

**LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL**

**RECREATION COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Loughton Town Council, Council Chamber,  
1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ on Tuesday 29 May 2024 at  
7.45pm**

**Present**

<b>Councillors:</b>	D Wixley (in the chair)		
	L House	N MacKinnon	S Murray
	M Stubbings	R Sylvan	K Valentine

**Also in attendance:** Cllr S Fontenelle (until Min no RC6)

**Officers:** M Squire (Town Clerk)  
P Hoy (Services Manager)

**Also Present:** Vanessa Gayton, Team Manager Community Development and Wellbeing, Customer and Communities, Epping Forest District Council (EFDC)

**RC1 To Confirm the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and membership of the Committee**  
Cllr Wixley was confirmed as Chairman of the Recreation Committee and Cllr Murray was confirmed as Vice-Chairman. The Chairman welcomed Cllr Sylvan to the Committee, all other members had served this Committee in the previous Council.

**RC2 Apologies**  
No apologies had been received.

**RC3 Declarations of Interest**  
Cllrs Wixley and Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 8, as they are acquainted with the Wintle family. Cllr Wixley declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 18, as a former employee of Essex and Suffolk Water. Cllr Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 12 as his property overlooks the changing room buildings.

**RC4 Confirmation of Minutes**  
The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2024 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**RC5 Public Representations**  
None were received.

**RC6 Oakwood Hill Area in Loughton**  
Vanessa Gayton, Team Manager Community Development and Wellbeing, Customer and Communities (EFDC), was welcomed to the meeting and provided a brief update on proposals for the Oakwood Hill area. EFDC have received Public Health Accelerator Funding to support their place-based approach to tackling health inequalities. The funding will enable EFDC to recruit a Community Engagement Officer specifically for the Oakwood Hill area of Loughton. The officer will be responsible for coordination and development of a wide range of partnership projects to improve the health and wellbeing of residents in the area.

The EFDC Environment Protection Team is looking at a funding bid to Essex County Council (ECC) to develop a pocket park, potentially at Longcroft Rise in Oakwood Hill.

Members were invited to ask questions.

It was broadly felt that any potential funding could be best used for renewing footpaths close to Oakwood Hill on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground.

To enable Members to make an informed decision as to whether to support the development of a pocket park, it was AGREED that the Town Clerk would seek further information from Fabrizio Ferrari, Public Health Improvement Officer, Health Improvement Team Manager – Customer and the Community (EFDC) who is leading the project.

Vanessa Gayton was thanked for her presentation.

Cllr Fontenelle left the meeting.

**RC7 Newmans Lane Playground Project**

The Town Clerk reported that Thomas Willingale and St John Fisher Schools had both been approached with regards to taking part in the consultation process, but no responses had been forthcoming. A personal visit had been made by the Town Clerk and Services Manager to Oak View School, with the emphasis on discussing equipment suited to park users with special educational needs, as students and staff from the school are known to regularly frequent this playground.

The Committee NOTED the report and the projection for the next stages in the process, and it was AGREED that Alderton Junior School would also be approached to take part in the consultation process.

**RC8 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report**

- The Committee NOTED that a Memorial Bench Policy and Memorial Tree Policy will be produced for the next Recreation Committee for consideration.
- The Committee NOTED that the bench for the Wintle family had been installed and the installation of the bench for the Lee family is imminent, (deferred very recently due to torrential rain). Rec Min 295.1 & 295.2 refer.
- The Town Clerk reported that work is ongoing regarding the Loughton Cricket Club boundary.
- The Chairman reminded members that the lighting of the beacon to commemorate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day was on Thursday 6 June, at Hillyfields Open Space, with all welcome to attend.

**Roding Valley Recreation Ground (RVRG)**

**RC9 Roding Valley Cricket Club (RVCC) – Min no RC313**

The Committee NOTED that Progress on the proposed transfer of cricket area continues to be protracted. The RVCC have now completed their Clubmark and safeguarding policies, so they can apply for loans from the Essex Cricket Board (ECB).

**RC10 RVRG Tree Survey – Min no RC314**

The Committee NOTED that follow-up works to trees, (following the comprehensive tree survey carried out by Place Services in late 2023), have been delayed due to

persistent wet weather, and consequently, soft ground conditions. Commencement of the works is expected imminently, now that the ground has hardened and the Council's contractors are confident that their vehicles can move freely across the site.

**RC11 RVRG – Memorial Trees – Min no RC315**

The Town Clerk reported that there have been no further developments since the previous report it is unlikely that anything further will be forthcoming until the tree planting season in the autumn.

**RC12 RVRG Changing Rooms – Min no RC316**

**i. Security / Health and Safety**

The Town Clerk has contacted the Senior Asset Manager at EFDC regarding all aspects of the delapidated buildings. Although under the terms of the lease the Town Council is responsible for all of the buildings on its section of the recreation ground, as this is such a serious issue, the Town Clerk will continue to liaise closely with officers at EFDC to reach a mutually agreeable solution.

**ii. Development of the building**

**Members reviewed the request and AGREED to decline any such approach for the foreseeable future.**

**RC13 Football Pitch Hire on the RVRG**

The Committee NOTED that there had been no requests for football pitches for the forthcoming 2024/25 season.

