

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 26 June 2024 at 7.30pm at Loughton Town Council, Council Chamber, 1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ.

Present:

Councillors: M Owen (in the Chair)
R Brookes I Allgood
S Fontenelle N MacKinnon
S Murray M Stubbings

Also present: Cllr D Wixley

Officers: M Squire (Town Clerk)
K Lumb (Deputy Town Clerk /
Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

There were no members of the public present.

The Chairman advised the meeting would be recorded.

RG1 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence received.

RG2 Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were received.

RG3 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 April 2024 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

RG4 Public Representations

There were no public representations.

RG5 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report

The Town Clerk reported:

- There will be a Staff and Strategy meeting on the 28.6.24. predominantly to discuss the Deputy Town Clerk / RFO's retirement in October 2024 and the potential taking over the closed Church Yard at St John's.
- The Town Clerk had attended that day, the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) Essex Branch, annual general meeting / training day, where the introduction of Martyn's Law (following the Manchester bombings), and is currently pending UK wide legislation, was discussed. The law will require plans to be in place for potential terrorist threats, in events being attended by more than 1,000 people. Both Jessel Green and Loughton day would be applicable, and further information will be brought back to a Town Council meeting in due course.

The Chairman had nothing to report.

- RG6 Training and Conferences**
Members NOTED the update on training.
- RG7 Staff Salaries 2024/25**
Following discussion, the Committee NOTED the update.
- RG8 80th Anniversary of D-Day Landings Commemoration**
Members NOTED the update and fitting tribute, which was well attended by residents.
- RG9 Flag Flying**
The Committee NOTED the update, and requested that the St George's flag, is raised in support, should England be successful in getting to the final UEFA European Football Championship 24 football tournament.
- RG10 Christmas Card 2024**
The Committee AGREED to continue with last year's format of producing a festive photo card to be circulated digitally, and with a donation being made to charity.
- RG11 Civic Service 2025**
The Committee AGREED that the Town Mayor may hold a Civic Service, should she so wish, with details (if applicable) to be determined in due course.
- RG12 Councillor / Staff Long Service Awards**
Following discussion, Members AGREED that certificates and (or) badges for Councillors who had completed a minimum of 10 years, then 15 and 20 years etc., should be implemented. The Town Clerk agreed to give this some thought and would take to the imminent Strategy & Staff Group (SSG) meeting.
- The Committee also AGREED that staff should also be recognised for similar long time service. The Town Clerk to recommend to the SSG meeting that extra day's holiday for significant milestones (e.g. 10, 15, 20 years' service).
- RG13 Finance**
- 13.1 Current Financial Position**
The Committee's financial position as at 30 April 2024 along with available funds in earmarked reserves as at 30 April 2024 were NOTED.
- 13.2 Accounts Paid**
The Committee NOTED that payments totalling £340,807.83 as detailed on payment schedules nos. 389-392 have been made since the report to the meeting on 10 April 2024, and that schedules and accompanying invoices are available for inspection at the Council offices.
- A member highlighted that there was difficulty in seeing the detail supplied in the agenda on this item. The Town Clerk agreed that A3 copies would be made available in future meetings.
- Following discussion, Members requested that the Town Council request a detailed breakdown of the election costs from Epping Forest District Council (EFDC), following the recent election and that these are shared via email with the Committee once the invoice is received.
- Members also discussed and would like to introduce an informal gathering at the end of this Town Council cycle (four years), to follow the

last Town Council meeting, and prior to Town Council elections. Officers would be asked to set up an area, for the Town Mayor / Councillors to then organise and contribute to..

RG14 Precept

Members NOTED the first instalment of the 2024/25 Precept £496,954.50, was received into the Town Council's Santander bank account on 26 April 2024.

RG15 Internal Financial Check

The Committee AGREED to continue with the appointment of a Town Councillor to undertake internal financial checks during the year, and that Cllr MacKinnon would undertake this exercise for 2024/25.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Murray for his support in managing this responsibility during 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24.

RG16 Internal Audit

The Committee NOTED the clear Internal Audit Report received from the Internal Auditors, Healis & Lodge dated 13 May 2024, and thanked the officers concerned.

