

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 4 July 2018 at 7.45pm at Loughton Library & Town Hall.

Present:

Councillors: S Pewsey (in the Chair)
M Dalton J Jennings J Jogia
J Mahoney

Also present:

Officers: B Smith (Assistant Town Clerk)
P Bryce (Administrative Assistant)

RG124 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Murray.

RG125 Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Mahoney and Pewsey declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 6.1, Financial Assistance Applications, as they were familiar with the Restore Community Centre.

RG126 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2018 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG127 Public Representations

None were received.

RG128 Matters for Report

128.1 Office Accommodation – Min no RG118.2

The Committee NOTED that the 3-year lease for the rental of 1 Buckingham Court had been completed on 13 June 2018 and the 3-month rent deposit of £8,125 paid directly into the Council's Santander account. At the determination of the lease, this would be repaid together with any interest accrued.

Further to the report made to this Committee on 5 July 2017, Mullucks Wells had been appointed as the Managing Agents for the property at £850 per annum plus VAT on a two-year contract.

Legal fees were likely to be in the region of £1,250.00 plus VAT together with £9.00 disbursements.

The Committee NOTED that the old desk furniture had been recycled and collected by the Warlies Park House Business Centre in Upshire who had subsequently made a £70 donation to one of the Town Mayor's charities, the Epping Forest Foodbank.

128.2 Insurance – Min no RG118.3

128.2.1 Assets

With regard to the insurance of bus shelters and play equipment, the Committee NOTED the report but AGREED to take no further action at this time.

128.2.2 Landlord Rent Guarantee Insurance

The Committee asked the Assistant Town Clerk to obtain further information regarding the Terms and Conditions of this type of insurance and deferred a decision until the next meeting.

128.2.3 HMRC investigations

The Committee asked the Assistant Town Clerk to obtain further information regarding the Terms and Conditions associated with investigation fees insurance cover for further consideration at the next meeting.

128.3 Internal Audit – Min no RG118.5

The Committee NOTED the internal auditor's final report for 2017/18 which had been circulated electronically to all members on 9 May 2018.

128.4 Data Protection – Min no RG118.7

The Committee NOTED that, to comply with the GDPR, officers had been continuing to update all the forms and paperwork associated with the services provided by the Town Council.

Councillors had also been sent a Privacy Notice reminding them of the Council's responsibilities in this regard.

The Committee also NOTED that whilst the Council's Document Retention Policy already addressed data retention of items covered by other legislative requirements, officers would need to periodically review other data held by the Council to ensure it was only kept for the purpose for which it was collected and only for as long as was necessary.

128.5 Christmas Card Competition 2018 – Min no RG87.5

The Committee NOTED the details of the 2017 competition and AGREED to maintain the current age categories and format for 2018 competition entries.

128.6 Flag Flying

The Committee NOTED that the Town Council had marked Armed Forces Day 2018 on Saturday 30 June 2018 by flying the special flag outside the Library.

The Committee NOTED the Council had been invited by the Seafarers UK's patron, HRH The Earl of Wessex, to "Fly the Red Ensign on Merchant Navy Day", Monday 3 September 2018. This aimed to help raise public awareness of our island nation's reliance on seafarers and shipping. A Red Ensign had been purchased at a cost of £38.50 for the occasion.

128.7 Training and Conferences

The Committee APPROVED the attendance of Cllr Jennings at the forthcoming Epping Forest District Council training sessions for the purposes of paying travel expenses:

Local Authority Finance & Budget Process	5 July 2018
Risk Management	30 October 2018
Treasury Management	22 January 2019

128.8 Local Services Fund

The Assistant Town Clerk reported that the Town Council had been awarded £10,000 from the Essex County Council Local Services Fund towards an apprenticeship scheme. As this was less than originally requested a revised scheme would be developed by the Town Clerk.

RG129 Financial Assistance Applications 2018/19 – RG107

129.1 Restore in the Community

Noting this organisation's recent move from the Community Centre in The Broadway and its amended application, the Committee RE-CONFIRMED the following award for 2018/19:

Organisation	Amount Granted	Power	Purpose of grant
Restore in the Community	£4,000	LGA 1972, S133	Running costs

129.2 Grant Claims

The Committee considered the report and CONFIRMED that the grant claim from Spark for its £1,000 award may be settled.

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman reported on their recent meeting with representatives from the Loughton Youth Project. It was AGREED to defer payment of the grant until further updates regarding Loughton Youth Project's future plans had been received.

RG130 Finance – Min no RG120

130.1 End of Year Report

The accounts for 2017/18, approved by full Council on 9 May 2018, together with details of the transfers to and from earmarked reserves, were NOTED.

130.2 Current Financial Position

The current financial position was NOTED.

