

**LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL
RECREATION COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 25th May 2011 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:**Councillors:** S M Harper (in the Chair)

M R M Chalk

C A Harper

R Law (until Min no RC184.3)

S W Murray

K Nicholson

T Thomas

D J Wixley

Also in attendance:**Councillors:** R E Brookes

S Pewsey

Officers:

E K Walsh (Town Clerk)

P J Hoy (Services Manager)

2 members of the public

Chairman's announcements

Cllr S Harper announced that Inspector Tom Simons of Essex Police who had been invited to address the Committee had tendered his apologies as he had been called away on duty.

RC179 Apologies

No apologies for absence were received.

RC180 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th March 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RC181 Declarations of Interest

Councillors C Harper and S Harper declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 5.2, the Skateboard Park as a family member is shortly to move into a property in River Way, adjacent to the Recreation Ground.

RC182 Public Representations

The meeting was adjourned to hear a representation from a member of the public with an interest in Agenda item 5.2, the Skateboard Park.

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

RC183 Skateboard Park – Min no RC174.2

Members thanked Mr Fennell for his presentation concerning the use of the Roding Valley Recreation Ground.

The Committee accepted the officers' recommendation that there was no alternative location on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground to accommodate a skateboard park owing to problems with isolation and flooding and concerns about the possible nuisance to nearby residents.

The Committee NOTED that the proposed site on part of the Roding Valley Nature Reserve adjacent to Oakwood Hill had been welcomed by members of the Skate Loughton Action Group and that the DVD presentation prepared by them would be arranged for mid to late June 2011.

Following the positive response from Essex Wildlife Trust that managed the Roding Valley Nature Reserve, the Town Clerk was authorised to progress this project. Local police would be contacted for their view on the suitability of the proposed location with regard to policing.

RC184 Matters for Report

To REPORT any further significant information on matters which have been previously discussed, in addition to those which may already be included on the agenda.

184.1 Roding Valley Recreation Ground

184.1.1 Town Mayor's Fun Run – Min no RC132.6

The Committee NOTED the success of the 2011 event. Avril Mills, creator of The Dream Factory charity had written to thank the Council for raising £501 in support of this children's charity.

184.1.2 Roding Valley Lake Project – Min no RC162.1

A verbal report of the management meeting held on 12 May 2011 attended by the Town Clerk and Services Manager was NOTED. The Town Clerk reassured that Committee that Epping Forest District Council and the Environment Agency were working closely together to minimise the environmental impact of the partial drainage of the lake.

184.1.3 Outdoor Gym – Min no RC174.1.2

The Committee NOTED that the equipment had been installed and was already proving popular with local residents. Induction sessions would be held run by Mr David Hogg, Leisure Officer at Epping Forest District Council.

It was AGREED to make arrangements for the opening ceremony to be held on a Saturday morning and to invite a local sporting celebrity.

184.1.4 Loughton Athletic Club Lease – Min no RC174.1.3

The Committee was pleased to NOTE that agreement on the wording of the Licence to Sub-Let part of the Roding Valley Recreation Ground to the Loughton Athletic Club had been reached and that the Council's solicitor had been instructed to proceed with the final preparation of the paperwork for signing.

184.1.5 Tennis Courts refurbishment – Min no RC174.7

The Town Clerk confirmed that a list of suitable contractors had been identified and that once the tender document had been reviewed by a specialist from the Sports and Play Construction Association the tender process would proceed.

184.2 Play Areas

184.2.1 Monksgrove – Min no RC162.5.3

Contractors would be invited to submit designs for the refurbishment of this play area to enable consultation with families on the Oakwood Hill Estate to be carried out. A suggestion to

extend the play area to include the adjacent unused concrete drying area would not be progressed owing to legal issues.

184.2.2 Newmans Lane – Min no RC174.3

The Committee NOTED that the universal joint on the pendulum swing would be replaced at a cost of £900. This was popular and well used piece of equipment. Budgetary allowance for 2012/13 would be made to enable similar work to be undertaken on an identical piece of equipment at the Westall Road play area.