RG17 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24

The Committee NOTED that the AGAR has been submitted to the External Auditors, PKF Littlejohn LLP, and that the completed confirmation of dates for the provision of public rights form has been displayed on Town Council noticeboards and posted on the Town Council website.

RG18 Financial Regulations

The Committee NOTED the update on the new National Association of Local Council's (NALC) model Financial Regulations and asked officers to ensure any changes are marked accordingly to assist Members, when they are asked to review.

RG19 Credit Cards

Following discussion, and noting the difficulties being experienced by officers with bank changes, the Committee AGREED the following increases in the Town Council's NatWest credit card limits:

- No 1. Town Clerk – increasing to £3,500.00
- No 2. Services Manager – increasing to £3,000.00

RG20 Budget - virements

Following discussion and recommendation from the Recreation Committee (minute RC26), Members AGREED to recommend the following to Full Council:

- Authorise the Town Clerk to be able to make any necessary virements between budgets with an individual limit being set at £6,000.00. Any virements made to be in consultation with the committee Chairman and reported thereafter to the relevant committee meeting and also the Resources and General Services Committee.

The Committee also NOTED that if agreed by Full Council, the new agreed limits will be included in the latest Financial Regulations.

RG21 Town Council's Banking Arrangements / Signatories

Members discussed and AGREED the recommendation to Town Council the transfer of the Town Council's NATWEST current account number 1, to Unity Trust Bank, along with the following recommendations regarding signatories:

- The removal of former Town Councillors Caroline Pond and Graham Wiskin from signatories on all bank accounts.
- The recommendation of the following signatories / authorisations:
 - All existing Councillor signatories to remain and be added for signatory / authorisation when the new Unity Bank account is opened.
 - Cllr Owen as signatory / authorisation on new Unity Bank account to be opened
 - Cllrs Allgood and Fontenelle as signatory / authorisation on new Unity Bank account and signatory on all other Town Council bank accounts.
- Other Councillors may also be further nominated at next Town Council meeting.

RG22 Policies Review

22.1 Code of Conduct

The Committee reviewed and AGREED the Code of Conduct Policy, with the next review June 2027.

22.2 Code of Conduct Annexe 3 Complaints Procedure

The Committee reviewed and AGREED the Code of Conduct Annexe 3 Complaints Procedure, with the next review June 2027.

22.3 Health and Safety

The Committee reviewed and AGREED the Health and Safety Policy, with the next review June 2027.

22.4 Training Strategy

The Committee reviewed and AGREED the Training Strategy Policy, with the next review June 2027.

RG23 IT Price Increase

Following discussion, the Committee AGREED the price increase and to continue with our current IT provider.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 8.25pm.

Signed:
Date: 2 October 2024

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 2 October 2024 at 7.30pm at Loughton Town Council, Council Chamber, 1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ.

Present:

Councillors:

M Owen (in the Chair)
R Brookes
S Fontenelle
S Murray

I Allgood
N MacKinnon
M Stubbings

Also present: Cllr D Wixley

Officers:

M Squire (Town Clerk)
K Pendlebury (RFO) pending

There were no members of the public present.

The Chairman advised the meeting would be recorded.

RG24 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence received.

RG25 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 26 as he knows the former C.E.O. and Cllr Murray, Cllr Owen, Brookes and Allgood declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 27 as they are District Councillors.

RG26 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2024 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

RG27 Public Representations

There were no public representations.

RG28 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report

The Town Clerk reported:

- The Town Clerk welcomed Kate Pendlebury and noted that Kim Lumb retires on 8 October 2024
- The Town Clerk is working to adapt the Town Council's 'Financial Regulations' to the new National Association of Local Councils (NALC's) recommended template and confirmed that a marked up copy would be circulated for review for the next meeting.
- The Terrorism Bill has been introduced and had its first reading in Parliament

The Chairman had nothing to report.

RG29 Training and Conferences
 Cllr Murray asked if newly elected Councillors had attended training. The Clerk confirmed that relevant training courses were offered to all members.