130.3 Precept

The Committee NOTED that the first instalment of the Precept, £332,500, together with the Local Council Tax Support Grant payment of £13,508, had been received into the Council's Santander bank account on 27 April 2018. Members were reminded that this was the final LCTS grant to be paid by the District Council.

130.4 Fidelity Guarantee Insurance Cover

The Committee carried out the annual risk-based review of the level of fidelity guarantee insurance cover as required by the audit process and AGREED to reduce the level of cover to £1.2 million.

130.5 Internal Financial Check

The Committee AGREED to ask Cllr Angold-Stephens to carry out checks on the Council's financial transactions during the current financial year and thanked Cllr Omer for his work in this regard during 2017/18.

130.6 Bank Accounts

130.6.1 Financial Limits – Min no RG110.2

The Committee AGREED to increase the maximum balance limit in the No 2 NatWest Account, used as an imprest account for wages, tax and pension payments, to £40,000.

130.6.2 Authorised Signatories

The Committee AGREED to the following list of authorised signatures for each bank account to enable the mandates to be updated:

No 1) CURRENT ACCOUNT (NatWest)

Signatories: Town Mayor S Murray and Deputy Town Mayor S Murphy together with Cllrs S Pewsey, C C Pond, D Wixley and J Angold-Stephens plus C P Pond (but not in conjunction with CCP).

Operators: Town Clerk Enid K Walsh and Assistant Town Clerk Brent Smith

No 2) PAYROLL ACCOUNT (NatWest)

Signatories: Town Clerk Enid K Walsh and Assistant Town Clerk Brent Smith in addition to those for the no 1 account.

No 3) BUSINESS RESERVE (NatWest)

Signatories: The Town Mayor, S Murray and Cllr S Pewsey, Town Clerk, Enid K Walsh, and Assistant Town Clerk Brent Smith

No 4) SANTANDER BUSINESS RESERVE

Signatories: Cllrs S Pewsey, C C Pond, J Angold-Stephens, C P Pond (not in conjunction with C C Pond)

Operators: Town Clerk Enid K Walsh and Assistant Town Clerk Brent Smith

No 5) For & on behalf of Loughton Town Council – SECURITY DEPOSITS (NatWest)

Signatories: Town Clerk Enid K Walsh, Assistant Town Clerk Brent Smith and Officer Paul Hoy

No 6) NATIONWIDE BUSINESS INSTANT SAVER

Signatories: Cllr S Pewsey, C C Pond and J Angold-Stephens, plus C P Pond (not in conjunction with C C Pond)

Operators: Town Clerk Enid K Walsh and Assistant Town Clerk Brent Smith

130.7 Accounts Paid

The Committee NOTED payments totalling £290,732.29 as detailed on payments schedules nos 257 – 261 had been made since the report to the meeting on 25 April 2018.

The schedules and accompanying invoices were available at the meeting for inspection. Copies of the latest bank account reconciliations were also provided at the meeting.

RG131 Standing Orders

The Committee reviewed the Standing Orders and AGREED to recommend the amendments detailed in the agenda report to full Council for further consideration and approval.

RG132 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised for future discussion.

Signed
Date: **10 October 2018**

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 10 October 2018 at 7.45pm at Loughton Library & Town Hall.

Present:

Councillors: S Pewsey (in the Chair)
M Dalton J Jennings J Jogia
J Mahoney S Murray A Omer

Also present:

Councillors: D Wixley (from Min no RG137)

Officers: E Walsh (Town Clerk)
B Smith (Assistant Town Clerk)

2 members of the public

RG133 Apologies for absence

No apologies for absence were received.

RG134 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received

RG135 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2018 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG136 Public Representations

None were received.

Cllr Wixley joined the meeting.

RG137 Matters for Report

137.1 Insurance – Min no RG128.2

137.1.1 Landlord Rent Guarantee Insurance

The Committee AGREED to take out the 36-month indemnity cover with a premium of £56.00 per year to cover the unpaid rent for any period during which the building was uninhabitable.

137.1.2 HMRC Investigations

The Committee considered the offer of “fee insurance” at £80 per annum to cover additional costs in responding to an investigation or enquiry raised by HMRC but took no further action in this regard.

137.1.3 Insurance Rebate

The Assistant Town Clerk reported that the Town Council had received a rebate of £76.82 for the reduction in the level of Fidelity Guarantee Insurance and low claim refund of £264.43 on the Commercial Combined Policy.

137.2 Christmas Closedown Arrangements

The Committee NOTED that, in line with the existing Council policy AGREED in February 2008, in addition to the statutory Bank Holidays, the Council Offices would also be closed on Christmas Eve, Monday 24 December 2018. This would be treated as a gratis day for staff.