**RC14 RVRG Playground – Min no RC300**

The Committee NOTED the request by a member of the public regarding the future use of safety harnesses, and it was AGREED that the decision made at the previous meeting to not allow harnesses to be used for health and safety reasons would remain as the council's policy going forward but would note these circumstances for future playground projects.

Members NOTED that a major independent inspection of all playgrounds is to be carried out by the inspection company TMPI on 29 May 2024.

**RC15 Roding Valley Angling Club (RVAC) – Min no RC312**

The Committee NOTED that permission had been given for RVAC to place a noticeboard close to the Greensted Road entrance, but that work had not yet commenced to install it.

**RC16 Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) Signs – Min no RC312**

The Committee NOTED that further signs were obtained from EFDC and had been installed onto notice boards on the RVRG.

**RC17 Paddle / Padel Tennis**

The Committee NOTED the report and AGREED that it would not support the request from this commercial enterprise, which would also potentially mean losing a section of the playing fields.

**RC18 Essex & Suffolk Water (ESW) – Min no REC 297**

The Committee NOTED that restoration site works would have been completed but have been delayed because of recent heavy rain. The Service Manager reported

that completion works were expected imminently, and a report would be made at the next meeting.

### **Other Agenda Items**

#### **RC19 Town Council Community Halls**

The Committee NOTED that a General Election had been called for 4 July 2024 and both Murray Hall and Kingsley Hall had been booked for use as polling stations. The Town Clerk would investigate whether display boards providing information relating to the work of the Town Council could be displayed at Murray Hall on the day.

##### **19.1 Murray Hall**

The Committee NOTED the report detailing costings for necessary forthcoming maintenance works and AGREED to vire £4k from the Murray Hall gas budget to be vired to the Murray Hall building and maintenance budget.

##### **19.2 Kingsley Hall**

The Committee NOTED that improvement works to three low level windows at the front of the building was necessary, and would be commencing in the next few weeks.

#### **RC20 Inappropriate planting of trees on Hillyfields Open Space and Jessel Green by Essex County Council (ECC) / Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) – Min no RC318**

This development had already been raised at the Town Council meeting on 21 February 2024.

I. **Hillyfields Open Space** – The Committee NOTED the report.

II. **Jessel Green** – The Committee NOTED the report.

#### **RC21 Jessel Green Fun Day – Sunday 23 June 2024**

The Committee NOTED the progress report and AGREED that a Councillor-run stall, with tombola, should be part of the event and that members should be encouraged to run the stall.

Cllr Murray Declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item, as he is known to the family.

#### **RC22 Request for a Memorial Bench Plaque**

The Committee NOTED the request and AGREED in principle, subject to the wishes of the family.

The Committee AGREED to suspend Standing Order number 3(ff) and AGREED to conclude the meeting by 9.45pm.

#### **RC23 Memorial Garden**

The Committee NOTED the report on the completion of refurbishment works following the incident with the stolen car.

The Town Clerk reported that he had received an offer from a former Town Councillor to pay for a replacement bench, with the proviso that it contained a plaque commemorating a lost loved-one. The Committee AGREED to accept the

proposal and that the new bench should also contain the commemorative plaque that been retrieved from the bench destroyed in the collision.

**RC24 Oak Processionary Moth – Min no RC242.1**

The Committee NOTED that the Services Manager will conduct a visual survey of oak trees across all Town Council sites in June 2024, and would report back accordingly, at the next Recreation Committee meeting.

**RC25 Restructure of Working Group**

The Committee NOTED the report on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground Improvements Projects Working Group (RVRGIPWG) and AGREED to the new title of Recreation Working Party (RWP). The Committee AGREED that The Chairman, Vice -Chairman and Cllr House would sit on this group to work with the Town Clerk and Services Manager. It was further AGREED that the group should be allowed the flexibility to include individual ward councillors to contribute at appropriate times.

**RC26 Financial Position**

The Committee NOTED the financial position as of 31 March 2024.

The Committee AGREED that authorisation for the Town Clerk to be able to vire amounts between budgets (subject to a cap) should be put before the Resources and General Services Committee for approval.

**RC27 Future Work of the Committee**

Reverting to the Newmans Lane Playground project it was AGREED that Cllrs Mackinnon, Sylvan and Valentine, together with the Town Clerk and Services Manager would form the selection panel, to review the tenders and designs from the prospective playground contractors, when they are forthcoming.

Cllr Wixley made an offer to committee members to organize a walk over the Recreation Ground and other areas to show members some of the things that the Committee is responsible for.

**Signed:** .....

**Date:** 3 September 2024

**LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL**

**RECREATION COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Loughton Town Council, Council Chamber,  
1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ on Tuesday 3 September  
2024 at 7.30pm**

**Present Councillors:** D Wixley (in the chair)

L House (from Min no RC33)	N MacKinnon
S Murray	M Stubbings
R Sylvan (until Min no RC46)	K Valentine

**Also in attendance:** Cllr R Brookes

**Officers:** M Squire (Town Clerk)  
P Hoy (Services Manager)

**Also Present:** Chris Couldrey, Treasurer, South Loughton Cricket Club (SLCC)

**RC28 Apologies**

No apologies had been received, although Cllr House had previously informed that he would be arriving late due to a prior commitment.