Members NOTED the update on training.

RG30 Staffing
 Members NOTED the update on staffing and wished Kim well in her retirement.

RG31 Staff Salaries 2024/25
 The Committee NOTED the update.

RG32 Christmas Closedown Arrangements 2024
 The Committee agreed the reduction of 15 minutes on December 31, 2024, to close at 12.30pm. The Christmas period closure will therefore be:

Tuesday 24 December	Closed 12 noon
Wednesday 25 December	Closed
Thursday 26 December	Closed
Friday 27 December	10am – 3pm
Monday 30 December	10am – 3pm
Tuesday 31 December	10am – 12.30pm
Wednesday 1 January	Closed

RG33 Citizens Awards
 The Committee CONFIRMED its commitment to the annual Citizen Awards.

RG34 Town Mayor initiatives
 The Committee NOTED the Town Mayors decision not to hold a Civic Service in 2025 and the two new initiatives for early next year. I.e.

- Fine tuning the publicity for the Citizenship Awards, to attract and involve the younger generation.
- Hosting a mock Town Council meeting, involving members of local primary school councils. The children to set up their own agenda and to be assisted during the daytime meeting.

RG35 Financial Assistance
 The Committee AGREED that the Financial Assistance scheme should continue in 2025/26

Members NOTED receipt of emails from successful 24/25 grant recipients.

RG36 Annual Town Meeting
 The Committee NOTED the 2025 Annual Town meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 19 March 2025, commencing at 8pm in the Murray Hall, and AGREED they would like to keep the same format as previous years without a key speaker.

The Committee also AGREED to invite the Essex Fire, Police and Crime Commissioner to talk at the Council meeting in February 2025.

RG37 Finance

13.1 Current Financial Position

The Committee's financial position as at 31 July 2024 along with available funds in earmarked reserves as at 31 July 2024 were NOTED.

13.2 Accounts Paid

The Committee NOTED that payments totalling £558,250.30 as detailed on payment schedules nos. 393-395 have been made since the report to the meeting on 10 April 2024, and that schedules and accompanying invoices are available for inspection at the Council offices.

Cllr Brookes asked if there was a review of unrepresented cheques with appropriate timely follow up. The Clerk confirmed that this was a regular procedure.

RG38 Internal Financial Check

Members NOTED that Councillor MacKinnon visited the office on Wednesday 17 July 2024 and undertook a financial check on invoices and cheque runs from the start of 2024/2025 financial year to date and that the next visit is 7 October 2024.

RG39 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24

The Committee NOTED that:

- PKF Littlejohn LLP, the external auditors, had signed and returned section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2023/2024, without any comments. This was dated 24 September 2024.
- Notice of 'Conclusion of Audit' which finalises the yearly audit requirements, dated 26 September 2024, has been posted on the Town Council's noticeboards and website.

The Chair thanked the Council for all the work completed in achieving a clean audit.

RG40 Internal Audit

The Committee NOTED that the interim internal audit from Heelis & Lodge will take place on Monday 13 January 2025.

RG41 Remembrance Service

- The Committee AGREED that the Town Council will donate £150 to the Royal British Legion in support of the Poppy Appeal and towards the cost of the wreath laid by the Town Mayor at the annual Remembrance Service to be held this year on 10 November 2024.
- Cllr Mackinnon requested that the Clerk follow up with Churches Together in Loughton regarding inclusive participation by all religious groups.

RG42 VE Day 80th Anniversary – 8 May 2025

- The Committee AGREED they wish to commemorate VE Day 80 - 'a shared moment of celebration' on the 8 May 2025, with a further beacon lighting at Hillyfields Green.

RG43 Utilities

The Committee NOTED the twelve-month contracts agreed in July 2024 with British Gas for both electricity and gas.

RG44 Policies Review

The Committee REVIEWED and AGREED the policies below :

44.1 Equal Opportunities Policy

The Committee reviewed and AGREED the Equal Opportunities Policy, with the next review October 2027.

44.2 Community Engagement Strategy

The Committee reviewed and AGREED the Community Engagement Strategy, with the next review October 2027.