The office hours will be as follows:

Monday 24 th December	Closed
Tuesday 25 th December	Closed
Wednesday 26 th December	Closed
Thursday 27 th December	9.30 – 4.30
Friday 28 th December	9.30 – 4.30
Monday 31 st December	9.30 – 4.00
Tuesday 1 st January	Closed

137.3 Referendum Principles

The Committee NOTED the Government’s decision in 2018 to defer the setting of referendum principles for town and parish councils for three years conditional upon the sector showing restraint. However, this policy would be kept under active review.

137.4 Remembrance Service

The Committee RESOLVED to make a donation of £100 to the Royal British Legion in support of the Poppy Appeal and towards the cost of the wreath to be laid by the Town Mayor at the Remembrance Service on 11 November 2018. Payment was approved under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

137.5 Annual Town Meeting

The Committee NOTED that the 2018 Annual Town Meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 13 March 2019 commencing at 8pm in the Murray Hall. Whilst this was not a council meeting, all town councillors were expected to attend.

The Committee AGREED to continue with the usual format for the meeting by inviting local organisations and voluntary groups, particularly those in receipt of Financial Assistance from the Council, to mount displays at the event to attract more public interest. The organisations successful in their grant applications for 2019/20 would also be presented with a certificate by the Town Mayor. The meeting would conclude with refreshments and an opportunity for members of the public to speak informally with their councillors. Local businesses which had supported the local community would also be invited.

Members were asked to submit suggestions for a guest speaker to the Town Clerk for further consideration at the next meeting.

137.6 Strategy and Staff Group

The Committee NOTED that the Strategy and Staff Group had met on 8 August 2018. Topics discussed at that informal meeting included staffing and staff recruitment, arrangements for the death of a national figure and the 2019/20 budget.

RG138 Financial Assistance – Min no RG129

138.1 General Applications 2018/19

The Committee NOTED the current balance of £3,650 in the 2018/19 Financial Assistance budget.

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

Organisation	Amount requested £	Item	Power
Rotary Club of Loughton	192.00	Promotional material	LGA 1972 s137

138.2 Grant Claims

The Committee NOTED that, following the receipt of additional information from the Loughton Youth Project satisfactory to the Working Group, the 2018/19 grant of £3,000 had been settled.

It has been reported that the Project was currently running under the control of the Essex Boys and Girls Club with particular reference to services secured via a grant from the Essex Police Fire & Crime Commissioner.

RG139 Finance – Min no RG120

139.1 External Audit 2017/18

The Committee NOTED the External Auditor's Certificate and that the Notice of Conclusion of Audit published on 28 September 2018 was currently displayed on the noticeboards around the town and on the Council's website.

The Committee expressed concern that the comments on the certificate regarding the treatment of direct debit payments were based on a technicality and this appeared to conflict with traditional banking methods.

139.2 Internal Audit – Min no RG118.5

The Committee NOTED that the next visit by the internal auditor would take place in November 2018. The auditor would follow the previously agreed 5-year work plan.

139.3 Internal Financial Check

The Committee NOTED that Cllr Angold-Stephens had accepted the appointment of being the councillor to carry out checks on the Council's financial transactions.

During her visit on 1 October 2018, Cllr Angold-Stephens inspected records connected with hall hire and expressed concern that the audit trail was difficult to follow. The procedure manual in this regard was to be checked and updated for review at her next visit.

The Committee thanked Cllr Angold-Stephens for her work.

139.4 Current Financial Position

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

A copy of the Council's current bank balances and most recent reconciliations would be circulated to members shortly after the meeting.

The Town Clerk reported that the final instalment of the 2018/19 Precept (£332,500), collected by Epping Forest District Council, had been paid directly into the Santander bank account.

139.5 Accounts Paid

Payments totalling £254,896.02 as detailed on payments schedules nos 262 – 268 had been made since the report to the meeting on 4 July 2018. The schedules and accompanying invoices were available at the meeting for inspection.

The Committee NOTED for information, details of all Council payments in excess of £500 were provided on the Council's website on the strategic documents page.

RG140 Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013

The Committee NOTED the Draft Administration Strategy which had been circulated to members under separate cover.

RG141 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised for future discussion.

Signed
Date: **5 December 2018**

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 5 December 2018 at 7.45pm at Loughton Library & Town Hall.

Present:

Councillors: J Jennings (in the Chair)
M Dalton J Jogia J Mahoney
S Murray J Angold-Stephens (as substitute for Cllr Pewsey)

Also present:

Officers: E Walsh (Town Clerk)
B Smith (Assistant Town Clerk)

1 member of the public

RG142 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Omer and Pewsey. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Angold-Stephens had been nominated as Cllr Pewsey's substitute for this meeting.

RG143 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

RG144 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2018 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG145 Public Representations

None were received.