**RC29 Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 5, as a social member of SLCC. Cllr Wixley declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 16, as a former employee of Essex and Suffolk Water.

**RC30 Confirmation of Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 May 2024 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. The Chairman asked that the following items be NOTED:

- That the council staff involved in the organisation and delivery of the beacon lighting, to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Normandy Landings on 6 June 2024 (Min no RC8), be congratulated on the success of the event.
- That a report be made at this meeting on the findings of the major independent inspection of all playgrounds conducted by the inspection company TMPI on 29 May 2024 (Min no RC14).
- That following Cllr Wixley's offer to committee members to organize a walk over the Recreation Ground and other areas to show members some of the areas that the Committee is responsible for (Min no RC27), Cllr Sylvan had taken up accepted the offer to accompany him on the tour, which took place on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

**RC31 Public Representations**

None were received.

**RC32 South Loughton Cricket Club (SLCC) – Min no RC267**

Chris Couldrey, the Treasurer of SLCC, addressed the Committee and presented outline plans for the redevelopment of the cricket pavilion, which is currently in the pre-application submission stage with Epping Forest District Council (EFDC). Members were invited to ask questions and reviewed initial sketch drawings for the project. The current lease with EFDC will expire in 2027 and a new lease will need to be put in place. There is likely to be some changes in existing dimensions; with the overall height of the new pavilion to be six metres. Residents living in properties in River Way would be consulted on the plans.

The Town Clerk advised of the benefit of holding an early meeting between SLCC, EFDC and Loughton Town Council (LTC) at the earliest opportunity, to expedite the process.

The Committee AGREED that SLCC plays a valuable part in the local community, and also the provision of recreation activities over many years. As such the Committee was broadly supportive, subject to receipt of a full application and consideration by the Planning and Licensing Committee, which would be looked at in due course.

The Committee thanked Chris Couldrey for his presentation and looked forward to hearing future developments.

Cllr House joined the meeting.

**RC33 Oakwood Hill project – Min no RC6**

The Committee NOTED the report, and Vanessa Gayton, Team Manager Community, Development and Wellbeing, Epping Forest District Council (EFDC), would be invited to attend the next Recreation Committee meeting to provide a further update.

**RC34 Newmans Lane Playground Project – Min no RC7**

The Town Clerk reported that the tender process via the governments Project Finder Portal, had attracted the initial interest of eight major playground companies in the project. The recent public consultation held at Loughton Library was well attended, and the data received was available for members to peruse during or after the meeting. A further consultation would be held with Oak View School in the coming days and it was noted that there had also been a healthy response to the consultation via social media. The Committee also noted that following the closure of the tender submission date, the Playground Panel would meet to review all submissions during the week commencing 7 October 2024.

**RC35 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report**

- The Committee NOTED that the installation of the bench for the Lee family had now been carried out and had been well received.
- The Town Clerk reported that there had been no further developments on the Loughton Cricket Club (LCC) boundary since the last meeting of this Committee. The Town Clerk further stated that he would soon be arranging a meeting with LCC officials to discuss this matter, as well as broader issues relating to grounds maintenance and the responsibilities of all parties involved in the management of the site.
- The Town Clerk reported that the Resources and General Services Committee would be approached at the next meeting to review whether the

Town Council would wish to participate in the commemoration of the 80th Anniversary of VE Day by taking part in a nationwide beacon lighting event on 8 May 2025, which would use Hillyfields Green as the venue.

- Members were reminded that the Town Council's 'Loughton Horticultural Show' was to be held this coming Saturday, 7 September 2024, at Murray Hall; all members of the Committee were invited to attend.

### **Roding Valley Recreation Ground (RVRG)**

#### **RC36 Roding Valley Cricket Club (RVCC) – Min no RC9**

The Committee NOTED that progress on the proposed transfer of the cricket area continues to be protracted, and that there had been no significant developments since the last meeting of this Committee, but that RVCC were still working on a loan from the Essex Cricket Board (ECB).

#### **RC37 RVRG Tree Survey – Min no RC10**

The Committee NOTED that the Town Council's contractors had now completed all follow-up works to trees, (following the comprehensive tree survey carried out by Place Services in late 2023). The Services Manager reported that during the works a further Oak tree had been identified as having an infestation of Oak Processionary Moth (OPM), and that works to remove the nests would soon be undertaken.

#### **RC38 RVRG – Memorial Trees – Min no RC11**

The Committee NOTED the report.

#### **RC39 Memorial Tree and Bench Policy**

The Committee considered the report and AGREED the detailed draft policy, subject to the following:

- The policy should be universal and apply to all Town Council controlled green spaces, including those overseen by the Environment and Heritage (E &H) Committee. This proposal would be taken to the next E & H Committee meeting for members to review.
- Point 3.2 should also include the wording 'permission is required from, but not limited to the local Highways Authority, Essex County Council, Epping Forest District Council and or any other relevant authorities.
- Point 5.12 – the two time frames to be extended to "6 weeks" and "12 weeks" respectively.

It was noted that another application for a memorial bench had been received from a local resident that very day.

#### **RC40 RVRG Changing Rooms – Min no RC12 -Security / Health and Safety**

The Committee NOTED the report and AGREED that quotations should be sought at the earliest opportunity.