184.2.3 Hillyfields – Min no RC174.3.1

The Committee NOTED that following the completion of the refurbishment of this play area achieved with funding from the Aiming High for Disabled Children scheme, a short opening ceremony would be arranged with children from Oak View School in attendance.

Cllr Law left the meeting.

184.3 Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge – Min no RC165

The nominations for the registration of the Hillyfields Open Space, Roding Valley Recreation Ground and Willingale Road Playing Field as Queen Elizabeth II Fields have been welcomed by the Fields in Trust Charity. The Committee NOTED that proposals for improving pedestrian and disabled access from the Willingale Road car park to the playing field would be presented at a future meeting.

184.4 Willingale Road Nature Reserve – Min no RC162.4

It was reported that Abigail Oldham and her staff at Epping Forest Countrycare were continuing to monitor this land and further clearance work will be carried out by Community Service teams in late summer. The Committee AGREED to run a volunteer day in the early autumn.

RC185 Current Financial Position

The Committee NOTED the end of year financial report for 2010/11.

RC186 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

Signed.....

Date

6th July 2011

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL**RECREATION COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 6th July 2011 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: S M Harper (in the Chair)
M R M Chalk A Copland C A Harper
S W Murray K Nicholson T Thomas
D J Wixley

Also in attendance:

Councillors: S Pewsey

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

Acting Inspector Tony Walker, Essex Police

RC187 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr R Law. Inspector Tony Walker gave apologies from Acting District Commander, Tom Simons, who had been called away on operational duties.

RC188 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th May 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RC189 Declarations of Interest

None were received.

RC190 Public Representations

No public representations had been received.

The Committee agreed to bring forward Agenda item 6.

RC191 Essex Police

Inspector Tony Walker was welcomed to the meeting and addressed the Committee on the effect of reforms in the Essex Police service levels following recent budget cuts. The Epping Forest policing area would be expanded to include Brentwood. The use of GPS tracking in police vehicles and radios would assist in ensuring the nearest unit could respond to emergencies with Neighbourhood and Investigation Teams still based in Loughton.

With regard to local issues, Inspector Walker referred to the intensive policing required by events connected with the Roding Valley Lake earlier this year and changes to arrangements for the Neighbourhood Action Panels, now called Neighbourhood Meetings. He also provided details of several local operations run in response to some increase in the number of burglaries, robberies and anti-social behaviour incidents in the town.

He was pleased to report that general levels of crime, including burglaries, had seen a significant reduction across the district as compared with the same period in 2010. The members were invited to ask questions and accepted the opportunity. The Committee thanked Inspector Walker for his report.

RC192 Matters for Report

192.1 Essex on Tour – Min no 174.6

The Committee NOTED that a jazz evening, “*The American Song Book*” performed by Claire Harper and her musicians, had been booked for Friday 23rd March 2012 at the Murray Hall and will form part of the next Loughton Festival.

192.2 Roding Valley Recreation Ground

192.2.1 Outdoor Gym – Min no RC184.1.3

The opening ceremony for this new facility was confirmed for Saturday 23rd July 2011 at 11am.

As this equipment has been well received by residents, the Committee proposed the Willingale Road Playing Field as a suitable site for a similar sized facility and NOTED this would require funding in the region of £23,000.

192.3 Skateboard Park – Min no RC183

The Town Clerk was asked to progress this project and, in particular, re-confirm the interest of the Skate Loughton Action Group.

192.4 Play Areas

192.4.1 Monksgrove – Min no RC184.2.1

The Committee NOTED the Services Manager was awaiting designs for the refurbishment of this play area from contractors. Once they had been received, consultation with the Oakwood Hill Residents Association and the local play group would be undertaken.

192.4.2 Newmans Lane – Min no RC184.2.2

The Committee expressed concern that damage to the basket seat on the pendulum swing had apparently been caused by dog owners allowing their dogs to bite the edging of the basket frame. Following advice received from the Animal Welfare Officer at Epping Forest District Council the basket would be replaced with a rubber tyre at a net cost of £170.