RG146 Matters for Report

146.1 Annual Town Meeting – Min no RG137.5

The Committee NOTED that, after careful consideration, the Town Mayor had decided not to hold a Civic Celebration during his term of office and proposed that the Citizenship Awards could be instead presented at the Annual Town Meeting. The Town Mayor would give careful consideration to the arrangements for the Town Meeting to ensure that the awards received due recognition.

146.2 Christmas Card Competition – Min no RG128.5

The Committee NOTED the report of the 2018 competition and commented that the entries were of an exceptionally high standard with an excellent display of the cards in the Library foyer.

146.3 Local Services Fund – Min no RG128.8

The Committee NOTED that the outcome of the Town Clerk's request to the Award Panel to transfer the £10,000 grant to create a Grounds Maintenance Apprenticeship to a Trainee Groundsman's position was awaited.

146.4 Authorised Signatories – Min no RG130.6.2

The Assistant Town Clerk reported that he had now verified the current signatories for the NatWest accounts but that additional changes would also be required early in February 2019 once the new Town Clerk was in post.

146.5 Remembrance Service – Min no RG137.4

The Committee NOTED that this year's event at the War Memorial on Kings Green on 11 November 2018, marking 100 years since the Armistice, had been very well attended. The Town Clerk reported that the "There but not There" statue would be removed shortly and the ground restored to its previous condition. The statue was to be given to the Town Council by the City of London for safe keeping and reuse.

146.6 Emergency Plan

The Committee undertook a review of the Emergency Plan. Members were asked to submit any further amendments by the end of December 2018.

RG147 Finance – Min no RG120

147.1 Internal Financial Check

The Committee thanked Cllr Angold-Stephens for carrying out a financial check at the Council Offices on 29 November 2018. Areas covered during this visit included the bank reconciliations for September, Hall Bookings procedure and PDQ Reconciliation. Cllr Angold-Stephens found them all to be in order.

147.2 Current Financial Position

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

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

147.3 Accounts Paid

The Committee NOTED that payments totalling £124,222.04 as detailed on payment schedules nos 269 - 273 had been made since the report to the meeting on 10 October 2018.

For information, details of all Council payments in excess of £500 were provided on the Council's website on the strategic documents page.

The Town Clerk reported that the internal auditors were visiting the Council Offices on 6 December 2018 and their report would be circulated to all members of the Council.

RG148 Subscriptions Review

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

RG149 Parish Basic Allowance

The Committee RECOMMENDED to full Council that the level of Parish Basic Allowance that members may claim in 2019/20 be raised to £120.00

RG150 Committee Priorities

150.1 As part of its overall plan and to complement the budget-making process, the Committee reviewed its priority list for 2019/20 and AGREED on the following:

Resources and General Services		
Priority	Main Function	Greater Detail/Current Position
Current activities		
High	Seeking external funding sources	Targeted action
Low	Council structure	Continuing reviews
On-going activities		
Medium	Banking arrangements and investments	Kept under review
High	Running the Committee	
High	Admin for whole council	
High	Council and committee agendas and minutes	
High	All council finances, end of year accounts, audit etc.	
High	Management of Buckingham Crt	
High	Personnel and employment matters, staff management	Staff Handbook reviews as required
High	IT and office equipment	
High	Civic matters	Civic Celebrations incl Citizenship Awards
High	Annual Report	Preparation and printing
High	Newsletter	Editorial, printing and distribution
High	Noticeboards	Maintenance and installation
High	Publicity and website	
High	Annual Town Meeting	Arrangements and admin
High	Christmas card competition	Arrangements and admin
High	Emergency Plan	Amendments and circulation
High	Financial Assistance Scheme	Admin and finance
High	New legislative requirements	
High	Policy reviews	On-going
High	Responding to consultations	Variable
High	Contract reviews	On-going
High	Training Strategy	Annual review
High	Any other matters within the Committee's terms of reference	
Low	Community Forum	Arrangements and admin

150.2 The Committee AGREED the following item for consideration by the Planning and Licensing Committee, as being suitable for a developer's

Section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy contribution should the opportunity arise:

- i) Noticeboards

RG151 Estimates for 2019/20

151.1 Income

The Committee AGREED to maintain the price per sheet of A4 for copies of items on the Publication Scheme at 65p.

151.2 The Committee’s Rolling Programme

The Committee AGREED to the Rolling Programme as presented in the Agenda with one amendment to increase the General Grants Budget to £27,000 for the year 2019/20.

151.3 Expenditure

The Estimates for 2019/20 as presented in the Agenda, with the one amendment referred to in 151.2, were AGREED such that the net figures were as follows:

Recourses and General Services Committee	£
Total budget expenditure (including committee recharge)**	201,481
Income	<u>35,515</u>
Net expenditure	165,966
Less income from earmarked reserves*	<u>-2,000</u>
Total net expenditure	£163,966
*Details of transfers from earmarked reserves:	
<i>Noticeboards</i>	1,000
<i>Office equipment</i>	<u>1,000</u>
<i>Total</i>	2,000

**** NB:** The total budget expenditure shown above currently includes a service recharge of -£257,500 (the 2018/19 figure). The 2019/20 figure would be confirmed by this Committee at its next meeting and a revised budget provided if appropriate.