- for the demolition of both changing room buildings
- for the capping of the building and potential parapet work.

#### **RC41 Football Pitch Hire on the RVRG- Min no RC13**

The Committee NOTED the report and AGREED to the decision of the Recreation Working Party (RWP), to permit the use of one full-size football pitch for the forthcoming 2024/25 season only.



**RC42 Independent Playground Inspection – Min no RC14**

The Committee NOTED that a purchase order has been issued to the Play Inspection Company, who are tasked to carry out the next major independent inspection of all playgrounds in November 2024, exact date to be confirmed.

The Services Manager reported that the previous full independent inspection of all Town Council playgrounds, conducted in May 2024, resulted in a very positive report with minimal remedial works necessary. All works recommended in the May 2024 inspection report had now been completed.

**RC43 Essex & Suffolk Water (ESW) – Min no RC18**

The Committee NOTED that the majority of the remedial work has now been completed by ESW. The Services Manager reported that there remained one small area of concern relating a partially exposed section of pipework. Officers would be contacting ESW in this regard in the coming days.

**Other Agenda Items**

**RC44 Town Council Community Halls**

**44.1 Murray Hall**

The Committee NOTED the following;

- A new heating thermostat has been installed, providing greater control and flexibility on the heating timings.
- Electricity bills have now been switched to British Gas and hopefully this will result in more reliable and consistent billing.
- As the Town Council electric van is now charged from Murray Hall directly, a cost reallocation will need to be considered during the financial year, from the 'Murray Hall electricity' budget line to 'van' budget line.
- The air conditioning units are not working and repair quotes have been sought.

The Town Clerk reported that he was currently discussing impending maintenance issues with the Services Manager and Halls and Bookings Officer, and that a full report would be made at the next meeting of this Committee. It was further reported that the East 15 Acting School would be returning to the hall on 7 October 2024, through to May 2025.

Issues arising from two recent party hires were NOTED, and as a result it was AGREED that the following points should be added to the terms and conditions of hire:

- "The Town Council is not responsible for matters beyond its control. e.g. loss of utilities power or water"
- "Hirers are responsible for the noise levels (decibels) generated by their own contractors"

**44.2 Kingsley Hall – Min no RC19.2**

The Committee NOTED that work on the front windows is now complete, and officers had been impressed by the high standard of work.

**RC45 Jessel Green Fun Day – Sunday 23 June 2024 – Min no RC319**

The Committee NOTED the report regarding the successful Jessel Green Day in the summer. The Town Clerk gave a comprehensive report on the sad and disappointing news that had just broken on the day, that the Red Ballon Foundation

(RBF) was now in the process of appointing liquidators to close the registered charity down. RBF has been a consistent supporter of LTC and its activities over many years and he explained how this would adversely affect LTC, now and also in the future

The Committee AGREED to suspend Standing Order number 3(ff) and AGREED to conclude the meeting by 9.30pm.

**RC46 Request for a memorial bench plaque – Min no RC22**

The Town Clerk reported that the Services Manager had met with the person who had made the initial request, and that confirmation of final adjustments to the design of the plaque were awaited from him.

Cllr Sylvan left the meeting.

**RC47 Memorial Garden bench – Min no RC23**

The Town Clerk reported that he would be following-up on the recent kind offer of a former Town Councillor regarding the donation of a new bench.

**RC48 Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) – Min no RC242.1**

The Committee NOTED that the Services Manager conducted a visual survey of Oak trees across all Town Council sites in June 2024, and that OPM was detected in two trees on the RVRG. The Services Manager reported that both trees had now been treated, and that a further tree on Hillyfields Open Space had been reported to the City of London Corporation, as it fell within their section of this site.

**RC49 Financial Position**

The Committee NOTED the current financial position as of 30 June 2024, together with details of the funds now available from earmarked reserves.

**RC50 Future Work of the Committee**

Cllr Murray to produce a report detailing a long-term strategic vision for the RVRG.

Signed: .....  
Date: 5 November 2024

**LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL**

**RECREATION COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Loughton Town Council, Council Chamber,  
1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ on Tuesday 5 November 2024  
at 7.30pm**

**Present**

**Councillors:**

D Wixley (in the chair)

L House (from Min no. RC55)

M Stubbings

N MacKinnon (from Min no. RC55)

K Valentine

**Also in attendance:**

**Officers:**

M Squire (Town Clerk)

P Hoy (Services Manager)

K Pendlebury (Responsible Financial Officer – Pending)

**Also Present:**

Vanessa Gayton, Team Manager Community Development and Wellbeing Customer and Communities, Epping Forest District Council (EFDC)

Cllr Chidi Nweke, EFDC Councillor

Attendees were asked if anyone were going to record the meeting and confirmed that they would not be recording.

**RC51 Apologies**

An apology had been received from Cllr Murray. Cllrs House and MacKinnon had both previously indicated that they would arrive a little late.

**RC52 Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Wixley declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 7, as a former employee of Essex and Suffolk Water. The Town Clerk and Services Manager declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 11, as they had both attended a training seminar organised by 'Proludic', which predominantly focussed on inclusivity in children's playgrounds .

**RC53 Confirmation of Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2024 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**RC54 Public Representations**

None were received.

Cllrs House and MacKinnon both joined the meeting during the next item.

