
LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 19 June 2013 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: S Pewsey (in the Chair)
 P Abraham I Lawrence J Mahoney
 S Murray
 C C Pond (as substitute for J Angold-Stephens)
 C P Pond (as substitute for H Mann)
 D Wixley (as substitute for J Jennings)

Officers: E K Walsh (Town Clerk)
 S Haynes (Deputy Town Clerk)

2 members of the public

RG80 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr J Angold-Stephens, Jennings and Mann. The Town Clerk reported that Cllrs C C Pond, Wixley and C P Pond had been nominated as their respective substitutes for this meeting.

RG81 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee held on Wednesday 3 April 2013 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG82 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Murray declared a disclosable interest in Agenda item 10, Schools – Sixth Form Provision, as he was employed at Roding Valley High School and announced his intention to withdraw from the meeting for that item.

Cllr Murray also declared a non-pecuniary and non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6.2.2, Financial Assistance – General Applications, as he had known the Chairman of the Loughton Football Club for many years and would be volunteering for the Charity associated with the Loughton Food Bank.

Cllrs Mahoney and Wixley declared a non-pecuniary and non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6.2.2, Financial Assistance – General Applications, Loughton Football Club as they knew the applicant. Cllr Wixley also confirmed he had supported the Club for many years.

Cllr Pewsey declared a non-pecuniary and non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6.2.2, Financial Assistance – General Applications, Loughton Food Bank, as a member of St Mary's Church.

Cllr C C Pond declared a non-pecuniary and non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 10, Schools – Sixth Form Provision, as a member of Essex County Council.

The Committee AGREED to bring forward Agenda items 6.2.2 and 9 as members of the public were interested in these items.

RG83 Public Representations

Mr Steve Short addressed the Committee on his nomination for the role of Trustee with the Loughton Parochial Charities.

Mr David Baker addressed the Committee regarding the Financial Assistance Application for the Loughton Food Bank.

RG84 Reference from Council – Loughton Parochial Charities

The Committee AGREED to recommend to the Council that Mr Steve Short be appointed as the Town Council's representative and hence one of the three trustees for the Loughton Parochial Charities.

RG85 Financial Assistant – General Applications

The Committee RESOLVED to make the following contribution from the scheme by granting financial assistance to:

Organisation	Amount granted £	Power
Loughton Football Club	600	LG(Misc Prov)A 1976 s19
Loughton Foodbank*	2,000	LGA 1972 s137

*The applicant was to be asked to provide a written report after the first six months of operation of this new scheme.

RG86 Matters for Report**86.1 Strategy and Staff Group – Min no RG302.1**

The Committee NOTED the items discussed at the Strategy and Staff Group meeting held on 12 June 2013 and in particular that the review of the banking arrangements had been deferred.

86.2 Insurance – Annual Review – Min no RG73.5

The Town Clerk advised that there was a confidential matter that needed to be brought to members' attention. The Committee AGREED to defer this item until the confidential discussions at the end of the Agenda.

86.3 Dementia Friendly Communities

The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Mann had held a meeting for local businesses and that Epping Forest Branch of the Alzheimer's Society would be launching the Dementia Friendly Communities scheme by providing awareness training at a firm of local solicitors.

RG87 Financial Assistance**87.1 Debden Day 2013**

The Committee AGREED that, following the cancellation of the 2013 event, the grant awarded to the Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership for Debden Day 2013 would be carried forward to be used in connection with the Partnership's Christmas 2013 events.

87.2 Christmas Lights

The Committee RESOLVED to make the following contributions from the scheme by granting financial assistance to:

Organisation	Amount requested £	Power
Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership	4,000	LGA 1972 s145
Loughton High Road Town Centre Partnership	4,000	LGA 1972 s145

RG88 Finance**88.1 Financial Position**

The end of year financial report for 2012/13 was NOTED together with details of the transfers to and from the Committee's earmarked reserves.

Confirmation was received that the first instalment of the 2013/14 precept, £287,300, had been received from Epping Forest District Council on 29 April 2013 together with the full amount of the Local Council Support Grant, £69,525.77.

A note of the Council's current bank balances and most recent reconciliations were circulated at the meeting.

88.2 Internal Audit

The Committee NOTED the report from the internal auditor's end of year inspection for 2012/13 carried out on 14 May 2013 and that no significant issues had been identified. During his visit, the auditor had also completed and signed page 4 of the Annual Statement of Accounts.

The Committee recorded its thanks to the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk for their work in this regard.

88.3 Councillor Checks on Finances

The Committee AGREED to continue the practice of appointing a councillor to carry out checks on the Council's financial transactions and re-appointed Cllr Lawrence to undertake this work during 2013/14.

88.4 Accounts Paid

It was NOTED that payments totalling £290,863.71, as detailed on payments schedules nos 131 – 135, had been made since the report to the meeting on 3 April 2013. The schedule and accompanying invoices were available at the meeting for inspection.

RG89 Financial Regulations

The Committee AGREED to amend Regulation 5.2.2 to read as follows:

"Access to the Internet Banking facility for the NatWest bank accounts shall be restricted to the Town Clerk and the Deputy Town Clerk".

Cllr Murray withdrew from the meeting for the following item.