The Committee thanked the Town Clerk for her clear presentation of the financial reports over the years.

RG152 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised for future discussion.

Signed
Date: 9 January 2019

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 9 January 2019 at 7pm at Loughton Library & Town Hall.

Present:

Councillors: J Jennings (in the Chair)
J Jogia J Mahoney S Murray
A Omer J Angold-Stephens (as substitute for Cllr Pewsey)

Also present:

Councillors: D Wixley

Officers: E Walsh (Town Clerk)
B Smith (Assistant Town Clerk)
P Hoy (Services Manager)

1 member of the public

RG153 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Pewsey. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Angold-Stephens had been nominated as Cllr Pewsey's substitute for this meeting. Cllr Dalton had telephoned his apologies but these were received too late to be included at the meeting.

RG154 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

RG155 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2018 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG156 Public Representations

None were received.

RG157 Matters for Report

157.1 Internal Audit Report

The report from internal auditors from their interim inspection at the Council Offices on 6 December 2018 previously circulated to all councillors was NOTED.

Members congratulated the Town Clerk and her staff on the excellent report.

157.2 Financial Assistance Working Group

The Committee appointed Cllr Angold-Stephens as the third member to this working group to join Cllrs Jennings and Murray in consideration of the applications.

RG158 Council-wide Priorities

The Committee reviewed the lists of priorities from the spending committees and AGREED that the Council-wide high priority list should be as shown below:

Ranking	Committee	Activity
1	Environment and Heritage / Planning and Licensing	Neighbourhood and Local Plans
2	Recreation	Roding Valley Recreation Ground improvements
3	Recreation	Playgrounds
4	Recreation	Community Safety

RG159 Estimates for 2019/20

The Committee considered the report and NOTED the increase in the tax base from the 2018/19 figure of 12,408.9 to 12,580.6.

After considering the estimates, the Committee AGREED that £25,000 could be taken from General Reserves to reduce the net requirement whilst leaving the General Reserves at approximately 62.41% of the net running costs to meet the Reserves Policy.

The Committee also AGREED to the proposed budget revisions with the exception of that for the Roding Valley Recreation Ground play area where £10,000 new money towards the refurbishment project remained.

The Committee RECOMMENDED to Council that the precept for 2019/20 be set at £719,000 with the budget details as follows:

Committee	Income		Expenditure	Expenditure inc re-charges
	£	£	£	£
Resources & General Services	35,515		458,981	180,981
Recreation	127,778		536,000	682,000
Environment and Heritage	18,075		119,960	216,960
Planning and Licensing	0		45,200	80,200
	181,368	181,368		
Interest	6,000	6,000		
Use from earmarked reserves				
Resources & General Services	14,000			
Recreation	133,250			
Environment & Heritage	36,500			
Planning and Licensing	45,000			
	228,750	228,750		
Total income/expenditure		416,118	1,160,141	1,160,141
Less money from general reserves		25,000		
Net requirement		719,023		
Rounding		719,000		

Signed
Date: 6 February 2019

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 6 February 2019 at 7pm at Loughton Library & Town Hall.

Present:

Councillors: J Jennings (in the Chair)
M Dalton J Jogia
J Mahoney (from Min no 165.1) S Murray A Omer
J Angold-Stephens (as substitute for Cllr S Pewsey)

Officers: M Squire (Town Clerk)
B Smith (Assistant Town Clerk)

2 members of the public

The Town Mayor welcomed Mark Squire, the new Town Clerk, to the Council and wished him well in his new role.

RG160 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Pewsey. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Angold-Stephens had been nominated as Cllr Pewsey's substitute for this meeting. He also reported that Cllr Mahoney may arrive late.

RG161 Declarations of Interest

With regard to Agenda item 6.1, Financial Assistance, Councillors made the following declarations:

Cllr Jennings declared a non-pecuniary interest in the application from the Citizens Advice Epping Forest District.

Cllr Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in the applications for Epping Forest Re-Use, Loughton Voluntary Care Association, New Vistas, Noah's Ark Play Group, Oakwood Hill Community Centre, Restore Community Church (Beyond Ourselves) and Citizens Advice Epping Forest District.

Cllr Angold-Stephens declared a non-pecuniary interest in the applications for Restore Community Church (Beyond Ourselves) and Citizens Advice Epping Forest District.

Cllr Dalton declared a non-pecuniary interest in the applications for St. Marys Church and Loughton Festival.