192.4.3 Hillyfields – Min no RC184.2.3

The Committee NOTED that the Town Mayor had officially opened this refurbished play area, with children from Oak View School in attendance, on 17th June 2011.

192.4.4 Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge – Min no RC184.3

It was reported that the Major Grants and Trust Manager for the Fields in Trust Charity would be visiting the three nominated sites, Hillyfields, Roding Valley Recreation Ground and Willingale Road Playing Field, in the coming weeks to assess how well they met the criteria. Legal advice was being sought on the implications of the Charitable and Non-Charitable Deeds of Dedication which accompany this scheme.

192.5 Kingsley Hall

The Committee NOTED that, following the theft of lead from a section of the dormer on the roof of the hall, emergency repair works had been carried out to stop the ingress of water. Subsequently the covering for the dormer and the remaining lead on the roof was replaced with EPDM rubber membrane with a twenty-year guarantee. Unstable hip tiles were also reinstalled. The net cost of all the works was £650.

192.6 Roding Valley Lake

Cllr Wixley provided an update on issues connected with the drop in water levels in the lake following the criminal investigations at the site earlier this year.

RC193 Current Financial Position

The Committee NOTED the report.

RC194 Roding Valley Recreation Ground – Tennis Courts refurbishment**194.1 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 the following item contained confidential information relating to a contract.

194.2 Tenders for the refurbishment of the Tennis Courts

The Committee NOTED that five quotations had been received by the noon deadline on Wednesday 29th June 2011 and that in the absence of the Chairman, the envelopes were opened shortly after midday by the Vice Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Wixley and the Town Clerk.

The report was considered and the Committee, with regard to the tender specification already prepared, AGREED to:

- i proceed with the option for weld mesh 385 fencing for the multi sports court in order to ensure a more suitable boundary.
- ii provide additional access gaps in the new internal fencing along the junction with the proposed all weather running track on courts 4 and 5.
- iii authorise the Town Clerk to submit grant applications to complete the funding for this project.
- iv delegate responsibility for the final decision to the Town Clerk in discussion with the Services Manager and the Chairman and Vice Chairman of this Committee.

195 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

Signed.....

Date 28th September 2011

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL**RECREATION COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 28th September 2011 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: S M Harper (in the Chair)
C A Harper K Nicholson (from Min no RC200)
T Thomas D J Wixley
S Pewsey (as substitute for Cllr Chalk)

Also in attendance:

Councillors: R E Brookes (from Min no RC200 until Min no RC203)

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

Mr Nick Robinson, Manager of the Loughton Youth Project
5 members of the Skate Loughton Group

RC196 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Chalk, Law and Murray. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Pewsey had been nominated as Cllr Chalk's substitute for this meeting.

RC197 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th July 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RC198 Declarations of Interest

None were received.

RC199 Public Representations

No public representations had been received.

The Committee agreed to bring forward Agenda item 6 as members of the public were interested in this item.

Cllrs Brookes and Nicholson arrived during the next item.

RC200 Skate Park

The Chairman welcomed the representatives from the Skate Loughton group to the meeting and invited them to address the Committee. They spoke of how the group had become more active, meeting regularly on Thursdays at the Space, by Loughton Library. In addition to opening a bank account, drafting a constitution and designing a website, several small grant funding bids had been submitted to assist with promotion of the project to build a skate park in the town.

The Town Clerk was asked to investigate the advantages of the group registering as a charity.

The Town Clerk confirmed that formal approaches had been made to Epping Forest District Council and Essex Wildlife Trust regarding a lease for the preferred site located adjacent to Oakwood Hill and that she had met with a Planning Officer to discuss the requirements for a planning application.

The Committee was pleased to note that a Positive Introductions event would again be held during the autumn half term school holiday, funded this year by the Safer Communities Partnership, and thanked Roding Valley High School for its support in allowing free use of its car park for the wheeled sports activities.

The Committee AGREED to purchase promotional T-shirts up to a maximum cost of £300 from the Skateboard Park budget for use in connection with the Positive Introductions event to be held on Friday 28th October.