RG90 Schools – Sixth Form Provision

Members NOTED that, although this item came under the remit of the Recreation Committee, as the consultation closed on 21 June 2013 it had been brought to this Committee for expediency.

The Committee strongly supported the proposal by Roding Valley and Debden Park High Schools to create a consortium (with King Harold School, Waltham Abbey and

St John's School, Epping) and establish a joint sixth form with effect from September 2014.

Members expressed a preference that the name of the consortium should refer to Epping Forest District Sixth Form and not Epping District.

Cllr Murray rejoined the meeting.

RG91 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

RG92 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Committee RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the remainder of the meeting under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as items contained confidential information relating to personnel matters and insurance.

RG93 Staffing Review

The Committee AGREED the three recommendations of the Strategy and Staff Committee as follows:

- i. Town Council staff could be awarded up to two additional spinal column points for gaining certain recognised and/or industry standard qualifications useful to their existing role within the Council. Examples included the CiLCA, City and Guilds and certain NVQ qualifications. Awards would be made at the discretion of the Town Clerk in discussion with the Strategy and Staff Group and be subject to budget availability.
- ii. In recognition of Mr Jeff Carratt's qualifications gained during his work for the Council since joining in 2004, he was to be awarded two additional spinal column points with effect from 1 April 2013.
- iii. Any general re-evaluation of council-wide job remunerations would be considered in due course.

RG94 Insurance

It was NOTED that the insurance company required councillors over the age of 80 to complete a personal accident questionnaire. Personal accident cover could be withdrawn depending on personal circumstances. The Town Clerk was asked to report back to the Committee on the implications and options available in this regard.

Signed.....
Date: 4 September 2013

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 4 September 2013 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: S Pewsey (in the Chair)
 P Abraham
 I Lawrence
 E Stacey
 J Angold-Stephens
 J Jennings
 J Mahoney
 H Mann (from Min no RG100.1)

Also in attendance:

Councillors: K Angold-Stephens
 P Beales
 D Wixley

Officers: E K Walsh (Town Clerk)
 S Haynes (Deputy Town Clerk)

RG95 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Murray.

RG96 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee held on Wednesday 19 June 2013 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG97 Declarations of Interest

Cllr K Angold-Stephens declared a non-pecuniary and non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 11, Memorial Rose Garden (formerly the Brook Project), as he had led the development of this project over the last ten years.

RG98 Public Representations

None were received.

RG99 Matters for Report

99.1 Investments – Min no RG30.11

The Committee NOTED that the Council's 12 month business bond with Santander matured on 1 October 2013, and to take advantage of any investment offers available at that time, it was AGREED that the Responsible Financial Officer would liaise with the Council's bank signatories to progress matters as appropriate.

99.2 Christmas Card Competition 2013 – Min no RG51.2

The Committee NOTED the closing date for entries this year was Wednesday, 13 November 2013 with presentations to the winners to be made prior to the Council meeting on 4 December 2013. Councillors volunteered to deliver the entry forms and posters for this annual competition into local schools.

Cllr Mann joined the meeting during the next item.

RG100 Financial Assistance**100.1 Associates of Epping Forest Field Centre – Min no RG61.3**

The Committee RATIFIED the officer decision, taken in discussion with the Committee's Financial Assistance working group, for the organisation to use the grant funding to provide an alternative event in the late afternoon of 11 September 2013 at the Staples Road pond.

100.2 Epping Forest Youth for Christ – Min no RG345 (11/12)

It was NOTED that, following discussions with officers, Epping Forest Youth for Christ had generously donated the laptop bought with the aid of Town Council grant funding to the Loughton Branch of the Epping Forest District Citizens Advice Bureau to ensure it continued to benefit the local community.

100.3 Annual Civic Service and Citizenship Awards – Min no RG73.4

The date and venue of the 2014 Civic Service was CONFIRMED by the Town Mayor as Sunday, 2 March 2014 at the Loughton Methodist Church, commencing at 3pm.

The application form for the award scheme was reviewed and it was noted that nominations for the 2014 Citizenship Awards would be invited in the coming months, with the closing date of 31 January 2014.

RG101 Finance**101.1 Financial Position**

The Committee NOTED the current financial report and the Committee's earmarked reserves.

Confirmation was received that the first instalment of the 2013/14 precept, £287,300, had been received from Epping Forest District Council on 29 April 2013 together with the full amount of the Local Council Support Grant, £69,525.77.

A note of the Council's current bank balances and most recent reconciliations were circulated at the meeting.

101.2 Accounts Paid

Payments totalling £115,670.00 as detailed on payments schedules nos 136 – 140 have been made since the report to the meeting on 19 June 2013. The schedules and accompanying invoices were available at the meeting for inspection and NOTED by the Committee.

RG102 Insurance**102.1 All-Weather Surface Running Track – Roding Valley Recreation Ground**

Further to the installation of the all-weather surface running track by the Loughton Athletic Club on two of the Council's tennis courts, the Committee NOTED that this surface had been added to the list of assets covered by the Council's insurance policy. The all-weather track had been insured for £40,000 on an all risks basis, which included malicious damage to the surface. The cost for the remainder of the current financial year was £52.35.