Cllr Omer declared a non-pecuniary interest in the applications for Oakwood Hill Community Centre.

RG162 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2019 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG163 Public Representations

None were received.

RG164 Matters for Report

164.1 Local Council Award Scheme

The Committee Noted that the Council's Quality Gold Award expires at the end of March 2019, and The Town Clerk is awaiting clarification from Cllr

Peter Davey, the NALC representative from Essex to confirm the re-accreditation process.

164.2 Meetings Schedule

The Committee AGREED the Town Council meeting dates for 2019/20 in principle but noted that they could be subject to some change as the District Council's calendar would not be confirmed until the 21 February 2019.

164.3 Buckingham Court Property Company

The Committee Noted that the retiring town clerk, Enid Walsh, had resigned from the role of Director of the above company and Mark Squire, as the Council's new Proper Officer, has been appointed in her place to help oversee the management of the site.

Cllr Mahoney joined the meeting during the next item.

RG165 Financial Assistance Applications 2019/20

165.1 General Applications

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

Organisation	Amount Granted £	Power	Purpose of Grant
Associates of Epping Forest Field Centre	300.00	LG(MiscProv)A 1976 s19	Family Activity/biodiversity project.
Beyond Ourselves Charity (Willingale Garden Project)	2,500.00	LG(MiscProv)A 1976 s19	Development of Community Space.
Cruse Bereavement Care Essex Area Epping Forest Client Services Committee	300.00	LGA 1972 s137	Running costs
Epping Forest Re-Use	230.00	LG(MiscProv)A 1976 s19	Equipment
Epping Forest Sportability Club	600.00	LGA 1972 s145	Running costs
Grow Community Garden (Beyond Ourselves)	2,500.00	LG(MiscProv)A 1976 s19	Running costs
Ignite St Mary's Church Loughton	500.00	LG(MiscProv)A 1976 s19	Laptop & matting
Living Hope (St Mary's)	0.00	LGA 1972 s137	Lunch Club costs
Lopping Hall Endowment	250.00	LGA 1972 s133	Equipment
Loughton Baptist Church (LBC the Church)	3,000.00	LGA 1972 s133	Refurbishment of Toilets
Loughton Festival	2,500.00	LGA 1972 s145	Running costs
Loughton Voluntary Care Association	500.00	LG(MiscProv)A 1976 s19	Running costs
New Vistas	300.00	LG(MiscProv)A 1976 s19	Hall hire for meetings
Noah's Ark play group (Beyond Ourselves)	2,000.00	LGA 1972 s145	Craft materials, equipment & running costs

Oakwood Hill Community Centre (Beyond Ourselves)	2,000.00	LGA 1972 s144	Running Cost and wifi
Project Linus UK	0.00	LGA 1972 s145	Hall hire for meeting
Restore Community Church	2,500.00	LGA 1972 s133	Improve hall facilities
Revitalise	500.00	LGA 1972 s145	Respite care for disabled guests & carers
Samaritans - Redbridge Branch	400.00	LGA 1972 s137	Running costs
The Loughton Club	3,000.00	LGA 1972 s133	Replacement boiler
Total awarded	£23,880		

165.2 Citizens Advice – Epping Forest District

The Committee CONFIRMED that a separate budget item for a grant provision to the Citizens Advice is in place. The budget for 2019/20 of £8,500 was AGREED.

Organisation	Amount granted £	Power	Purpose of Grant
Citizens Advice – Epping Forest District	8,500.00	LGA 1972 s144	Running costs

RG166 Financial Regulations

166.1 Annual Review

The annual review of the Financial Regulations was undertaken. The Committee CONFIRMED to full Council that no amendments were required at the present time and that the document met the Council's needs.

166.2 Financial Limits

The Committee CONFIRMED the financial limits below and AGREED that they were adequate.

Topic	Amount £	Last reviewed	Last changed
Limit of imprest on no 2 a/c	40,000	July 2018	July 2018
Limit of officers signing cheques on no 2 a/c	150	Feb 2018	April 2010
Limit of imprest on Security Deposits a/c	3,000	Feb 2018	April 2006
Limit of cheques on Security Deposits a/c	none	Feb 2018	April 2006
Petty cash imprest	150	Feb 2018	-
Urgent repair work etc without budgetary provision (FR 3.4)	5,000	Feb 2018	April 2008
Additional audit work of external auditor (FR 12.1)	750	Feb 2018	May 2004
Tenders to be obtained (FR 12.3, 12.6 & 12.8)	over 50,000	Feb 2018	May 2004
3 quotes to be obtained (FR 12.8)	10,000 to 50,000	Feb 2018	May 2004
3 estimates to be obtained (FR 12.8)	2,000 to 10,000	Feb 2018	May 2004