RC201 Matters for Report

201.1 Park Rangers Events – Min No RC174.1.1

The Committee AGREED to support the Play in the Park scheme, organised by Epping Forest District Council, in the 2012 Easter and Summer school holidays at £50 per session for a total of six sessions

201.2 Essex on Tour – Min no RC192.1

The Committee confirmed the actions of the Town Clerk in booking an evening of classical chamber music in Loughton through the Essex on Tour scheme. The City of London Sinfonia Quintet would be performing at the Loughton Methodist Church on Saturday 15th October 2011 at 7.30pm. The event would be held in partnership with the Methodist Church with any profits going to the church building fund. Tickets @ £10 each were available from both the Town Council and the Methodist Church and on the door. The cost of the event is £400. Members were asked to assist in promoting the event and providing assistance on the evening.

201.3 Roding Valley Recreation Ground

201.3.1 Lake Project – Min no RC192.6

The Committee NOTED the report.

201.3.2 Tennis Courts refurbishment – Min no RC194

The Committee welcomed confirmation of the grant of £10,000 from Essex County Council's Big Lottery Fund towards the cost of this project.

Following the completion of the tender evaluation, the successful contractor was AMB Sports Ltd with the costs of the works amounting to £67,160 net of VAT. A post installation inspection of the works will be undertaken by a member of the Sports and Play Construction Association at a net cost of £970.

The Committee AGREED to plan for a series of coaching sessions in the Easter holidays 2012 and to hold an official opening event.

201.3.3 Football

The Committee NOTED the withdrawal of weekend grounds staff services by the Direct Services Organisation (DSO) and that the Town Clerk had appointed a temporary replacement on a 12-week seasonal contract. Proposals for the future coverage of these duties, with a possibility of combining the post with a relief

caretaker/assistant park warden, would be made to the Strategy and Staff Group.

Members were concerned to note issues arising from the increased use of the football pitches on the Recreation Ground for team training. Officers would monitor the situation and seek advice.

201.4 Play Areas

201.4.1 Safety inspection – Min no RC162.5

The Committee NOTED that the six-monthly inspection of the children's play areas had been carried out on 20th July 2011 by a member of the Register of Play Inspectors International (RPII) and that the minor maintenance issues raised in the report had been addressed. The full report was available to view on request to the Services Manager.

201.4.2 Monksgrove – Min no RC192.4.1

It was reported that the play group at the Oakwood Estate Community Hall had been consulted on the design proposals for the refurbishment of this play area. The plans would remain on display in the Council Chamber until Friday 7th October to enable councillors to comment.

Once officers had evaluated the designs and the consultation responses an order for the works would be placed.

201.4.3 Westall Road – Min no RC174.3.2

Noting that the natural surfacing of this play area originally required by the Play Builder Scheme grant conditions had proved unsuitable, the Committee AGREED to:

- i replace the grass surface of the play area with free draining asphalt at a net cost of £10,120.
- ii vire £10,000 from the Willingale Road improvements earmarked reserve to cover the cost of this work.

201.5 Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge – Min no RC192.4.4

The Committee NOTED that the Fields in Trust Charity (FIT) had confirmed that the nominated sites met the criteria of the Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge. The Town Clerk reported that Non-Charitable Deeds of Dedication would be used as these were less restrictive than the Charitable Deeds and that the registration of the Roding Valley Recreation Ground under this scheme would require a tripartite deed between FIT, Loughton Town Council and Epping Forest District Council (the landowner).

The Committee AGREED to proceed with the dedication of Hillyfields, Roding Valley Recreation Ground and Willingale Road Playing Field in celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II as public playing fields and recreation grounds for the benefit of the inhabitants of Loughton. The Committee requested full Council to authorise the sealing of the documents and nominate two councillors to carry out this task as required by Standing Orders.

201.6 Willingale Road Nature Reserve

The Town Clerk reported that the Kingsley Pre-School had been awarded thirty young native trees by Sainsbury's and offered them to the Town Council. The Pre-School were thanked for the offer and it was AGREED to plant the trees in the Willingale Road Nature Reserve near to the boundary with the Willingale Road allotments site to create a new hedge line. A Community Service team would be asked to assist with the planting and the children of the Pre-School invited to inspect the trees once the works were completed.