**RC55 Oakwood Hill Project – Min no RC33**

Vanessa Gayton, Team Manager Community Development and Wellbeing Customer and Communities, Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) was welcomed to the meeting and provided a comprehensive update on community work in the Oakwood Hill area. Copies of "Oakwood Hill Matters," a new community newsletter were left for members to peruse. The work carried out so far has been centred on:

- After school club

- Funding for up to six people to gain child minding qualifications
- The appointment of a community Champion, Claire Silver, who has initiated a new residents' Facebook page and yoga sessions, with a Christmas meal and a summer barbeque planned
- Female Entrepreneurship programme
- Foodbank collection point, in conjunction with Restore
- "Ladies Dance and Dine" programme, for up to 15 residents
- "Let's Get Together" social group
- Mindful Arts Space – mental health support and advice
- Beginning in January 2025, "Movement of the Mind", for up to six mental health service users
- Funding for "Safer Streets" – diversionary activities aimed at both primary and secondary school age groups
- Creative Youth Club – music, art, podcasting etc, with mentorship from students from New City College

An invite from Claire Evans, EFDC Community Engagement Officer, Oakwood Hill, who had been invited but unable to attend this meeting, was extended via Vanessa Gayton to all members for the first annual stakeholder event for Oakwood Hill on Friday 15 November at Oakwood Hill Community Hall, Loughton. This would provide an opportunity to highlight key projects that have been developed in the Oakwood Hill area, and to explore the priorities for the area and how they can be addressed. Members Noted that the time of the event was 12.30pm.

Members took the opportunity to ask questions, and Vanessa Gayton was thanked for her presentation and for the work carried out on the Oakwood Hill Estate so far.

**RC56 Roding Valley Recreation Ground – Changing Rooms – Potential 'Mens Shed' Project**

EFDC Councillor, Chidi Nweke, was welcomed to the meeting and provided an update on the potential project to convert the derelict changing rooms to a 'Men's Shed' workshop for the benefit of the local community. The Chairman, Town Clerk and Services Manager met with Cllr Nweke at the changing room buildings on 4 October 2024, and the full scale of the task to convert the buildings into a safe working space were made aware to Cllr Nweke. Funding from multiple sources would be necessary to enable the project to commence.

Members took the opportunity to ask questions and Cllr Nweke was thanked for his presentation.

**RC57 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report**

Members NOTED the Town Clerk's report.

The Chairman highlighted and the Committee confirmed that they had received his e-mail, which provided information on two issues that originated from the Environment and Heritage Committee i.e. proposed Fields in Trust status for Jessel Green and potential budget implications to support the local Speed Watch Group.

**Roding Valley Recreation Ground (RVRG)**

**RC58 Roding Valley Cricket Club (RVCC) – Min no RC36**

The Committee NOTED that progress on the proposed transfer of the cricket area continues to be protracted.

**RC59 RVRG Changing Rooms – Min no RC40 – Security / Health and Safety**

The Committee NOTED that two quotes for the demolition of both buildings had been obtained. The Services Manager reported that work to install security measures to prevent access to the roof would amount to between £6k and £10k.

Members AGREED

- to invite Cllr Nweke to the next committee meeting to provide an update on progress on the potential Men's Shed Project;
- that in the meantime he should be informed of the urgency, to make immediate remedial works and that a timeline needs to be set to put these measures in place.

**RC60 Damage to RVRG Gate**

The Committee NOTED that damage to the main gate from the Oakwood Hill Estate to the RVRG was identified on the evening of 2 October 2024. An insurance claim has been made and accepted by the Council's insurance company, value £450, and the repair is due to be carried out on Thursday 7 November 2024.

**Other Agenda Items**

**RC61 Newmans Lane Playground Project – Min no RC34**

The Town Clerk reported that 10 companies had expressed an interest in the project, of which eight tender submissions had been received. All five members of the sub-committee assigned to choose the winning tender agreed that the scheme submitted by Proludic most accurately complied with the brief and provided dynamic play equipment with a high emphasis on inclusiveness. The Committee NOTED that work would commence in January 2025 and that feedback was currently being provided to all of the unsuccessful bidders.

**RC62 Essex Playing Fields Association AGM & Awards Evening**

The Committee NOTED the Chairmans report.

**RC63 Davenant Playing Fields**

The Committee NOTED the report. Further comment is awaited from Davenant Foundation School before a clear direction on this issue can be agreed. It was AGREED that any possible expenditure involved would be split between this Committee and the Environment and Heritage Committee, whose remit includes the neighbouring Lady Whittakers Mead.

**RC64 Jessel Green 'Fields in Trust' Status**

The Committee NOTED the report and AGREED to support the initiative as proposed by the Environment and Heritage Committee (Min no's EH6 and EH32).

It was AGREED that a comprehensive consultaion should be sent to local residents, in the vicinity of Jessel Green, to support the 'Fields in Trust' application, which would be carried out in due course.

**RC65 Town Council Community Halls**

**65.1 Murray Hall – Min no 44.1**

The Committee NOTED the report listing recent expendture on Murray Hall and potential projects that will need future funding, which need to be taken into account in the budget process.

**65.2 Kingsley Hall**

The Committee NOTED that the flooring throughout Kingsley Hall will need replacing at some point soon, which will similarly affect future budgets.