Public Contracts Regulations 2015 apply	over £25,000	Feb 2018	Feb 2016
Bad debts may be written off by RFO	250	Feb 2018	Feb 2014
Credit card:			
No 1 Town Clerk	1,000	Feb 2018	Nov 2004
No 2 Services Manager	500	Feb 2018	Feb 2014

166.3 Payments Procedures

Noting that all instructions and the direct debit mandates had previously been approved by the Council and the mandates authorised by two councillor signatures, the Committee CONFIRMED the list of payments currently made by direct debit as follows:

Name	Gross Amount	Frequency	Due date	Purpose
Peninsula Business Services	£241.92	Monthly	4 th	HR services
Epping Forest District Council	£974.00	Monthly	20 th	Business rates for Kingsley & Murray Halls, RVRG & WRPF changing rooms
World Pay (formerly Streamline)	Various	Monthly	18 th	Hire of terminal for credit/debit card payments and associated fees/charges
Crown Gas & Power	Various	Quarterly	10 days after invoice date	Gas supply at Murray Hall and Kingsley Hall
SSE	Various	Monthly	Various	Electricity supply at RVRG, Cemetery, Murray Hall, Kingsley Hall, WRPF and Kings Green
Orange	Various	Monthly	30 th	Mobile phones for external staff
NatWest	Various	Monthly	27 th	Credit card purchases (in full, monthly)
Public Works Loan Board	£14,103.22	Half yearly	19 th Jan/July	Loan repayment Buckingham Court
Public Works Loan Board	£18,295.62	Half yearly	28 th Mar/Sept	Loan repayment Murray Hall (1)
Public Works Loan Board	£17,849.89	Half yearly	1 st June/Dec	Loan repayment Murray Hall (2)
ICO	£55.00	Annually	Sept	Subscription

RG167 Finance

167.1 Authorised Signatories

The Committee CONFIRMED and AGREED that the following changes to the bank mandates should be actioned to reflect the appointment of the new Town Clerk:

- a) To delete Mrs Enid K Walsh from all accounts and add Mr Mark Squire as follows:

Account no	Operator	Signatory
2 NatWest imprest account		X
4 Santander Business Reserve	X	
5 NatWest Security Deposit		X
6 Nationwide Instant Saver	X	

The Committee also CONFIRMED that:

- i. applications to provide for online access to all NatWest accounts for both the Town Clerk, Mr Mark Squire, and Assistant Town Clerk, Mr Brent Smith, may be submitted;
- ii. an application for a credit card for the Town Clerk, Mr Mark Squire, may be submitted to NatWest MasterCard, with the spending limit of £1,000 and the balance to be paid in full, monthly by direct debit from the NatWest current account; and
- iii. the authorising signatories for the two council credit cards may be amended to add Cllrs Angold-Stephens, Murray and Jogia, noting that Cllr C C Pond is currently registered in this regard. Any previous superfluous signatories would now be removed from the bank mandate.

167.2 Current Financial Position

The Committee’s financial position as at 31 January 2019 was NOTED. Copies of the latest bank account balances and reconciliations were subsequently emailed to the committee.

167.3 Accounts Paid

It was NOTED that payments totalling £157,464.40 as detailed on payment schedules nos 274 - 278 have been made since the report to the meeting on 5 December 2018. The schedules and accompanying invoices were available at the meeting for inspection.

RG168 Insurance – Annual Review

The Committee NOTED that 2018/19 was the final year of a three-year long term agreement with WPS Insurance Brokers and Aviva and the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk were awaiting quotes from various specialist Insurance companies for 2019/20.

RG169 Asset Register

The Register of Assets and Properties as at 31 January 2019 was reviewed and AGREED as presented in the Agenda.

RG170 Exclusion of the Press and Public

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

RG171 Pay Award from 1 April 2019

The Committee NOTED the most recent briefing issued by NALC regarding the new pay scales and rates to be applied to all staff from 1 April 2019

Signed
Date: 10 April 2019

THESE MINUTES NOT YET CONFIRMED

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 10 April 2019 at 7.45pm at Loughton Library & Town Hall.

Present:

Councillors: J Jennings (in the Chair)
M Dalton J Mahoney (from Min no 176.3) S Murray
A Omer J Angold-Stephens (as substitute for Cllr S Pewsey)

Also present D Wixley
Councillor

Officers: M Squire (Town Clerk)
P Bryce (Administrative Assistant)

RG172 Apologies for absence

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

RG173 Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

RG174 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2019 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG175 Public Representations

None were received.

RG176 Matters for Report

176.1 Insurance Annual Review – Min no RG168

The Committee noted that the Assistant Town Clerk received three quotes from specialist companies and it was decided to go ahead and continue with WPS Insurance, who provided a competitive quote with a new provider Royal Sun Alliance (RSA).