102.2 Murray Hall Insurance Claim

As reported to the Recreation Committee at its meeting on 17 July 2013, two large glass window panes at the front of the hall were broken during the night of Sunday 14 July 2013. Following the submission of an insurance claim, the Committee NOTED that the sum of £1,045 had been received which represented the replacement cost less the excess payment of £250.

102.3 Low Claims Rebate

The Committee NOTED that the Council's insurers have confirmed a low claims rebate for the financial year 12/13 of £400.96.

102.4 Fidelity Insurance cover

The Committee reviewed the level of fidelity guarantee cover and AGREED that the Council's current level of £1.4m was adequate.

RG103 Staffing matters**103.1 Local Government Pension Scheme**

The Committee NOTED that a new LGPS scheme would come into effect from 1 April 2014; the key changes being:

- Career Average 1/49 (not Final Salary 1/60).
- Increased number of member contribution bands – 9 bands from 5.5% to 12.5%.
- A different definition of Pensionable Pay (e.g. to include non-contractual overtime).
- An employee's actual pension will be based on the Pensionable Pay figure provided annually by Employer.
- A number of new additional reporting requirements for Employers.
- Employers' payroll systems will have to be changed to cope with the new requirements.

Although this would require changes to the administration process, it would not have a significant financial impact for the Council.

103.2 2013 Pay Award

It was NOTED that the one per cent pay award agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) applied from 1 April 2013. The increase for Town Council staff had been backdated to this date and paid to all employees in August.

103.3 Zero Hours Contracts

The Committee considered the report and CONFIRMED that the current contractual arrangements for the one member of staff on a zero hours' contract, who provided cover during the football season and emergency cover at other times of the year, were currently the best way of delivering that service for the individual and the Council and the Town.

RG104 Emergency Response Plan

The Emergency Plan had been circulated to all members of the Council. Members were asked to provide the Town Clerk with suggestions for any additions and/or amendments to the document prior to its submission to Epping Forest District Council.

RG105 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

RG106 Memorial Rose Garden (formerly the Brook Project)

The Committee NOTED that the Parochial Church Council of St Michael's Church in Roding Road was keen to explore the possibility of the Town Council taking a lease on the memorial rose garden when the refurbishment is completed and assuming responsibility for the garden's future maintenance.

At its meeting on 31 July 2013, the Environment and Heritage Committee suggested that a lease period of a minimum of twenty-five years should be sought by the Town Council at a peppercorn rent.

The Committee CONFIRMED that this may be progressed and authorised the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor, or in their absence any other two councillors, to sign the lease when it was AGREED.

Signed.....

Date: 6 November 2013

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL**RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 6 November 2013 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: S Pewsey (in the Chair)
P Abraham J Angold-Stephens J Jennings
I Lawrence J Mahoney S Murray

Also in attendance:

Councillors: D Wixley

Officers: E K Walsh (Town Clerk)
S Haynes (Deputy Town Clerk)

1 member of the public

RG107 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mann.

RG108 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee held on Wednesday 4 September 2013 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Committee AGREED to consider Agenda item 3, Public Representations, and item 6, Financial Assistance, immediately after Agenda item 4, as a member of the public wished to address the Committee regarding their application.

RG109 Declarations of Interest

Cllr J Angold-Stephens declared a non-pecuniary but prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6. Financial Assistance in the application for the Epping Forest District Citizens Advice Bureau as the Council's representative. She also advised that she would withdraw from the meeting whilst this application was discussed as she had encouraged the organisation to apply for the grant funding.

Cllrs Jennings and Mahoney declared a non-pecuniary and non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6, Financial Assistance, as they had worked as volunteers with the Epping Forest Citizens Advice Bureau.

Cllr Murray declared a non-pecuniary and non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 7, Remembrance Service, as he was the president of the Loughton Branch of the Royal British Legion.

Cllr J Angold-Stephens left the meeting.

RG110 Public Representations

A member of the public addressed the Committee regarding the Financial Assistance Application for the Epping Forest Citizens Advice Bureau.

RG111 Financial Assistance

The Committee RESOLVED to make the following contributions from the scheme by granting financial assistance to:

Organisation	Amount requested £	Power
Epping Forest Citizens Advice Bureau	750	LGA 1972 s144
Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership	700	LGA 1972 s145

Cllr J Angold-Stephens re-joined the meeting for the discussion on the application from the Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership.

RG112 Matters for Report**112.1 Investments – Min no RG99.1**

The Committee NOTED that, as agreed at the previous meeting and following discussions with the Council's bank signatories, the £500,000 from the existing twelve-month Business Bond had been reinvested in a similar Bond with Santander at 1.4 per cent interest. The total interest payable on maturity on 1 October 2014 would be £7,007.62 gross.

112.2 Christmas Office Opening Hours

The Committee NOTED that, in line with Council policy, the 2013 Christmas opening hours for the Council Offices would be as follows:

Christmas Eve, 24 December	9am – 12 noon
Christmas Day, 25 December	Closed
Boxing Day, 26 December	Closed
Friday 27 December	Closed
Monday 30 December	9am – 5pm
Tuesday 31 December	9am – 4pm
New Year's Day, 1 January	Closed

112.3 Annual Town Meeting

The Committee noted that the next Annual Town Meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 19 March 2014 commencing at 8pm in the Murray Hall.

The Committee AGREED to continue with the format of the Annual Town Meeting by inviting local organisations and voluntary groups, particularly those in receipt of Financial Assistance from the Council, to mount displays at the event to attract more public interest. The organisations that had been successful in their grant applications for 2014/15 would also be presented with a certificate by the Town Mayor.

It was also AGREED to invite a guest speaker(s) from Debden Park High School and/or Roding Valley High School to give a short presentation on the establishment of a consortium to provide sixth form education in the District. In the event this was not possible, as reserve, a speaker from the City of London would be invited to talk about Epping Forest.

The meeting would conclude with refreshments and an opportunity for members of the public to speak informally with their councillors.

112.4 Code of Conduct

The Committee NOTED the draft minutes of the annual meeting of the Joint Standards Committee.

RG113 Finance**113.1 Accounts and Audit 2012/13**

The receipt of the External Audit Certificate for 2012/13 confirming that “*on the basis of the review of the Annual Return and supporting documents carried out by PKF Littlejohn LLP, in their opinion the information submitted by the Town Council was 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*” was NOTED.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the Conclusion of the Audit and the Right to Inspect the Annual Return had been advertised on the Council’s notice boards for a period of at least fourteen days.

113.2 Internal Audit

The written report of the Council’s internal auditor, Auditing Solutions, for the financial year 2013/14 from their visit to the offices on 10 October 2013 was NOTED and that no significant issues had arisen.

The Committee NOTED that the salary adjustment to the London Inner Fringe weighting, increased from £798 to £806 from 1st April 2013, would be applied with the November 2013 salaries.

113.3 Councillor Checks on Finances

The Committee thanked Cllr Lawrence for undertaking a routine inspection of the Council’s financial records on 5 September 2013. Cllr Lawrence confirmed that there were no issues to report.

113.4 Financial Position

The Committee’s financial position as at 6 November was NOTED. Details of the Council’s current bank balances together with a copy of the most recent bank reconciliations were circulated at the meeting.

Confirmation was received that the second and final instalment of the 2013/14 precept, £287,300, had been paid by Epping Forest District Council on 27 September 2013.

113.5 Accounts Paid

Payments totalling £168,851.80 as detailed on payments schedules nos 141 – 144 had been made since the report to the meeting on 4 September 2013. The schedules and accompanying invoices were made available at the meeting for inspection.

RG114 Remembrance Service

The Committee AGREED to make a donation of £100.00 to the Royal British Legion in support of the Poppy Appeal and towards the cost of the wreath to be laid by the Town Mayor at the Remembrance Service in November 2013. Payment was approved under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

RG115 Calendar of Meetings

It was NOTED that the next Annual Council Meeting was currently arranged for Wednesday 14 May 2014 with the European and District Council Elections

scheduled for Thursday 22 May 2014.

As this meant that the meeting fell in the pre-election purdah period and to avoid such problems in the future, the Committee AGREED the following new policy:

Elections and moving the Annual Council meeting

In years where national and/or principal council elections are taking place up to a month later than the Annual Council Meeting, that meeting is to be held over until the Wednesday following polling day.

The Annual Council Meeting was now to be held on 28 May 2013.

RG116 Parish Basic Allowance

The Committee reviewed the level of Parish Basic Allowance and RECOMMENDED to the Council there should be no increase to the current level of £108 per annum for 2014/15.

RG117 Subscriptions Review

The Committee reviewed the current list of organisations of which it is a member and AGREED to continue to support those listed in the agenda without amendment.

RG118 Committee Priorities

118.1 As part of its overall plan and to complement the budget-making process, the Committee reviewed its priority list for 2014/15 and AGREED on the following:

Priority	Main Function	Greater Detail/Current Position
Current activities		
High	Staffing – employment and Health and Safety policies and procedures; Fire Risk Assessments; Employee Handbook	H&S policy in place, fire and risk assessments undertaken, Staff Handbook completed – annual reviews required
High	Seeking external funding sources	Targeted action
High	Council accommodation	Review and research for opportunities to improve office location for public access

Medium	Investigate bank alternatives	Deposit account improved but no further action on current account
Low	Honours Board	2009/10 project
Low	Council structure	Continuing reviews
Low	Noticeboards	Maintenance and installation
On-going activities		
High	Running the Committee	
High	Admin for whole council	
High	Council and committee agendas and minutes	
High	All council finances, end of year accounts, audit etc.	

High	Management of Buckingham Crt	
High	Personnel matters, staff management	
High	IT and office equipment	
High	Publicity and website	Website to be upgraded 2013/14
High	Civic matters	Civic Service reinstated including Citizenship Awards
High	Annual Report	Preparation and printing
High	Newsletter	Editorial, printing and distribution
High	Annual Town Meeting	Arrangements and admin
High	Christmas card competition	Arrangements and admin
High	Emergency Plan	Amendments and circulation (carried out through digest)
High	Grants	Admin and finance
High	New legislative requirements	
High	Responding to consultations	Variable
High	Policy reviews	TBC
High	Responding to consultations	Variable
High	Contract reviews	On-going
High	Training Strategy	Annual review
High	Any other matters within the committee's terms of reference	
Low	Community Forum	Arrangements and admin

118.2 The Committee AGREED 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 Noticeboards

RG119 Estimates for 2014/15

119.1 The Committee AGREED the fees and charges would increase by 3.2% from 1 April 2014 for the following:

- 1) Hire of Council Chamber at Buckingham Court

It was further AGREED to keep the current rate of 60p per sheet of A4 for items on the Publication Scheme.

119.2 Rolling Programme

The Committee AGREED to the Rolling Programme as presented in the Agenda.

119.3 The estimates for 2014/15 as presented in the Agenda were AGREED such that the net figures were as follows:

	£
Total budget expenditure (including committee recharge)**	190,500
Income	<u>330</u>
Net expenditure	190,170
Less income from earmarked reserves*	<u>-6,500</u>
Total net expenditure	£183,670

*Details of transfers from earmarked reserves:

<i>Noticeboards</i>	1,000
<i>Office equipment</i>	3,000
<i>Internal redecoration</i>	<u>2,500</u>
	6,500

** **NB:** The total budget expenditure currently included a service recharge of -£245,000 (the 2013/14 figure). The 2014/15 figure would be confirmed by this Committee at its next meeting and a revised budget provided if appropriate.

RG120 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

Signed.....
Date: 15 January 2014

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 15 January 2014 at 7.00pm at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: S Pewsey (in the Chair)
P Abraham J Angold-Stephens J Jennings
I Lawrence J Mahoney S Murray (from Min no RG127)
C C Pond (as substitute for H Mann)

Also in attendance:

Councillors: K Angold-Stephens
D Wixley

Officers: E K Walsh (Town Clerk)
S Haynes (Deputy Town Clerk)

RG121 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mann. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr C C Pond had been nominated as his substitute for this meeting. Apologies for lateness had also been received from Cllr Murray.

RG122 Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were received.

RG123 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee held on Wednesday 6 November 2013 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG124 Public Representations

None were received.

RG125 Matters for Report

125.1 Financial Assistance

The Committee confirmed Cllr Murray as the third member of the working group to join the Chairman and Vice Chairman of this Committee in considering the financial assistance applications for 2014/15.

RG126 Council-wide Priorities

The Committee reviewed the lists of priorities from the spending committees and AGREED that:

1. the heritage street lights item be deleted from the Environment and Heritage Committee's list of current activities, as the grant application had been unsuccessful.
2. the registration of Village Greens be moved to the ongoing activities list for the Environment and Heritage Committee as four applications were now with Essex County Council.

3. the Council-wide high priority list should be as shown below:

Ranking	Committee	Activity
1	<i>Environment & Heritage</i>	<i>Registration of Village Greens</i>
2	<i>Resources & General Services</i>	<i>Skateboard facility</i>
3	<i>Recreation</i>	<i>Playgrounds</i>
4	<i>Environment & Heritage</i>	<i>War Memorial, Kings Green</i>
5	<i>Resources & General Services</i>	<i>Staffing – employment and Health & Safety policies and procedures; Fire Risk Assessments; employee handbook</i>

Cllr Murray joined the meeting during the next item.

RG127 Estimates for 2014/15

The Committee considered the report and, in particular, NOTED:

- a. the increase in the tax base from the 2013/14 figure of 11,682.8 to 11,828.2.
- b. that the Local Council Tax Support Grant of £58,358 was still a provisional figure, which would be confirmed by Epping Forest District Council on 20 January 2014.

The removal of £15,000 for heritage street lighting from the Environment and Heritage Committee's budget following the unsuccessful grant application was confirmed as members did not wish to allow a similar sum for an alternative renovation project at this time.

The Committee AGREED that:

1. at the end of the current financial year, a virement of £11,000 was to be made from the Recreation Committee's earmarked reserve for drainage improvement works at Willingale Road Playing Fields to general reserves. This would increase the forecasted level of general reserves at 31 March 2014 to £461,890.
2. £93,950 could then be taken from General Reserves to reduce the net requirement whilst leaving the General Reserves at 70.04% of the net running costs to meet the Reserves Policy.
3. the budget for 2014/15 would be as follows:

Committee	Income £	Expenditure including recharges £
Resources and General Services	330	194,100
Environment and Heritage	22,361	167,875
Recreation	104,700	574,095
Planning and Licensing	0	47,500
	127,391	983,570
Interest	20,000	
Use from earmarked reserves		
Resources & General Services	6,500	
Environment & Heritage	26,670	
Recreation	54,000	
Planning and Licensing	15,000	
	102,170	
Local Council Support Grant	58,358	
Use from general reserves	93,950	
Total income	401,869	
Council Precept Rounding		581,701
		581,700

The Committee RECOMMENDED to Council that the precept for 2014/15 be set at £581,700.

It was NOTED that this would result in no change to the 2013/14 Band D charge of £49.18, but a small increase on the total precept of 1.24% (up from £574,600).

The Committee thanked Cllr Wixley and all the Committee Chairmen for their careful scrutiny of the budgets.

RG128 Meetings Schedule

The Committee AGREED the schedule of meetings for 2014/15 as follows:

2014 May	28	Wednesday	Annual Council
June	2	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	16	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	18	Wednesday	Recreation
	30	Monday	Planning and Licensing
July	2	Wednesday	Environment and Heritage
	14	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	16	Wednesday	Resources and General Services
	28	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	30	Wednesday	Council
August	18	Monday	Planning and Licensing
September	8	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	10	Wednesday	Recreation

	22	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	24	Wednesday	Environment and Heritage
October	6	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	8	Wednesday	Resources and General Services
	20	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	22	Wednesday	Council
November	3	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	5	Wednesday	Recreation
	17	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	19	Wednesday	Environment and Heritage
December	1	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	3	Wednesday	Resources and General Services
	15	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	17	Wednesday	Council
2015			
January	5	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	14	Wednesday) Resources and General Services (Budgets) (7pm)) Recreation
	19	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	28	Wednesday) Council (7pm)) Environment and Heritage
February	2	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	11	Wednesday	Resources and General Services
	16	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	25	Wednesday	Council
March	2	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	11	Wednesday	Recreation
	16	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	18	Wednesday	Annual Town Meeting, The Murray Hall, Borders Lane at 8pm
	25	Wednesday	Environment and Heritage
	30	Monday	Planning and Licensing
April	8	Wednesday	Resources and General Services
	13	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	22	Wednesday	Council (approval of accounts)
	27	Monday	Planning and Licensing
May	11	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	13	Wednesday	Annual Council

All meetings would be held at 1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton, at 7.45pm unless otherwise shown.

Signed.....
Date: 12 February 2014

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 12 February 2014 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: S Pewsey (in the Chair)
 P Abraham
 I Lawrence (from Min no RG132)
 S Murray
 J Angold-Stephens
 J Mahoney
 J Jennings
 H Mann

Also in attendance:

Councillors: K Angold-Stephens
 D Wixley

Officers: E K Walsh (Town Clerk)
 S Haynes (Deputy Town Clerk)

5 members of the public

RG129 Apologies for absence

No apologies for absence were received.

RG130 Declarations of Interest

With regard to Agenda item 6, Financial Assistance, Councillors declared the following interests:

Cllr Abraham declared a non-pecuniary interest in the application for the Loughton Festival.

Cllr K Angold-Stephens declared a non-pecuniary interest in the applications for the Broadway Town Centre Partnership and for the Loughton Memorial Garden Project.

Cllr J Angold-Stephens declared a non-pecuniary interest in the applications for the Epping Forest District Citizens Advice Bureau as the Council's representative and for the Alzheimer's Society Epping Forest Office, Debden Horticultural & Allotment Society, Loughton Athletic Club, Loughton Baptist Church, Loughton Festival, Loughton Memorial Garden, Love Loughton, Music@LMC, New Vistas, Restore Community Centre, Restore Community Church Youth Activities and Restore Community Church Noah's Ark Toddler Group.

Cllr Mahoney declared a non-pecuniary interest in the applications for the Cheeky Cherubs, 7th Epping Beavers, 7th Epping Cubs, 7th Epping Scouts, 41st Globetrotters Explorer Scout Unit, Loughton Athletic Club, Loughton Festival, 30th Loughton Scout Group, New Vistas, Reindeer Explorer Scout Unit and the Epping Forest District Citizens Advice Bureau.

Cllr Mann declared a non-pecuniary interest in the application for the Broadway Town Centre Partnership.

Cllr Murray declared a pecuniary interest in the applications for the 7th Epping Beavers, 7th Epping Cubs, 7th Epping Scouts, 41st Globetrotters Explorer Scout Unit,

Loughton Memorial Garden, 30th Loughton Scout Group, Music@LMC, New Vistas and Reindeer Explorer Scout Unit, and a non-pecuniary interest in the applications for the Loughton Athletic Club, Restore Community Centre, Restore Community Church Youth Activities and Restore Community Church Noah's Ark Toddler Group.

Cllr Pewsey declared a pecuniary interest in the application for the Loughton Festival.

Cllr Wixley declared a non-pecuniary interest in the applications for the Loughton Youth Project and the Epping Forest District Citizens Advice Bureau.

RG131 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee held on Wednesday 15 January 2014 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Committee AGREED to consider Agenda item 4, Public Representations, immediately before Agenda item 6, Financial Assistance, as two members of the public wished to address the Committee regarding their applications.

Cllr Lawrence joined the meeting.

RG132 Matters for Report

132.1 Internal Audit – Min no RG113.2

The second internal audit inspection for 2013/14 had been carried out on Monday 3 February 2014. The report had been circulated to all members of the Council and the Committee NOTED that no issues had been raised in the report.

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

132.2 The Local Audit and Accountability Act

The Committee NOTED that the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 had received Royal Assent on 30 January 2014 and that, once the Secretary of State had issued guidance on matters affecting local councils, a further report would be made to this Committee.

132.3 Cheque signatories

It was NOTED that the Legislative Reform Order (LRO) repealing Section 150(5) of the Local Government Act 1972, the requirement for all parish council payments to be made by cheque signed by two members of the council, would be effective from 1 April 2014. Officers would consider options to enable the Council to move to making electronic payments whilst ensuring that the necessary safeguards were in place.

132.4 Local Government Pension Scheme

The Committee NOTED the following details received from the Essex Pension Fund resulting from the 2013 Actuarial Valuation:

Deficit payments

2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
7,958	8,320	8,697

Employers' Contributions

2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
15.1%	15.9%	16.7%

The Town Clerk confirmed that the amended rates for 2014/15 were within the Committee's budget calculations.