RC202 Current Financial Position

The Committee NOTED the report.

Cllr Brookes left the meeting during the next item.

RC203 Committee Priorities

203.1 As part of its overall plan and to complement the budget-making process, the Committee reviewed its priority list for 2012/13 and AGREED on the following:

Current Priority	Main Function	Greater Detail (current position)
Current activities		
1	Skateboard facility	Work to progress plans for the Oakwood Hill site underway
2	Playgrounds	New works/upgrading
3	Land adjacent to Willingale Road Allotment	Use as a nature reserve. Some clearance and environmental studies undertaken
4	RV Rec Ground – improvements to changing rooms exterior & surrounding area to include refreshment facility	Plans to be revised following initial consultation. Internal works to be included. Funding TBC
5	Youth Forum	Discussions with stakeholders, approval by council required
6	Outdoor gym at other locations	Preferred site WRPf
7	RVRG noticeboards	Designs to be considered
8	Loughton Brook (Gateway project)	Council has agreed financial support up to £5,000 p.a. when project completed
9	RV Rec Ground	Diverted path by Charlie Moules bridge – no action at present. EFDC monitor condition
10	Loughton Athletic Club running track surface on RV Rec tennis courts	Awaiting approach from LAC
On-going activities		
High	Running the committee	Agenda, reports, research, minutes, finance, admin
High	Kingsley Hall	Bookings, admin, finance, maintenance and works

High	Millennium Remembrance Grove	Tree replacements and maintenance. Awaiting proposals from EFDC Tree Officer
High	Open spaces	Maintenance
High	Murray Hall	Bookings, admin, finance, maintenance and works
High	Willingale Road Playing Field and Roding Valley Recreation Ground	Football lettings, maintenance, works. No football at WRPF
High	Playgrounds	Maintenance
High	Responding to consultations	Variable
High	Any other matters within the committee's terms of reference	

203.2 Section 106 Contribution

The Committee AGREED that the following items should be drawn to the attention of the Planning and Licensing Committee for consideration as deserving of a Section 106 contribution should the opportunity arise.

1. Skate Park facility
2. Play areas (new works/upgrading)
3. Major improvements to the Roding Valley Recreation Ground changing rooms and car park area
4. Outdoor gym facilities

The Committee AGREED to suspend Standing Order number 1.4 and AGREED to conclude the meeting by 9.45pm.

RC204 Estimates for 2012/13

204.1 Income – Fees and Charges

The Committee AGREED the following items

- a) A standard/commercial fee would be introduced for Kingsley Hall hirings with effect from 1st April 2012 to remove the anomaly with the Council's other facilities for hire. This fee to be based on £20.20 per hour at the 2011/12 rates. The Town Clerk was asked to hold discussions with the hall's regular hirer on the impact of this change.
- b) All hire fees for 2012/13 to be increased in line with the rate of inflation at 5.2%, with the exception of the use of the Roding Valley Recreation Ground by television/film crews, fun fairs and/or for other commercial activities, which would be referred to the Committee for further consideration.

204.2 Rolling Programme

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

204.3 Estimates for 2012/13

The estimates for 2012/13 as presented in the Agenda were AGREED such that the net figures were as follows:

Recreation Committee	£
Total budget expenditure*	422,570
Income**	<u>84,870</u>
Net expenditure	337,700
Transfers from earmarked reserves***	48,500
Total net expenditure	<u>£289,200</u>
* Does not include the service recharge 2012/13	
** An adjustment will be made to the Kingsley Hall income figures pending the outcome of Min no RC204.1a	
*** Details of transfers from earmarked reserves:	
<i>Replace entrance hall carpets at Murray Hall</i>	1,000
<i>Hall floor maintenance at Murray Hall</i>	2,500
<i>Building maintenance at Kingsley Hall</i>	1,000
<i>Land adj to WRd Allotments</i>	1,000
<i>Skate park</i>	<u>43,000</u>
	<u>£48,500</u>

RC205 Essex County Council Children's Services

The report on the range of services and the number of staff currently working at the Loughton Centre for Young People was NOTED. Officers would continue to monitor the situation.