44.3 LTC Complaints Procedure

The Committee reviewed and AGREED the LTC Complaints Procedure, with the next review October 2027.

RG45 Town Council's Banking Arrangements – changes

The Committee NOTED the update to the Town Councils Banking arrangements and change of signatories

RG46 Loughton Town Council (LTC) email addresses and 'Sharepoint' access

The Committee NOTED the update to the Town Councils email addresses and 'Sharepoint' access and requested in person support to ensure they are set up correctly to receive emails to the new addresses.

RG47 Clerks and Councils Direct Magazine – September 2024 - Article

The Committee NOTED the article attached and requested the magazine be made available in the office for review in future.

RG48 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Committee AGREED to exclude the press and public from the following items and recording of the meeting was stopped.

RG49 Local Charity

Following a lengthy discussion the Committee agreed that the matter was in hand and that the Council would wait for the liquidators' findings.

RG50 EFDC Fees

The Committee AGREED that the Council should revert to EFDC requesting clarification on some of the administration fees charged and achieve some rebate if possible. They also requested that the operational issues experienced on the day be highlighted to EFDC for future elections. Members also NOTED that earmarked reserves for elections would need to be increased significantly over the next three annual budgets in preparation for the 2028 Town/Parish Council elections.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 9.00pm.

Signed:
Date: 4 December 2024

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 4 Dec 2024 at 7.30pm at Loughton Town Council, Council Chamber, 1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ.

Present:

Councillors: M Owen (in the Chair)
R Brookes S Fontenelle
N MacKinnon M Stubbings
D Wixley (as substitute for I Allgood)

Also present:

Officers: M Squire (Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer- RFO)
K Pendlebury (RFO pending)

There was one member of the public present.

- RG51 Apologies for absence**
Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Murray and Allgood. Cllr Wixley had been nominated as substitute for Cllr Allgood.
- RG52 Declarations of Interest**
No Declarations of Interest were received.
- RG53 Confirmation of Minutes**
The minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2024 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.
- RG54 Public Representations**
There were no public representations.
- RG55 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report**
The Town Clerks report was NOTED.

The Chairman had nothing to report.
- RG56 Training and Conferences**
Members NOTED the update on training and that Cllr Dodd's, Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) Introduction to Planning course has to be re-scheduled from the original date of 30 November 2024.
- RG57 Christmas Card 2024**
Members were pleased with the Christmas card design and AGREED that the card could now be distributed.

RG58 Remembrance Services
Members NOTED the update.

RG59 Finance

59.1 Current Financial Position

The Committee's financial position as at 14 November 2024 along with available funds in earmarked reserves were NOTED.

59.2 Accounts Paid

The Committee NOTED that payments totalling £626,835.74 as detailed on payment schedules nos. 396-398 had been made since the report to the meeting on 2 October 2024, and that schedules and accompanying invoices are available for inspection at the Council offices.

Cllr Fontenelle arrived and informed the Committee that he would be recording the remainder of the meeting

RG60 Banking

Members AGREED to remove Kim Lumb and add Kate Pendlebury, RFO (pending) to the list of authorised users for the following bank accounts:
National Westminster Bank
Nationwide Building Society
Santander
Unity Bank

RG61 Precept

The Committee NOTED the receipt of the second instalment of the 2023/24 Precept £496,9554.50, received on 27 September 2024

RG62 Internal Financial Check

The Committee NOTED that Cllr MacKinnon undertook a financial check of purchase orders and receipts on 7 October 2024 and that a further financial review would be held in January 2025.

RG63 Financial Assistance

63.1 The Committee AGREED to defer the decision to carry forward any unallocated Financial Assistance budget until the final budgets for 2025/2026 are agreed.

63.2 The shortlisting panel was confirmed for 2025/2026 as previously AGREED at the Annual Council meeting on 15 May 2024. i.e. The Chair and Vice Chair of this committee, Cllr Murray and the immediate past Town Mayor.