**RC66 Financial Position**

The Committee NOTED the current financial position as of 30 September 2024.

**RC67 2025/2026 Fees and Charges Review**

The Committee AGREED to an increase in fees and charges of 2.7%, in line with the Retail Price Index (RPI).

**RC68 Committee Priorities for 2025/2026**

The Committee reviewed its priority list for 2025/26 and AGREED to insert the 'Kingsley Hall floor' into number 2 and 'fencing at Willingale Road Playing Field' into number 3.

**RC69 2025/26 Budget**

The Town Clerk stated that this was very much a preliminary budget and may need to be adjusted at a later stage, in lieu of establishing more reliable utility costs data, and implementing the changes from the Chancellor's budget on Employer costs etc. The general budget figures were based on a 3% increase on many budget lines and more provision had been made on expenditure on tree maintenance.

The Committee was informed that no substantial funds for major projects would likely be available until the prepayment of public works loans at the tail end of financial year 2027/28.

An additional £5k was requested to be added to Earmarked Funds for speeding indicator measurement equipment for the Valley Hill area.

Members AGREED the preliminary budget figures.

**RC70 Future Work of the Committee**

None to report.

Signed: .....

Date: 15 January 2025

**LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL**

**RECREATION COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Loughton Town Council, Council Chamber,  
1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ on Wednesday 15 January at  
7.30pm**

**Present**

**Councillors:**

D Wixley (in the chair)	A Fricker (substitute for Cllr MacKinnon)
R Brookes (substitute for Cllr House)	M Stubbings
S Murray	K Valentine
R Sylvan	

**Also in attendance:**

Cllr I Allgood  
Cllr S Fontenelle

**Officers:**

M Squire (Town Clerk)  
P Hoy (Services Manager)

**Also Present:**

Cllr Chidi Nweke, Epping Forest District (EFDC) Councillor

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

**RC71 Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Cllrs House and MacKinnon. The Town Clerk reported that Cllrs Brookes (for Cllr House), and Fricker (for Cllr MacKinnon) had been appointed as substitutes for this meeting.

**RC72 Declarations of Interest**

Cllrs Murray and Allgood declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda item 5, as both were involved in the Men's shed project, (albeit tentative trustees at present). Cllr Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 8, as he is acquainted with the family who have requested the memorial bench.

**RC73 Confirmation of Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2024 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**RC74 Public Representations**

None were received.

**RC75 Roding Valley Recreation Ground - Changing Rooms – Potential 'Mens Shed' Project – Min nos RC56 & RC59**

EFDC Councillor, Chidi Nweke, was welcomed to the meeting and provided a further update on the potential project to convert the derelict changing rooms to a 'Men's Shed' workshop for the benefit of the local community. Cllr Nweke reported the following:

- Discussion had been held with Qualis regarding arranging for a full structural survey to be carried out on the buildings.
- To assist with funding applications, a lease with minimum term of 10 years would need to be agreed with LTC.

- Large companies, including building material suppliers, had been approached regarding assistance in the conversion of the buildings into a space suitable to house a men's shed.
- The registration of the Loughton Men's Shed group was ongoing, and it will be stated as a Community Shed.
- The cost (stated as £900.00) of the structural survey should be met by LTC as the leaseholder of the buildings.

The Committee considered the final point and AGREED that the council should pay for the structural survey, with the money to be taken from the Roding Valley Recreation Ground (RVRG) improvement works budget.

#### **RC76 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report**

- The Committee NOTED that the Speed Indicator Device (SID) is imminently due to be installed in Valley Hill by the EFDC Highway Rangers.
- The Committee NOTED that the memorial bench plaque at the corner of Borders Lane / Colson Road has now been installed.
- The Committee NOTED that the former Town Councillor who has offered to pay for a new bench and plaque at the Memorial Garden, has now been approached with the various costings.

Cllr Sylvan declared a non-pecuniary interest in the next item, as she has entered a contract to run an 'after school club' as part of the ongoing project at Oakwood Hill.

- The Chairman reported on the first annual stakeholder event for Oakwood Hill on Friday 15 November 2024, organised by the EFDC Community Engagement Team, at Oakwood Hill Community Hall, Loughton, that he and several fellow councillors had attended. The event provided EFDC officers with the opportunity to highlight key projects that have been developed in the Oakwood Hill area, and to explore the priorities for the area and how they could be addressed. Cllr Murray has been keeping members informed on all developments pertaining to the Oakwood Hill project.
- The Chairman reported that EFDC Local Plan included proposals to protect Epping Forest from recreational pressures. The Roding Valley Recreation Ground (RVRG) had thus been designated as a SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space). An enhancement project, details not yet known, was to be funded from Section 106 monies.
- More details can be found in the agenda and minutes of the EFDC Cabinet meeting held on the 9 December 2024 at which the Chairman had addressed the Cabinet in order to ensure that LTC will be consulted on the proposals.
- The Vice Chairman also provided an update on EFDC 'Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation' -RVRG – Enhancement Project funding. Specific details will emerge in due course.

#### **Roding Valley Recreation Ground (RVRG)**

#### **RC77 Roding Valley Cricket Club (RVCC) – Min no RC58**

The Town Clerk reported that there had been no further progress, but that he is continuing to chase the RVCC on a regular basis.