RC206 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

Signed.....

Date 11th January 2012

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL**RECREATION COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 11th January 2012 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: S M Harper (in the Chair)
M R M Chalk A Copland (from Min no RC211.4)
C A Harper R Law K Nicholson
D J Wixley

Also in attendance:

Councillors: S Pewsey

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

3 members of the public

RC207 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Murray and Thomas.

RC208 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th September 2011 amended from those circulated in Minute no RC204.1a to read "1st April 2012" were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RC209 Public Representations

No public representations had been received. However, the Chairman announced that she would adjourn the meeting at Agenda item 5.4, Skateboard Park, for 10 minutes to allow the members of the public an opportunity to express their opinions.

RC210 Declarations of Interest

Cllrs C Harper and S Harper declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 5.1.1 as close family members attended the church.

Cllr Wixley declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 5.1.1 as he was acquainted with a member of the church.

Cllr Nicholson declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 5.1.1 as her church would be involved in the family fun day.

RC211 Matters for Report**211.1 Roding Valley Recreation Ground****211.1.1 Restore Community Church Family Fun Day – Min no RC162.2.1**

The Committee AGREED to allow use of the Recreation Ground by the Restore Community Church for a family event on Sunday 15th July 2012, free of charge.

211.1.2 Tennis Courts Refurbishment – Min no RC194

The Committee NOTED the report and that an official opening ceremony was scheduled for Saturday 31st March 2012. Members

suggested sports personalities whose attendance would raise the profile of this event.

211.1.3 Changing Rooms Improvements

The Town Clerk apologised that the revised plans had not been prepared by the architect in time for this meeting. It was AGREED to defer discussions until a future meeting.

211.1.4 Highwood Lane Fencing

The Town Clerk reported that Harlow Probation Service had offered the Town Council grant funding of up to £10,000 to finance materials for works in Loughton to be carried out by Community Service Teams before the end of March 2012. The Services Manager planned that this financial support should be used to replace the 170 metres of wooden fencing along the Highwood Lane boundary of the Roding Valley Recreation Ground.

211.2 Play Areas

211.2.1 Safety Inspection – Min no RC201.4.1

The Committee NOTED that the six-monthly inspection of the children's play areas together with the outdoor gym would be undertaken during January 2012 by Playsafety Ltd, part of RoSPA, at a net cost of £498.15.

211.2.2 Monksgrove – Min no RC201.4.2

It was reported that the placing of the order for the refurbishment works and new play equipment had been delayed by the need to seek expert advice on the stability of the brick retaining walls from a civil engineer. Mr Gowlett of G N Gowlett Ltd had been instructed, at a net cost of £350.00, to prepare a report with recommendations on the appropriate remedial solutions so that the Town Council's concerns may be addressed with the landowner, Epping Forest District Council. The initial report commented that whilst the wall was not in imminent danger of collapse, the timing of complete failure was impossible to predict and as the path alongside is frequented by young children it was recommended that remedial works were completed this year.

In order to expedite this matter, officers would now obtain costings for these works based on the detailed recommendations of Mr Gowlett and approach the landowner, Epping Forest District Council.

211.2.3 Newmans Lane and Westall Road – Min no RC174.3.2

The Committee NOTED that the planned resurfacing works at both of these play areas would be carried out once the weather conditions had improved.

211.3 Murray Hall

211.3.1 Projector Screen – Min no RC174.5

It was confirmed that the new screen, part financed by a grant from Essex County Council's Community Initiatives Fund, would be fitted shortly. The final choice of screen had been made in discussion with representatives of the Loughton Film Society.

211.3.2 Essex on Tour – Min no RC RC174.6

It was NOTED that tickets were now on sale for the jazz evening, “*The American Song Book*” performed by Claire Harper and her musicians, on Friday 23rd March 2012 at the Murray Hall. This performance would form part of the 2012 Loughton Festival.