RG64 Staff Salaries 2024/25

64.1 Members NOTED the changes for the staff salary pay increases for 2024/25.

64.2 Members NOTED the changes in employers National Insurance Contributions as communicated in the October 2024 budget and the effect it would have on this year's Town Council budget requirements.

RG65 Parish Basic Allowance

The Committee AGREED the level of Parish Basic Allowance to remain at £120 per member for the following Town Council year.

RG66 Subscription Review
The Committee AGREED to continue with the current list of subscriptions for 2025/2026 and stated budget level.

RG67 2025/2026 Chamber Room Buckingham court fees
The Committee AGREED the recommended fee levels for Buckingham Court as presented.

Members discussed ways of potentially increasing usage and income of the chamber room. The Town Clerk was given the go-ahead to pursue 'one-off' discounted offers to potential hirers for long term usage, e.g. advertising the space at Buckingham Court as a potential 'hot desk' office for local businesspeople. Discussions ensued on ways of supporting local community groups for use of the chamber, such as Citizens Advice (C.A.). Cllr Wixley declared an interest as a member of C.A.

RG68 Committee Priorities
The Committee AGREED the priority list for 2025-26

RG69 Budgets/Estimates 2025/26
The Town Clerk highlighted certain salient areas of the budget figures. The Committee CONFIRMED the estimates of income and expenditure and levels of earmarked funds for 2025-26

Members NOTED that this was a preliminary budget and that future amendments may be required.

A member RECOMMENDED that a further budget provision should be made for the restoration of the Town Mayors chain of office.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 8.30pm.

Signed:

Date: 15 January 2025

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 15 January 2025 at 7.00pm at Loughton Town Council, Council Chamber, 1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ.

Present:

Councillors: M Owen (in the Chair from the latter part of RG75)
I Allgood S Murray
R Brookes (in the Chair until RG74) M Stubbings
S Fontenelle D Wixley (as substitute for N MacKinnon)

Also present: Epping Forest District (EFDC) Cllr Chidi Nweke joined the meeting at 7.20pm. Cllr Fricker joined the meeting at 7.25pm

Officers: M Squire (Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer - RFO)
K Pendlebury (RFO pending)

The Town Clerk noted that a member was recording the meeting.

RG70 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr MacKinnon. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Wixley substituted Cllr MacKinnon for this meeting.

RG71 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Murray and Cllr Allgood declared pecuniary interests as 'tentative' trustees of the Mens Shed initiative and Cllr Owen declared a non-pecuniary interest as he knows Cllr Nweke. Cllr Fontenelle declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Mens Shed initiative as a member of the Loughton Residents Association (LRA).

RG72 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2024 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and were signed by the Vice Chairman.

RG73 Public Representations

There were no public representations.

RG74 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report

The Town Clerks reported the following: -

- the announcement by both Essex County Council (ECC) and EFDC for formative plans for the devolution of Local Government from County level and the requirement to reduce the number of District Councils within Essex.

Cllr Michael Owen joined the meeting and took the Chair.

- That Loughton Town Council (LTC) had just received a 'clean' interim internal audit, which would be reported fully at the next Resources and General Services Committee meeting.
- That the tender process would now commence for the next internal auditor as LTC is in the last year of the current five-year agreement.
- that the tender processes had begun for the insurance contract as LTC is in the final year of its current three-year agreement.

These items were NOTED and a five-year comparison quote for the insurance contract was requested (in addition to the three 3-year quote) as part of the process, as there could be potential cost savings advantages.

The Chairman had nothing to report.

RG75 Internal Financial Check

Members NOTED the completion of the Internal Financial Check.

RG76 Financial Assistance Grants

Members NOTED that the Financial Assistance Working Group would meet on Wednesday 29 January 2025 to review the grant applications received.

RG77 Banking

Members NOTED the report and AGREED to move forward to open a Unity Bank deposit account and in due course to close the current Santander banking facility.

RG78 Budgets/Estimates 2025/26

The Town Clerk highlighted certain salient areas of the budget figures. The Committee CONFIRMED the estimates of income and expenditure and levels of earmarked funds for 2025-26 on the bass submitted which would increase the precept request by approximately 6.75%. The Committee AGREED the budget and Precept request for 2025 /2026.