The annual premium is £5,501.86 with a three year long term price agreement. It also carries a Public Liability increase to £15 million and a low claims profit rebate up to 7.5%.

Motor insurance has been similarly renewed with existing insurers for a further year at a minimal additional cost, totalling £489.80.

176.2 Annual Town Meeting

The Committee noted that the draft minutes for the 2019 Annual Town Meeting held on 13 March 2019 had been circulated to members. All concerns that had been raised by members of the public at the meeting during the question and answer session had been dealt with by the Town Council. The Town Clerk reported that engineers from Essex County Council Highways will be making a presentation at the Council meeting on

24 April 2019 to talk about the proposed bridge work on Alderton Hill during the summer.

Cllr Mahoney joined the meeting during the next item.

176.3 Local Council Awards Scheme (LCAS) – Min no RG 164.1

The Town Clerk explained that whilst much work had been conducted already to reaccredit the Town Council to 'Gold' level, the qualified audit comment raised by the external auditor in the 2017/2018 Annual Governance and Accountability (AGAR) Return has effectively prohibited reaccreditation for the time being. This has been confirmed by the Chief Executive of the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC). Both the EALC and the Town Clerk will make representations to the respective governing bodies to advocate changes to the current LCAS deliberations. The Town Council will review the situation again later in the year.

176.4 AGAR 2017/2018

The Committee noted the qualified comment from the external auditors on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2017/18, in the 'except for matters' section and RESOLVED that any similar accounting entries required for the 2018/2019 would be allocated appropriately; ie any outstanding Direct Debits and Standing Orders should not be part of the bank reconciliation but be included as creditors and form part of the reconciliation between Boxes 7 and 8 on the AGAR.

176.5 Travel expenses for training

The Committee authorised travel expenses for the Town Clerk to attend a 'making tax digital' training course scheduled for June 2019.

RG177 Policies Review

The Committee received and noted the following policies:-

- Code of Conduct
- Publication Scheme
- Health and Safety Policy
- Equality Policy
- Community Engagement Policy
- Grant Awarding Policy
- Training Policy

The Committee noted that the training record of both members and staff (for the last five years only) has now been added to the Town Council's website.

The Town Clerk highlighted the comprehensive review of risk management arrangements conducted in March 2018. A full review of the 2018/2019 arrangements would form part of the full Town Council agenda of 24 April 2019.

RG178 Social Media Policy

The Committee agreed to fully review the draft social media policy and report back to the next Resources and General Services Committee.

The Committee RESOLVED that Facebook only would be used initially, to advertise social events e.g. the Fun Run, Jessel Green Day, Horticultural and Christmas events.

The Town Clerk noted that he would investigate whether the general use of social media would be better organised internally (depending on skills and resources available) or with external assistance.

RG179 Financial Assistance

179.1 General Applications 2019/20

The Committee RESOLVED to make the following contributions (as listed below) from the scheme by granting financial assistance to:

Organisation	Amount granted £	Item	Power
Spark (a branch of Worth Unlimited)	1,000.00	Running Costs for Counselling	LGA 1972 s137
BASICS Essex Accident Rescue Service (BEARS)	200.00	Annual Running Costs	LGA 1972 s137

RG180 Finance

180.1 Authorised Signatories Min No 167.1

The Committee was made aware of the difficulty and frustration involved in making the appropriate changes to banking mandates and noted that the following changes to the bank mandates have been actioned to reflect the appointment of the new Town Clerk:

- b) Online access to all NatWest accounts for Town Clerk, Mr Mark Squire and Assistant Town Clerk, Mr Brent Smith.
- c) A credit card for the Town Clerk, Mr Mark Squire, has been received, a NatWest MasterCard, with a spending limit of £1,000 and the balance to be paid in full, monthly by direct debit from the NatWest current account.
- d) The Town Clerk, Mr Mark Squire is assigned as Operator of the Santander Business Reserve.
- e) Due to delays with NatWest's processing of applications the adding of the Town Clerk, Mr Mark Squire to the Security Deposit accounts are still to be processed, as is the changing of the authorizing signatures for the council credit cards.

180.2 Current Financial Position

The Committee noted the current financial position together with details of the funds available from earmarked reserves.

180.3 Accounts Paid

The Committee noted that payments totalling £127,397.89 as detailed on payment schedules nos 279 - 283 have been made since the report to the meeting on 6 February 2019.

180.4 Councillor Financial Check for Resources and General Services Committee

The Committee thanked Councillor Jill Angold-Stephens for carrying out the periodic check on Council finances, focussing specifically on 'bank reconciliation'.

RG181 Exclusion of the Press and Public

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

RG182 Staffing Matter

The Committee concurred with the actions proposed by the Town Clerk.

Signed
Date: **26 June 2019**