



ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Members of the Environment and Heritage Committee

are summoned to attend a Meeting at **7.30pm** on

Wednesday 14 June 2023

to be held at

Loughton Town Council, Council Chamber
1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ

to transact the business shown in the agenda.

Mark Squire

Town Clerk

7 June 2023

Councillor C C Pond (Chairman)
Councillor C P Pond (Vice Chairman)

Councillors

P Beales
K Valentine

B Cohen
G Wiskin

S Fontenelle

Note to Councillors:
If you are unable to attend the meeting,
please email your apologies to the office contact@loughton-tc.gov.uk

A G E N D A

- 1 Apologies**
To RECEIVE any apologies for absence
- 2 Declarations of Interest**
For Councillors to declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in any items on the Agenda.
- 3 Confirmation of Minutes**
To CONFIRM the minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2023.
- 4 Public Representations**
To hear any representations from members of the public who have registered a request to address the Committee in accordance with no 5, Appendix C, of the Standing Orders.
- 5 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report**
To report (for discussion only) on any further significant information / matters that may be of interest to Committee members.
- 6 Heritage Plaques – Min EH185**
The homeowner has now submitted her formal consent form regarding Charles Frederick Clark (1876 – 1945), Industrialist and Philanthropist. A site visit was made by the Services Manager, Paul Hoy, to establish a suitable setting for the plaque on the house. There are 3 possible locations (see attached page 7). The owner has expressed a preference for site 3, which would actually prove most problematic to instal, and would likely involve instructing an outside contractor to fit (this would incur extra costs).

Cllr C Pond has agreed the wording for the plaque and the order has been progressed.

Members to review

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A local resident of 62 The Uplands would like to start the process of placing up to 3 blue plaques on the building. The 3 individuals connected with no 62 are

- Percy Thompson, major historian of Loughton
- William Brown McDougall, artist,
- Alan Cox, restorer of Copt Hall, architect

Members to review

.....
The Loughton Library (LL) team recently asked Cllr C Pond to provide a guided tour and narrative on 27 May 2023, for a number of heritage blue plaques in the vicinity of LL.

The LL team subsequently reported as follows; *The Heritage Blue Plaque Walk in aid of Love Your Library Day last Saturday was a great success. Led by Cllr Chris Pond we had 31 attendees who really enjoyed it and it was a beautiful day. They all came back to the library for tea and to look at our local history display.*

7 Allotments
7.1 Willingale Road Allotments Report
7.1.1 Status Report

	26 April 2023 – date of inspection
Total plots on site (full and half plots)	91
Plots tenanted (full and half plots)	91
Plots vacant and available	0
Plots vacant but extremely overgrown	0
Income banked to date	£3,730
Outstanding rent	£0.00

Following a full plot inspection on 26 April 2023, 17 letters/emails of concern were sent out. Following which three plot holders have decided to give up their plots. The next inspection will take place during June 2023, with the annual tenancy renewal due on 1 September 2023. Any of those plots showing little or no improvement will be sent a final warning letter.

There are currently 35 residents on the waiting list.

Contact has been made with the Probation Service and they have confirmed they will advise when they have a group available to work at the allotment site.

Rotavator – the volunteers have suggested that the rotavator which is currently not used, as its too large, should be sold and the funds used to buy a strimmer. Committee members to consider this request.

Volunteers have advised the Allotment Officer that they are finding the language barrier more difficult with new tenants. It has been suggested to have the Management Policy translated into a number of appropriate languages to foster better communication. Members to review this request, makes sense given the cosmopolitan make-up of the current plot holder base.

7.1.2 Annual Rent Review

The Committee is asked to consider and agree the rent increase for the period 1 September 2023 – 31 August 2024 so that the required twelve months' notice can be given to all tenants. Usually, the change is based on the increase in the Retail Price Index (RPI). The latest level – April 2023 is 11.4% (January 2023 was 13.8%).

Recommend an increase of 10% (rounded up or down) for the annual rent for plots with effect from 1 September 2023 as shown below. This still provides good value and remains below or comparable with neighbouring parishes.

Plot type	1 September 2022 – 31 August 2023 £	1 September 2022 – 31 August 2023 £
Full	48.00	53.00
Half	33.00	36.00
Shed	18.00	20.00

7.2 Grow Community Garden – Hillyfilelds

Unfortunately, there have been a number of recent break-ins at the site. All incidents have been reported to Essex Police and a crime reference number taken. The office will continue to monitor.

To receive and note

8 Signage

8.1 Signage to the Forest from Loughton Station / Town Centre – Min no EH187.1

All formalities have been completed by the Epping Forest Heritage Trust, and delivery and installation of the signage is now awaited.

To receive and note.

8.2 Broadway Noticeboard – Min no EH187.2

The purchase order for a new wall-mounted notice board was placed with the suppliers on 17 April 2023. Delivery had been anticipated before the end of May and the suppliers have been asked for the date on which the item is expected to be delivered. Installation will take place shortly after the notice board is received.

To receive and note.

8.3 Oakwood Hill Noticeboard – Min no EH187.3

As with the Broadway Notice board (above), the purchase order for a new post-mounted notice board was also placed with the suppliers on 17 April 2023. Installation will also take place shortly after the item is delivered.

To receive and note.