RG133 Public Representations

The meeting was adjourned to hear representations from two members of the public regarding Agenda item 6, Financial Assistance Applications, for the Epping Forest District Citizens Advice Bureau and the Loughton Youth Project.

RG134 Financial Assistance**134.1 Citizens Advice Bureau**

The Committee RESOLVED to grant £6,000 to the Epping Forest Citizens Advice Bureau under the Local Government Act 1972 s142.

134.2 General Applications 2014/15

The Committee RESOLVED to make the following contributions from the scheme by granting financial assistance to:

Organisation	Amount granted £	Power
Alzheimer's Society EF Office	**600.00	LGA 1972 s145
Associates of Epping Forest Field Centre	200.00	LGA 1972 s145
Debden Horticultural & Allotment Society	400.00	LG(Misc Prov)A 1976 s19
Epping Forest Sportability Club	700.00	LG(Misc Prov)A 1976 s19
7th Epping Beavers	400.00	LG(Misc Prov)A 1976 s19
7th Epping Cubs	400.00	LG(Misc Prov)A 1976 s19
7th Epping Scouts	400.00	LG(Misc Prov)A 1976 s19
41st Globetrotters Explorer Scout Unit	450.00	LG(Misc Prov)A 1976 s19
Loughton Athletic Club	800.00	LG(Misc Prov)A 1976 s19
Loughton Baptist Church	500.00	LG(Misc Prov)A 1976 s19
Loughton Broadway TCP	2,000.00	LGA 1972 s145 & s137
Loughton Festival	1,000.00	LGA 1972 s145
Loughton Memorial Garden	200.00	LGA 1972 s145
30th Loughton Scout Group	600.00	LGA 1972 s133
Loughton Youth Project	5,000.00	LGA 1972 s145
Love Loughton	400.00	LGA 1972 s145
Music@LMC	300.00	LGA 1972 s145
New Vistas	400.00	LGA 1972 s145
Reindeer Explorer Scout Unit	450.00	LG(Misc Prov)A 1976 s19
Restore Community Centre	2,500.00	LGA 1972 s133
Restore CC Loughton Youth Activities	800.00	LGA 1972 s145

Restore CC Noah's Ark Toddler Group	800.00	LGA 1972 s145
Samaritans of Redbridge	300.00	LGA 1972 s137
St Clare Hospice	500.00	LGA 1972 s137
Vitalise	200.00	LGA 1972 s145
West Essex Alcohol & Drugs Service	2,500.00	LGA 1972 s137
	22,800.00	

**Subject to the receipt of a statement detailing the end of year expenditure against the anticipated budget.

The Cheeky Cherubs Stay & Play group was unsuccessful in its application this year.

RG135 Finance

135.1 Financial Position

The Committee's financial position as at 12 February 2014 was NOTED. Details of the Council's current bank balances together with a copy of the most recent bank reconciliations were circulated at the meeting.

135.2 Accounts Paid

It was NOTED that payments totalling £177,274.91 as detailed on payments schedule no 145 - 150 had been made since the report to the meeting on 6 November 2013. The schedule and accompanying invoices were available at the meeting for inspection.

RG136 Financial Regulations – Annual Review

136.1 The recommendations to reflect the changes in legislation were CONFIRMED as follows:

- A **Section 1.5**, "*In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations shall mean the Regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and then in force.*"

to be replaced with

"All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the RFO as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 and 2006, and any subsequent amendments thereto."

- B **Section 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.*"

to be replaced with

"The RFO shall make arrangements for the opportunity for inspection of the accounts, books, and vouchers required by Audit Commission Act 1998 section 15 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 and 2006, and any subsequent amendments thereto."

It was NOTED that a future further review of these regulations would take place to allow the Council to consider alternative payment options following the repeal of Section 150(5) of the Local Government Act 1972.

136.2 The limits were CONFIRMED as follows:

Topic	Amount	Last reviewed	Last changed
Limit of imprest on no 2 a/c	35,000	Feb 2014	April 2010
Limit of officers signing cheques on no 2 a/c	150	Feb 2014	April 2010
Limit of imprest on Security Deposits a/c	3,000	Feb 2014	April 2006
Limit of cheques on Security Deposits a/c	none	Feb 2014	April 2006
Petty cash imprest	150	Feb 2014	
Urgent repair work etc without budgetary provision (FR 3.4)	5,000	Feb 2014	April 2008
Additional audit work of external auditor (FR 12.1)	750	Feb 2014	May 2004
Tenders to be obtained (FR 12.3, 12.6 & 12.8)	over 50,000	Feb 2014	May 2004
3 quotes to be obtained (FR 12.8)	10,000 to 50,000	Feb 2014	May 2004
3 estimates to be obtained (FR 12.8)	2,000 to 10,000	Feb 2014	May 2004
Bad debts may be written off by RFO	250	Feb 2014	Feb 2013
Credit card:			
No 1 Town Clerk	1,000	Feb 2014	Nov 2004
No 2 Services Manager	500	Feb 2014	Feb 2005

RG137 Insurance – Annual Review

The Committee reviewed the insurance cover as laid out in the agenda report and CONFIRMED its adequacy.

RG138 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

Signed.....