211.3.3 Garden Landscaping – Min no RC201.6

As the size of the young native trees donated to the Council by the Kingsley Pre School made them unsuitable for the Willingale Road Nature Reserve it was reported that they will instead be planted in the rear garden at the Murray Hall. Representatives from the Pre School would be invited to attend a planting ceremony.

Cllr Copland joined the meeting during the next item.

211.4 Skateboard Park – Min no RC200

The Committee NOTED that following the successful Positive Introductions event held at the Roding Valley High School in October 2011, officers were endeavouring to progress discussions with Epping Forest District Council on a lease for the preferred skate park site in Oakwood Hill. As the site was designated as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) in the Local Plan, an approach to Natural England was likely to be required.

The support of the Loughton Youth Project for the Skate Loughton Group was welcomed.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting to allow members of the public to express their concerns about the proposed skate park site and regarding on-going problems with anti-social behaviour on the Oakwood Hill Estate.

The Chairman thanked the members of the public for their comments and reconvened the meeting.

Cllr Law withdrew from the meeting.

211.5 Estimates for 2012/13 Income – Fees and Charges – Min no RC204.1

The Town Clerk reported that she had held discussions with the Kingsley Hall’s regular hirer on the impact of the introduction of a standard rate change with effect from 1st April 2012 and as instructed by the Committee had offered a fifty per cent discount on the rental increase for the first twelve months.

RC212 Current Financial Position

The Committee NOTED the report.

Cllr Law re-joined the meeting.

RC213 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

RC214 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 the following items contained confidential information relating to staffing and leases.

RC215 Staffing Matters

215.1 Football Groundsman

The Town Clerk reported that Mr R Griffiths had been appointed to this post on a flexible contract.

215.2 Assistant/Relief Caretakers

The Town Clerk reported that applicants for these posts were being considered.

RC216 Asset Management

The Committee welcomed the report and AGREED that the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Cllrs C C Pond and J Angold-Stephens should attend an informal meeting with the Town Clerk to discuss the matter further. A confidential note of the discussions would be held on file.

Signed.....

Date 7th March 2012

THESE MINUTES NOT YET CONFIRMED

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RECREATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 7th March 2012 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: S M Harper (in the Chair)
A Copland C A Harper R Law (until Min no RC221.2.6)
T Thomas D J Wixley

Also in attendance:

Councillors: T Frankland

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

RC217 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Chalk and Nicholson.

RC218 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th January 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RC219 Public Representations

No public representations had been received.

RC220 Declarations of Interest

None were received.

RC221 Matters for Report

221.1 Essex Police – Min no RC191

Members NOTED that Chief Inspector Tom Simons had been promoted to the post of Staff Officer to the Chief Constable, Jim Barker-McCardle. His successor, Chief Inspector Ed Wells, would be invited to speak at a future meeting of the Committee.

221.2 Roding Valley Recreation Ground – Min no RC211.1

221.2.1 Dangerous and nuisance dogs

The Committee expressed serious concerns about the reported problems of nuisance and potentially dangerous dogs and the increase in dog fouling on the Recreation Ground and other open spaces across the town.

Officers were asked to investigate the making of a byelaw to address this issue. Other measures proposed included the raising of public awareness through the posting of notices, press releases and articles in the newsletter. Further assistance would also be sought from Environmental Services at Epping Forest District Council and Essex Police.

221.2.2 Unauthorised use of the Recreation Ground for Organised Activities.

Members NOTED with concern the increasing number of groups (both business and community organisations) using the Recreation Ground and its various facilities for regular coaching/training sessions without permission from the Town Council. Problems experienced included additional wear and tear on the football pitches, the blocking of emergency access gates and inconsiderate parking in neighbouring residential roads.

In view of insurance related issues, town council officers were asked to regularise this situation by requiring such groups to apply for a licence. A further report on the level of licence fees to cover administration costs, and charges for commercial organisations, would be brought to the next meeting of this Committee.

221.2.3 Tennis Courts Refurbishment – Min no RC211.1.2

Members NOTED that Mr Tony Hawkes, broadcaster, comedian, and co-founder of Tennis For Free was hopeful of being in attendance at the free tennis taster sessions planned for 10am on Saturday 31st March 2012. The assistance of the Avenue Tennis Club in providing equipment was welcomed. Full details for the event were being finalised.