8.4 Alleyway Project – Min no EH187.4

The Services Manager has arranged to visit all sites with the installation contractor on Thursday 15 June 2023. Installations are due to commence immediately thereafter, and it is hoped that they will be completed on that day as well.

To receive and note.

9 Correspondence with Essex County Council

9.1 Salt Bin provision – Min no EH188

Updates on all 3 potential sites and provision of additional salt bags are awaited from Essex County Councillor Vance.

To receive and note

9.2 Bus shelter – Min no EH196

Councillor Vance in his email dated 31.5.23, has requested ‘*Can we resurrect my enquiry regarding a bus shelter for Neville Way Loughton. I believe there was an issue over finances, but it would be good to know if we can progress further*’.

The original understanding was that the requirement was for a positioning near the junction of Valley Hill and Greensted Road.

In earlier correspondence, the Town Clerk explained the difficulty in funding, at this juncture, as this proposal came after the Town Council’s budget setting for 2023/24. There is only £500 allocated for bus shelter maintenance. The last shelter that the Town Council purchased was back in 2017 for Traps Hill, which cost c £4,500, albeit some 6 years ago now.

A potential way forward, could be for Cllr Vance to use his County allowance to fund the bus shelter.

Members to and review and recommend a way forward.

10 Events

10.1 Loughton Day – Min no EH189

Organisation of the event is progressing well, and a variety of potential sponsors have been approached by the Community Manager and Town Clerk. An initial community meeting was held on 25 May 2023. We have received many responses confirming groups are keen to participate in this year’s event following the remittance of registration forms and publicity flyers.

To receive and note.

10.2 Christmas Window Competition

See report pages 8 – 9.

To receive and note.

10.3 Loughton Wombles

Loughton Wombles carried out another successful group litter pick on Saturday 27 May 2023, with 11 wombles out, in two teams, covering the length of Rectory Lane and Hillyfields Green.

The next group meeting will be on Sunday 25 June 2023 for Jessel Green Fun Day, between 12 noon to 4pm, meeting point – the Loughton Town Council gazebo.

To receive and note.

11 Chigwell Lane Bench – Min no EH190

The Town Clerk made an enquiry to the neighbouring business, adjacent to the proposed site, who did not want to be involved as it was outside their boundary.

The Town Clerk and Services Manager will progress matters and provide a further oral update if applicable.

12 Financial Savings – Min no EH194

Members to consider the response from the Recreation Committee meeting of 31.5.23 minute, see below

RC229 Environment & Heritage Committee 28.3.23. Minute 194 Financial Savings

After much discussion, it was AGREED that

- *there were no obvious, significant cost cutting opportunities.*
- *an onsite meeting should be arranged between representatives of the Recreation Committee, the Chairman of the Environment & Heritage Committee, the Town Clerk and Services Manager, EFDC Team Manager, Grounds Maintenance South Contracts & Technical Services, and any other interested parties.*

13 Closed Churchyard

The Town Clerk, Services Manager and Burial Clerk met with the Church Warden of St John the Baptist Church on 30 May 2023, for a further on site meeting.

See meeting note dated 31.5.23 and subsequent email dated 2.6.23

The Town Clerk will provide a further oral update.

See report pages 10 – 11.

To receive and note (pending responses from St John's).

14 Weekly Markets

See report (pages 12 – 13). An updated Town Council market policy will be produced for review at the Committee meeting
Members to review and agree a way forward.

15 Financial Position

Current Financial Position

The current financial position as at 30 April 2023 is attached together with current details of the funds available from earmarked reserves.
(See pages 14 – 15).

16 Financial savings

Following the Town Council meeting of 20 December 2022, the Committee is asked to review, if and where, any further savings can be made.

17 Environmental Issues

This agenda item provides an opportunity for the Committee to discuss concerns and improve the ambience and environment of Loughton by tackling adverse factors and promoting positive ones.

The methodology agreed is as follows:

Councillors should send to the Town Clerk at least 14 days before the meeting a statement of what the eyesore is, its exact location, its ownership, if known, and the desired course of action. Members would discuss the matter, come to a conclusion, and then the Clerk would write to the responsible body outlining what the Town Council would like to see done. If no action were taken, the matter could be publicised and revisited at a subsequent meeting.

18 Future Work of the Committee

The opportunity for members to suggest topics to be considered by the Committee at a future meeting, subject to the Committee's agreement.

19 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE to exclude the press and public from the following item in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as it contains confidential information relating to contractual matters.

20 Allotment dispute

Please see attached Confidential report (pages 16 – 18).

Members to receive and note.

Mark Squire
TOWN CLERK
7 June 2023

Agenda item 6 - Heritage Plaques



Agenda item 10 - Christmas Window Competition

Christmas Window Competition 2022

Several Loughton businesses decorated their windows as part of the town's festive celebrations. All Christmas-themed shop windows were automatically eligible for this competition. The Competition returned to its original format, following previous disruption due to Covid.

Businesses were, as before, split into four classes of entry – local/independent businesses, multiples/chain stores, charity shops and Eateries. The judges were Town Mayor, Barbara Cohen, assisted by Councillor Carol Davies (no third volunteer could be found to assist with the judging). The results were as follows:

Class	Winning businesses	£75 donation made to nominated charity by the Town Council
LOCAL/INDEPENDENT		
Winner	Emily Grace, