period to the end of March 2013.

The Committee thanked Council staff for their work on this scheme.

36.4 Christmas Lights on Kings Green – Min no EH24.1

A report on the 2012 Light up a Life ceremony held on Kings Green, in partnership with St Clare Hospice, on Saturday 1 December was NOTED. The Committee commented on the attractiveness of the lighting display following the additional improvements in Autumn 2012.

36.5 Proposed Closure of Fairmead Road, Waltham Abbey – Min no EH24.3

A copy of a letter received from Essex County Council confirming the revised plans for the partial closure of this road was NOTED.

36.6 Remembrance Services – Min no EH24.4

It was reported that the Town Mayor and Town Clerk would be meeting shortly with representatives from Churches Together in Loughton and the Loughton Royal British Legion to discuss arrangements for the 2013 Services on Kings Green. It was AGREED to invite Cllr J Angold-Stephens to this meeting in her capacity as Deputy Town Mayor.

36.7 Blue Heritage Plaques – Min no EH24.7

The Committee NOTED the report of the installation of plaques to commemorate William Brown Macdougall, 1868-1936 (artist) and his wife, Margaret Armour, 1860-1943 (author) at their former home, Elm Cottage in Debden Green and the former Braeside Military Hospital on no 1 Connaught Avenue.

The Committee AGREED to amend the criteria for Blue Heritage Plaques, in accordance with present practice, to include the statement that:

Proposals will not be considered for the commemoration of individuals still living.

The Committee considered the nominations submitted by members of the public and AGREED to install a plaque to commemorate Ralph Russell (1918-2008), eminent scholar and translator of Urdu literature, who had lived in Queens Road from 1927 to 1940 and attended Staples Road School; this would be subject to the home owner's permission.

36.8 Christmas Window Competition 2012 – Min no EH28

The report of the 2012 competition was NOTED. The Committee thanked Vivienne Messenger for her work in this regard.

36.9 Green Routes – Min no EH29

The Committee NOTED that, as Essex County Council had offered some 2012-13 money to help fund the feasibility study for the Roding Hub Project Brief, the organisers were now asking the local bodies who had originally expressed support for the scheme (e.g. Buckhurst Hill and Chigwell Parish Councils, Loughton Town Council, Chigwell School, etc.) to approve some spending to parallel the County Council's offer.

This project, aimed to develop a safe, off-road cycle network connecting Buckhurst Hill, Chigwell and Loughton.

The Committee AGREED to set aside £500 to support this project, with the funds coming from a virement from either the Street Furniture or Contingency budgets as appropriate.

EH37 Financial Position

The Committee NOTED the current financial position.

EH38 Northern Gateway Access Package Consultation

The Committee NOTED the response to this consultation made by the Town Clerk in November 2012 under delegated powers, which had been subsequently ratified by the Planning and Licensing Committee at its meeting on 12 November 2012 (PL111).

EH39 Lower Roding Catchment Plan

The Committee NOTED the Catchment Plan, published in December 2012, and details of the work now proposed by Thames21, a charity employed by the Environment Agency to encourage river groups and local people on the Roding, Beam and Ingrebourne to help progress the shared actions in the catchment plan and continue partnership working.

The Committee expressed support for the project and a wish to comment if and when more detailed schemes affecting Loughton were drafted.

EH40 Future Work of the Committee

The Town Clerk was asked to revisit the issue of the replacement of the bench on land previously or currently owned by Essex County Council at the junction of Church Hill and Sedley Rise, now used for car parking.

Signed:.....

Date: 27 March 2013

THESE MINUTES NOT YET CONFIRMED

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 27 March 2013 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present

Councillors: C P Pond (in the Chair)
 P Beales C Davies T Downing
 I Lawrence S Pewsey C C Pond
 P Abraham (as substitute for Cllr Jennings)
 J Bostock (as substitute for Cllr Owen)

Also in attendance:

Councillors: D Wixley

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

3 members of the public

EH41 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Jennings and Owen. The Town Clerk reported that Cllrs Abraham and Bostock had been nominated as their respective substitutes for this meeting.