#### **RC78 New Bench**

The Committee NOTED that a local resident has requested a bench, to incorporate a memorial plaque, ideally to be installed in the 'running track' field. The Services Manager met with the requestee on 2 January 2025, the desired position, close to



the wooden footbridge, was identified, and the memorial bench policy and payment details discussed and agreed in principal.

**RC79 Wilding of grass areas**

The office has been requested to set up a site meeting with EFDC / Qualis, with a view to, if necessary, in delaying grass cutting until after the blooming of wild flowers had faded in the RVRG fields behind Avondale Drive and Greensted Road. The Committee AGREED that the Services Manager should arrange the meeting, which he, the Town Clerk, the Chairman and Councillor Murray would all attend.

**Other Agenda Items**

**RC80 Newmans Lane Playground Project – Min no RC61**

The Committee NOTED that the preferred playground contractor 'Proludic' has been on site since Monday 6 January 2025, and that good progress was being made. Completion is set for the end of January 2025 (weather permitting). In the absence of the Town Clerk, the Services Manager will liaise with the Chairman, Vice Chairamn and Town Mayor regarding an opening ceremony, to include Oakview School once the project has reached a conclusion.

**RC81 Jessel Green**

**81.1 Jessel Green Community Funday**

It was AGREED that this event will be held on Sunday 6 July 2025.

**81.2 'Fields in Trust' status - Min no RC64**

Work on this project will commence at the first available opportunity to include local residents questionnaire/consulation/ feedback. It was AGREED that Neil Bartlett, 'Save Jessel Green' campaign would be included in this process. A request was made for members (including ward members) to help in the distribution of hardcopy correspondence to local residents in this respect.

**RC82 Town Council Community Halls**

**82.1 Murray Hall – Min no 65.1**

The Committee NOTED that the hall floor was sanded, treated and polished (last time 2022) in December 2024 at a cost of £3,670, the majority of which will be funded from the remaining 'Halls earmarked funds' of £3,005.

**82.2 Kingsley Hall**

The Committee NOTED that during the pre-Christmas period, our regular flooring contractors attended the hall and carried out minor repairs to 2 no. damaged sections of flooring, and applied 2 no. coats of industrial strength floor polish. Following on from the above, it was also NOTED that the flooring for Kingsley Hall will need replacing entirely, at some point in the latter part of the next financial year.

**RC83 Tree Whips**

The Committee NOTED that Cllr MacKinnon has at his disposal some 100 tree whips, which can be planted at various Town Council sites. Various options were discussed, and it was AGREED that the Chairman would liaise with Cllrs MacKinnon and Fricker, and the Services Manager, to select the most suitable sites, once the exact species of the Whips is known. Several members of this committee volunteered to assist in the planting.

**RC84 Financial Position**

The Committee NOTED the current financial position as of 31 December 2024 together with the details of the funds available from earmarked reserves.

**RC85 2025/26 Budget**

Members NOTED the 2025/2026 Budget, as detailed at the preceding Resources and General Services budget meeting.

**RC86 Future Work of the Committee**

Nothing to report.

**Signed:** .....

**Date:** 11 March 2025

**LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL**

**RECREATION COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Loughton Town Council, Council Chamber,  
1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ on Tuesday 11 March 2025 at  
7.30pm**

**Present**

**Councillors:**

D Wixley (in the chair)	
I Allgood (substitute for Cllr House)	N MacKinnon
S Murray	M Stubbings
R Sylvan	K Valentine

**Also in attendance:**

**Officers:**

M Squire (Town Clerk)  
P Hoy (Services Manager)

**RC87 Apologies**

An apology had been received from Cllr House. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Allgood had been appointed as substitute for Cllr House for this meeting.

**RC88 Declarations of Interest**

Cllrs Murray and Allgood declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda item 6, as both were involved in the Men's Shed project, (albeit tentative trustees at present). Cllr Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 8, as he is acquainted with the family who have requested the memorial bench.

**RC89 Confirmation of Minutes**

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

**RC90 Public Representations**

None were received.

**RC91 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report**

- The Chairman reported that two officers who had previously worked closely with the Town Council, had recently departed EFDC. Phil Hawkins, formerly Manager of the Grounds Maintenance Team, and Gill Wallis, formerly Community, Health and Wellbeing Manager, were thanked for all they had done for the Town Council, and both were extended the very best wishes of this Committee and of the Town Council.
- The Chairman reported that two 'Play in the Park' sessions, funded by the Town Council and free of charge to attendees, had been arranged for Tuesday 8 April 2025 (10.00am to 12.00 noon) at Roding Valley Recreation Ground (near the tennis courts), and on Tuesday 15 April 2025 (10.00am to 12.00 noon) at Jessel Green (by Colebrook Lane Playground).
- The Chairman reported that the lighting of a beacon, to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day, would be taking place at Hillyfields Open Space on Thursday 8 May 2025 at 9.00pm. All members of this Committee, and the wider Council, were invited to attend the event.

- **RC79 Wilding of Grass Areas** – The Chairman reported on a site meeting that he attended with Cllr Murray, the Services Manager and staff from Qualis Grounds Maintenance, to discuss leaving designated sections of the Roding Valley Recreation Ground (RVRG) uncut, to encourage the growth of dandelions. Several options were discussed, but ultimately it had been AGREED to not delay grass cutting for this year, therefore no action would be taken.
- The Chairman commented on the pleasing spectacle created by the spring flowers now on display on Kings Green. The committee NOTED that a Facebook post displaying a photo of the flowers had been well received by the general public.
- The Town Clerk reported that the Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) Highway Rangers had cleared the Lower Road street sign that had been obscured by overgrown vegetation, following a request by officers. It was AGREED that this item would also be reported at the forthcoming Environment and Heritage Committee meeting on 26 March 2025.
- The Committee NOTED that the former Town Councillor who had offered to pay for a new bench and plaque at the Memorial Garden had accepted the various costings, and orders for the bench and its installation. Payment had been received and the bench would now be installed.
- The Town Clerk reported that he had been approached by members of Loughton Athletic Club (LAC) with regards to meeting to discuss their plans for the refurbishment of the LAC building. The meeting will also include discussions about the renewal of the LAC lease which is due to expire in May 2028, and a full report would be made to the next meeting.
- The Town Clerk reported that the occupant of a property in Greensted Road, had contacted officers regarding Connifer trees bordering the RVRG. The Services Manager further reported that following a site meeting with the occupant, the trees were found to have been within the boundary of the property. No further action is required in this matter.
- The Chairman reported that he had been in contact with members of LAC regarding security issues, specifically access to the roof of its building at RVRG, and had put several suggestions forward.

### **Roding Valley Recreation Ground (RVRG)**

**RC92 Roding Valley Recreation Ground - Changing Rooms – Potential ‘Mens Shed’ Project – Min nos RC56, RC59 & RC75**

The Town Clerk reported that an asbestos survey had now been conducted, and that the results showed only a minimal level of asbestos present in the buildings. An independent structural survey would now be carried out, and a full report made at the next meeting.

**RC93 Roding Valley Cricket Club (RVCC) – Min no RC77**

The Town Clerk reported that although dialogue with officials from RVCC remained ongoing, there had been no further tangible progress.

**RC94 New Bench – Min no RC78**

The Services Manager reported that the bench, incorporating a memorial plaque, that a local resident had requested, to be installed in the ‘running track’ field, has been delivered and will be installed as soon as the ground conditions allow for vehicle access onto the RVRG.

The Committee AGREED that officers should advise dog owners to deposit dog waste bags into general litter bins in the event that dog waste bins are full to overflowing. Notices will be affixed to all dog waste bins throughout the RVRG.

### **Other Agenda Items**

#### **RC95 Newmans Lane Playground Project – Min no RC61**

The Town Clerk reported that the project was now completed, with the exception of some minor ‘snagging’ issues. The Play Company ‘Proludic’, that supplied the equipment and carried out the installation, had conducted a very good job and had been user friendly throughout the process. The project has been paid for, with 5% of costs being retained for a period of 6 months to cover for any immediate issues arising.

On a sour note it was reported that a small section of safety surfacing underneath the multi-play unit had been damaged by arson. This would be repaired in due course. Unfortunately, there had also been other incidents of graffiti at this early stage.

An opening ceremony has been arranged for Friday 14 March 2025 at 10.30am, and all members of this Committee are invited to attend. The playground will be officially opened by the Town Mayor, and it is hoped that pupils and staff from Oakview School will also be in attendance. The event has been advertised locally, and a number of ‘goody bags’ are to be provided by Proludic for those attending. Representatives from EFDC, including Councillor Holly Whitbread, had also been invited to attend.

#### **RC96 Town Council Community Halls**

##### **96.1 Murray Hall – Min no 65.1**

There were no items to report.

##### **96.2 Kingsley Hall**

The Committee NOTED that the current morning nursery will be closing on Tuesday 22 July 2025. The Town Clerk reported that as none of the existing staff wish to carry on the nursery, another hirer would be sought. The nursery has been sent an itinerary of items to clear from the premises in the meantime.

#### **RC97 Tree Whips**

It was AGREED that the tree whips will be planted at RVRG, with any excess being used at Lady Whitakers Mead. A work party will be convened to carry out the planting in the coming weeks, when resources and time allow

#### **RC98 Loughton Cricket Club (LCC) Boundary**

The Town Clerk reported that he and the Services Manager had carried out a site visit to check the measurements of the new amended boundary. However, in the absence of anyone from Thornton Rones, another visit will be necessary to clarify certain points. This is likely to be in early April, and a full update will be made at the next meeting.

The Committee NOTED that the Town Clerk will soon arrange to meet with LCC officials, to discuss the roles and responsibilities of all relevant parties. A full report will be made at the next meeting.

**RC99 Davenant Playing Fields – Min no RC63**

The Town Clerk reported that further correspondence had been received from the school regarding whose responsibility it is for repairs to the school's perimeter fence, which borders both Willingale Road Playing Field and Lady Whitakers Mead. The school's Compliance Officer has once again been asked to access the relevant paperwork which will clarify this matter. A further update will be provided as and when this information has been made available.

**RC100 Financial Position**

The Committee NOTED the current financial position.

**RC101 Future Work of the Committee**

Nothing to report.

**Signed:** .....

**Date:** 28 May 2025