Date: 9 April 2014

THESE MINUTES NOT YET CONFIRMED

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 9 April 2014 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: S Pewsey (in the Chair)
 P Abraham
 H Mann
 T Downing (as substitute for I Lawrence)

J Angold-Stephens
 J Mahoney

J Jennings
 S Murray

Also in attendance:

Councillors: D Wixley

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

RG139 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Lawrence. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Downing had been nominated as her substitute for this meeting.

The Committee welcomed Pippa Bryce, the recently appointed Administrative Assistant, to the meeting.

RG140 Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were received.

RG141 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee held on Wednesday 12 February 2014 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG142 Public Representations

None were received.

RG143 Matters for Report

143.1 Annual Civic Service and Citizenship Awards – Min no RG100.3

The Committee NOTED the report of this year's Civic Service, held at the Loughton Methodist Church at which Janet McNeill had been presented with the Citizenship of the Year award by Lord Petre, Lord Lieutenant of Essex, for her forty years of service as a local Brownie Leader.

The collection at this Service had raised £407 for the Chigwell Riding Trust. The Town Clerk reported that £520 was also raised for the Chigwell Riding Trust at the Town Mayor's Annual Fun Run held on Sunday 6 April.

143.2 Annual Town Meeting – Min no RG112.3

Copies of the draft minutes of the 2014 Annual Town Meeting had been circulated to members. These would be approved at the next Annual Town Meeting to be held on 18 March 2015.

143.3 Councillor Checks on Finances – Min no RG113.3

The Committee NOTED that Cllr Lawrence had undertaken a routine inspection of the Council's financial records on 31 March 2014. Included in her checks were the chip and pin records, the debt register and a reconciliation of the petty cash.

The Committee recorded its thanks to Cllr Lawrence for her work in this regard.

143.4 Internal Audit – Min no RG132.1

The Committee NOTED that the third and final inspection by the internal auditor for 2013/14 would be carried out on 23 April 2014. Once received, a copy of his report would be circulated to all members of the Council and any issues detailed on the next agenda of this Committee.

143.5 Insurance – Annual Review – Min no RG137

Further to the report presented to the Committee's meeting on 12 February 2014, it was NOTED that the Council had renewed its policy with its existing insurers, Aviva Insurance Limited through WPS Insurance Brokers at a total premium for 2014/15 of £8,774.14 net of VAT. The vehicle insurance premium for the van had also been confirmed at £376.80, a slight decrease on that for 2013/14. The Committee also NOTED the confirmed levels of cover.

RG144 Asset Register – Annual review

The Register of Assets and Properties was considered and AGREED as presented in the Agenda. The Committee recorded its thanks to the Council officers for preparing the report.

RG145 Risk Assessment and Management

The Committee carried out the annual review of its Risk Assessment and Management document. No amendments to the document agreed at the meeting on 3 April 2013 were considered necessary at this time.

RG146 Internal Audit

The Committee undertook the annual reviews as follows:

146.1 Effectiveness of the System of Internal Audit; and

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 Committee AGREED that the system of internal audit, which had been in place during 2013-14, was satisfactory.

146.2 Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Control

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

The Committee 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 had been in place at the Council for the year ended 31 March 2014.

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 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.

146.3 Appointment of Internal Auditor for 2014/15

The Committee confirmed the appointment of Auditing Solutions as the Council's internal auditors for 2014/15, noting that there would be two visits during the financial year with a final end of year visit to inspect the annual accounts.

RG147 Finance**147.1 Financial Position**

The Committee's financial position as at 31 March 2014 was NOTED. The Town Clerk clarified that this was not the end of year position as the adjustment for the creditors and debtors had not been included and transfers to and from earmarked reserves not yet actioned.

Details of the Council's current bank balances together with a copy of the most recent bank reconciliations were circulated at the meeting.

147.2 Accounts Paid

Payments totalling £260,821.71 as detailed on payments schedules nos 151 – 155 had been made since the report to the meeting on 12 February 2014. The schedules and accompanying invoices were available at the meeting for inspection.

RG148 Report of the Complaints Panel

The report of the Complaints Panel from its meeting on 24 February 2014 was NOTED.

The Committee AGREED to amend the Complaints Policy and Procedure to include the following:

Seven clear working days before the Complaints Panel meeting, the complainant will provide the Town Council with copies of all documentation, or other evidence (such as photographs) that they intend to introduce to the Complaints Panel meeting. The Town Council will provide the same to the complainant.

RG149 Staffing**149.1 Vacancies**

The Committee NOTED that staff had recently been appointed to fill the existing vacancies.

149.2 Salary grades

The Committee NOTED that, following discussions with the Strategy and Staff Group, the salary range for the post of Cemetery Attendant/General Assistant, previously 10 – 12, had been brought in line with that of the Park and Amenities Warden, SCP 11 – 13. This reflected the change of role in that the Cemetery Attendant was now an active member of the Services Team undertaking duties at other Council-owned sites.

RG150 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

RG151 Reference from Environment and Heritage Committee – Min no EH103.2**151.1 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

The Committee RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the next item under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as it contained confidential information relating to land acquisition.

151.2 Land Acquisition

The Committee CONFIRMED the recommendation of the Environment and Heritage Committee to make a formal offer for the piece of land recently declared surplus to requirements by Essex County Council to allow the reinstatement of a public bench.

Signed.....

Date: 16 July 2014