EH42 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2013 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

EH43 Public Representations

As a member of the public with an interest in Agenda item 7 had registered to speak, the Committee AGREED to take this item following Agenda item 4, Declarations of Interest. It was also agreed to bring forward Agenda item, 5.4 as a member of the public was interested in this application.

EH44 Declarations of Interest

Cllr C C Pond declared a non-pecuniary and non-prejudicial interest in Agenda items 5.8, Local Highways Panel and 9, New Interactive Public Rights of Way Map, as a member of Essex County Council.

EH45 Hills Amenity Society

The Chairman congratulated the Hills Amenity Society on its 40th anniversary and invited the representative of the Society to address the Committee.

Mr Stephen Cohen gave details of the proposal to install an information board depicting the London skyline as viewed from Pump Hill on the green. Permission is being sought from the landowner, the City of London.

The Committee AGREED to support this proposal in principle and asked for more details to be provided to the Town Clerk when available.

EH46 Allotments – Min EH13**46.1 Allotment Training – RC44**

Cllr Jennings' report of the training event she had attended was NOTED.

46.2 Best Allotment in Loughton 2013

Arrangements for the 2013 competition were discussed with the judging criteria to be as follows:

- General appearance and condition of crops.
- Use of recycled / compost / manure.
- Use made of all ground areas in the plot.
- A bit of flair / creativity e.g. unusual crops.

Following comments received from allotment tenants last year, the judging period was likely to be delayed until mid-July but again this would depend on growing conditions in the coming months.

The Town Clerk would follow up suggestions for an external judge to inspect the shortlisted plots and the Committee's wish to make the "opt-in" on the Roding Road site "opt-out" instead.

46.3 Roding Road Allotments – Min no EH35**46.3.1 Pedestrian and Vehicle Accesses**

The report of the Deputy Town Clerk's annual inspection of the rear accesses from properties in Roding Road was NOTED.

46.3.2 Allotment inspection report

The Town Clerk reported on her detailed inspection of the allotment site carried out on 6 March 2013 with the Chairman of the Roding Road Allotment and Leisure Gardens Association (RRALGA) Mr Eddie Boatman and Mrs Ann Andrews (the Association's Lettings and Publicity Officer).

The Committee agreed with the priorities identified in the report and the course of action to be followed. Members noted that a second inspection would be carried out towards the end of May 2013. In particular those plots where there had been only limited signs of cultivation at the March inspection would be monitored closely and, if necessary, a formal letter sent by the RRALGA committee under the terms of the tenancy agreements requiring the tenant to cultivate or face a notice to quit.

The promotion of allotments to residents would continue and members suggested that the allotment groups in the town may wish to have a stall at a Farmers' Market later in the year where a display of produce would attract interest.

46.3.3 Safety concerns

The inspection had identified the following concerns:

- Asbestos roofing sheets lying uncovered on plots
- Glass sheets stacked in an unsafe manner; broken glass

- Untidily stacked and excessive quantities of building materials including pallets and miscellaneous items

The RRALGA Chairman would continue to address these issues through displaying notices, including articles in the Association's regular newsletter and by speaking directly to the tenants. However, should there be no significant improvement in this regard at the second formal inspection at the end of May, the Council may wish to reinforce the Association's approach.

46.3.4 Clearance of plots

The Committee welcomed the positive outcome of initial discussions with both the RRALGA and the Harlow Probation Service about the use of Community Service Teams to undertake projects on the allotment site. It was reported that Mr Boatman had requested that the area known as the Beekeepers' plots be cleared of undergrowth, derelict buildings and fly-tipping and tree maintenance under this scheme. Arrangements for this would be progressed.

46.3.5 Temporary buildings/structures

The Town Clerk drew members' attention to concerns about the wide variety and size of structures on the site used as storage sheds or greenhouses, particularly those covered in opaque polythene or using UPVC panels. It was noted that the Chairman of the RRALGA had agreed to speak to tenants to prevent any further escalation of such structures.

As the written consent of the Council was required for any new buildings or structures, either permanent or temporary, the Committee asked the Town Clerk to undertake research and prepare a report in discussion with the RRALGA to enable a policy to be developed in this regard.