221.2.4 Changing Rooms' Improvements – Min no RC211.1.3

The revised plan for the car park area which included lighting for the building and car park area, rise and fall entrance bollards and a CCTV column were on display at the meeting. The original plans for the proposed community café and refurbishment of the exterior of the football changing rooms were provided.

Members NOTED that the Town Clerk would be meeting with the Sports and Health Development Manager at Epping Forest District Council and representatives from the other main user groups on the Recreation Ground to discuss an opportunity for a joint funding bid to Sport England to assist with the plans for improvement works to the changing rooms and access paths to the Cricket Club.

The Committee AGREED that a planning application for the changing rooms' improvement works may now be submitted.

221.2.5 Highwood Lane Fencing – Min no RC211.1.4

The Committee NOTED that confirmation of the Government grant funding application made by the Harlow Probation Service to provide new post and rail fencing along Highwood Lane was still awaited.

221.2.6 Loughton Athletic Club Lease – Min no RC184.1.4

The Town Clerk reported that the Lease had been signed by the Trustees of the Athletic Club and would be executed by the Chairman and Vice Chairman at the end of the meeting.

Cllr Law left the meeting.

221.3 Play Areas**221.3.1 Safety Inspection – Min no RC211.2.1**

The report of the RoSPA inspection carried out on 26th January 2012 of all the Town Council play areas including the outdoor gym was NOTED. No significant items had been identified.

221.3.2 Monksgrove – Min no RC211.2.2

The Committee NOTED that costings for the rebuilding of the section of brick wall supporting this play area had been obtained. The repair work was being discussed with the District Council's Housing Services with a view to expediting the repairs so that an order for the new play equipment and surfacing could be placed.

221.4 Essex County Council Children's Services – Min no RC205

It was reported that an officer from the Children's Services had been invited to speak at the meeting about service provision in Loughton but as strategic decisions were still outstanding her visit had been postponed until the next meeting of this Committee when the situation should be clearer.

RC222 Current Financial Position

The Committee NOTED the report.

RC223 Solar energy installations for Council buildings

Members thanked Cllr Wixley for his detailed report.

Having regard for the Council's Environment and Sustainability Policy, the Committee asked the Town Clerk to investigate the possible use of solar energy installations on its buildings and to seek professional advice on the viability of such a scheme for the Town Council. This matter was given a low priority.

RC224 Murray Hall – Community Centre Working Party

The Committee AGREED to extend the remit of this internal group to include the Kingsley Hall so that a review of the operation of that hall may be undertaken in due course.

RC225 2012 Diamond Jubilee Celebrations

The Committee supported Cllr Frankland's proposal for the planting of six commemorative oak trees at a suitable location on one of the Queen Elizabeth II Fields. Advice would be sought from the Arboricultural Officers at Epping Forest District Council with a view to holding an official planting ceremony in Autumn 2012.

RC226 Mobile Library Services

The Committee expressed disappointment at Essex County Council's proposal to withdraw the fortnightly mobile library services to Home Cherry House and Oakwood Hill with effect from 30th June 2012. It was noted that if demand increased in the future consideration would be given to a reinstatement of the service. It was reported that where appropriate Loughton Library staff currently offered a home delivery book service to residents in the town.

RC227 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

RC228 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 the following item contained confidential information relating to the business affairs of a hall hirer.

RC229 Kingsley Hall Hire Fees

Members considered the report in detail and confirmed its view that, whilst the Council regularly supports community groups and charities through its Financial Assistance Scheme, it was not appropriate to subsidise a business albeit one that provided the local community with an important service.

The Committee unanimously AGREED to offer the Kingsley Pre-School the opportunity to stagger the introduction of the standard rate hire fees over a three year period to further reduce the impact on its business. The Pre-School would also be required to provide confirmation of its fee charging structure during this time.

The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Suzanne Harper, closed the meeting by thanking fellow councillors and officers for their hard work and support over the four-year term of the Council.

Signed.....

Date