Members NOTED the request from District Cllr Nweke for LTC to pay for a structural survey of the dilapidated changing rooms on the Roding Valley Recreation Gound at an estimated a cost of circa £1,000. After reviewing it was NOTED that there was room under existing budget allocations within this financial year for LTC to pay for the survey, without amending the budget that had just been agreed. A final decision would be made by the Recreation Committee that followed, immediately after this meeting.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting.

Signed:
Date: 12 February 2025

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 12 February 2025 at 7.30pm at Loughton Town Council, Council Chamber, 1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ.

Present:

Councillors: M Owen (in the Chair)
I Allgood
R Brookes
S Fontenelle
S Murray
N MacKinnon
M Stubbings

Also present: Cllr D Wixley

Officers: P Bryce (Deputy Town Clerk)
K Pendlebury Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) pending

10 members of the public.

RG78 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence received.

RG79 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest on applications 1,4,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,19,20,21,22,24 within agenda item 9.1.
Cllr Brookes declared non-pecuniary interest on applications 2, 11,12,14,15,16 within agenda item 9.1.

RG80 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2025 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG81 Public Representations

There were no public representations.

RG82 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report

The Town Clerk and Chairman had nothing to report.

RG83 Royal British Legion

Members NOTED the receipt of £138.15 to the Poppy Appeal.

RG84 Annual Town Meeting

Members NOTED the date and time of the Annual Town meeting.

RG85 Meetings Schedule

Members AGREED to delegate the draft timetable to the Town Clerk.

Cllr S Fontenelle joined the meeting, and the Chairman advised that the remainder of the meeting would be recorded.

RG86 Financial Assistance Grants

86.1 General Applications

A representative group of 8 members from 7th Epping Forest Scouts addressed the Committee to thank them for the grant and explained how it would be used to help fund their attendance at the World Scout Jamboree in Belgium.

Janet Thompson (Loughton Voluntary Care) addressed the Committee and explained the major priorities for 25-26 for their organisation, including an update regarding the newly established walking group held in Loughton on Mondays.

John Johnson (Forest Creative Writers) addressed the Committee and explained the request for a contribution to their annual rent and provided an update of the support provided by the group.

Members AGREED the applications and amounts granted for 2025-2026.

86.2 Citizens Advice – Epping Forest District

Members AGREED the grant for 2025-2026

RG87 Financial Limits

The Committee AGREED the financial limits as provided.

The Committee AGREED that any write off of the Red Balloon Foundation (RBF) bad debt can be actioned as appropriate by the RFO.

RG88 Payments Procedures

The Committee reviewed the list of current direct debits and CONFIRMED that the direct debits can be transferred to Unity Bank as previously agreed in RG257.

RG89 Finance

89.1 Current Financial Position

The current financial position as at 31 January 2025 along with available funds in earmarked reserves as at 31 January 2025 was NOTED.

89.2 Accounts Paid

The Committee NOTED payments totalling £570,291.70 as detailed on payment schedules nos. 399 – 403 have been made since the report to the meeting on 15 January 2025 and that schedules and accompanying invoices are available at the Council offices for inspection.

RG90 Internal Audit

The Committee NOTED the receipt of the clean audit.

RG91 Internal Auditor Renewal

The Committee AGREED the recommendation to re-appoint Heelis & Lodge as Internal Auditors for the year 2025 – 2030.

RG92 Insurance – Annual Review

The Committee CONFIRMED the list of cover as detailed and AGREED to delegate the renewal decision to the Town Clerk.

RG93 Asset Register

The Committee NOTED the Register of Assets as at 31 January 2025.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 8.15pm.

Signed:
Date: 9 April 2025

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 9 April 2025 at 7.30pm at Loughton Town Council, Council Chamber, 1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ.

Present:

Councillors: M Owen (in the Chair)
I Allgood S Murray
R Brookes N MacKinnon
S Fontenelle M Stubbings

Also present: Cllr D Wixley

Officers: M Squire (Town Clerk)
K Pendlebury (Responsible Finance Officer) (RFO)

Cllr Fontenelle advised that he would be recording the meeting.

RG94 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence received, although Cllr Mackinnon had informed the office that he would be running late.

RG95 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest declared.

RG96 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2025 were CON FIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG97 Public Representations

There were no public representations.

RG98 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report

The Town Clerk and Chairman had nothing to report.

Cllr MacKinnon arrived at the meeting.

RG99 Banking Arrangements

99.1 Unity Bank

Members NOTED the progress made with Unity Bank and electronic banking arrangements.

99.2 Santander Bank

Members NOTED the closure of the Santander bank account.

RG100 Training and Conferences

Members noted the update.

At this juncture members NOTED the formal appointment of Kate Pendlebury as RFO, with immediate effect.

- RG101 Staff matters**
- 101.1 Staff Salaries 2025/26**
Members noted the update from The Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).
- 101.2 Staff Appraisals**
Members noted that all Staff Appraisals had been completed.
- 101.3 Recommendations from the Strategy & Staff Group (SSG) meeting of 4 April 2025**
- Members NOTED and ratified the staffing matters agreed at this meeting.
 - Member NOTED the difficulty in resourcing the two major events, namely 'Jessel Green Fun Day' and Loughton Day (especially the former) and AGREED both should continue in the existing format, but that greater support should be sought for the Jessel Green event. This matter would be raised at the next Town Council meeting.
 - Members NOTED that there was a case for the Town Council taking over the landlord role, of the area that Loughton Town Council is responsible for on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground (RVRG). This matter would be raised at the next Town Council meeting.
- RG102 80th Anniversary of VE Day Commemoration**
Members received and noted the details of the event, and the good progress made to date.
- RG103 Epping Forest District council (EFDC) – Local Council's Liaison Committee (LCLC)**
- 103.1 District Council and Local Council Charter – 2009**
Members discussed the contents of the document and agreed that it was too out-dated to comment on further.
- 103.2 Terms of Reference agreed September 2020**
Members reviewed the terms of reference and had no further comment.
- 103.3 Epping Forest District Association of Local Councils (EFALC) Draft constitution.**
Members reviewed the document and agreed to put forward the proposal for up to 3 representatives to attend the meetings from Loughton Town Council.
- RG104 Local Council Awards**
After due consideration of the benefits associated with this award and the huge investment of time required members AGREED not to take forward this initiative. The time involved could be better served for projects and work that would benefit the local community.
- RG105 Technology**
- 105.1 New Computers**
The committee NOTED the need to purchase the new computers for the office.
- 105.2 Current Telephone Operators**
Members AGREED that the office should seek alternative quotes for the provision of telephone / internet services.

- RG106 Electric and Gas Supplier**
The members agreed to move forward with a further 3 year contract with British Gas for the supply of gas and electricity at all sites within Loughton Town Council.
- RG107 Financial Assistance Awards**
The Committee NOTED the update.
- RG108 Finance**
89.1 Current Financial Position
The current financial position as at 28 February 2025 along with available funds in earmarked reserves as at 28 February 2025 was NOTED.
- 89.2 Accounts Paid**
The Committee NOTED payments totalling £566,695.95 as detailed on payment schedules nos. 404-406 have been made since the report to the meeting on 12 February 2025 and that schedules and accompanying invoices are available at the Council offices for inspection.
- RG109 Internal Financial Check**
The Committee NOTED and thanked Councillor MacKinnon for the financial reviews.
- RG110 Annual Insurance**
The Committee NOTED the annual insurance premium for 2024/25 (year 3 of a 3-year contract with Zurich), which also includes fully comprehensive insurance for the Town Council's lease van.
- RG111 Governance and Accountability**
The Committee NOTED and AGREED the following reviews and risk assessments.
- 111.1 Internal Audit**
111.1.1 Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Audit

111.1.2 Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Control.
- 111.2 Risk Assessment and Management**
- RG112 Year End 2024-25 Accounts**
Following an update from the Town Clerk, members NOTED the timeline for completion of the Year / End Financials for 2024/25.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 8.30pm.

Signed:
Date: 25 June 2025