With regard to a tenant who had written directly to the Council asking for permission to install sheds and greenhouses on one of his plots, it was agreed to respond that as a policy was now in preparation and likely to be adopted in the future, the Council was unable to comment his proposals at this time.

46.3.6 Notice to Quit

At the last meeting members had expressed concern regarding the Notice to Quit issued by the RRALGA to an allotment tenant who had addressed this Committee on 1 August 2012.

The Town Clerk had spoken to members of the Association's committee but, as confirmed by the tenant in an email, whilst that committee had received the unreserved apology, its members, after careful deliberations, had agreed that the Notice to Quit would not be rescinded.

Members noted the Council had delegated management responsibilities to the RRALGA and that the full reasons for the decision to issue the Notice to Quit were not known. However, the Committee also recognised the tenant had raised important issues with the Council that had prompted action and so considered the tenant should not be penalised for this.

It was AGREED to offer strong advice to the RRALGA that it should seek mediation or conciliation with the allotment tenant to endeavour to resolve issues.

46.3.7 Resources

The Committee NOTED that considerable officer time would continue to be devoted to allotment related work in the future. The Town Clerk was asked to record the hours spent on this area of work.

47 Matters for Report

47.1 Community Tree Strategy for Loughton – Min no EH36.2

The Committee thanked Chris Neilan, Tricia Moxey and John Price for their work to produce the Strategy, which was now available on the District Council's website.

Members considered the draft Action Plan and associated consultation document. Their comments would be collated by the Town Clerk and sent to Mr Neilan. Confirmation of the closing date of the consultation would be sought.

Members welcomed the suggestion of a walk around the town later this year to celebrate and promote the Strategy.

47.2 Winter Service 2012/13 – Min no EH36.3

It was NOTED the insurance company had written off the additional insurance premium for providing public liability and personal accident cover for the new volunteers who had assisted with snow clearance and salt spreading on residential roads this past winter.

47.3 Christmas Lights on Kings Green – Min no EH36.4

The Committee NOTED the date of the 2013 Light up a Life service, to be held in partnership with St Clare Hospice and with the support the Loughton Methodist Church, had been confirmed as Saturday 30 November, meeting at the Church from 4.30pm for the 4.45pm procession to the Green.

47.4 Remembrance Services – Min no EH36.6

The report of the meeting of the Town Mayor and Town Clerk with representatives from Churches Together in Loughton (CTL) and the Loughton Royal British Legion held on 28 February 2013 to discuss arrangements for this year's Remembrance Service was NOTED.

47.5 Blue Heritage Plaques – Min no EH36.7

It was reported that the owners of no 6 Queens Road had given their permission for the installation of a heritage plaque to commemorate Ralph Russell (1918-2008), eminent scholar and translator of Urdu literature, who had lived in Queens Road from 1927 to 1940 and attended Staples Road School.

47.6 Tourism

The Town Mayor reported on his attendance at a recent conference in Waltham Abbey and the discussions on how the tourism potential of the area could be fulfilled.

47.7 Local Highways Panel

The process for submitting schemes for consideration by the Local Highways Panel was noted.

EH48 Financial Position

The Committee NOTED the current financial position.

EH49 Central Line Vegetation Management, Debden to Loughton

The report from London Underground on planned vegetation maintenance work on the embankment between Debden and Loughton on the Central Line was received. The Committee was pleased to note that Arboricultural Officers at Epping Forest District Council were monitoring this work very closely.

EH50 New interactive Public Rights of Way map

The Committee NOTED that the Public Rights of Way team at Essex County Council had developed an interactive Map of Public Rights of Way for the Essex Highway website that complimented the statutory Definitive Map, which in law provides conclusive evidence of the existence of any Public Rights of Way shown on it.

EH51 Future Work of the Committee

The Committee agreed to consider the following items at a future meeting:

- i. The replacement of non-conforming street furniture in Conservation Areas and funding opportunities. Cllr C C Pond to prepare a report.
- ii. Essex County Council's part night street lighting scheme – to await proposals from ECC.

As this was the last meeting of the municipal year, the Chairman thanked the members of the Committee for their work this year.

Signed:.....
Date: **5 June 2013**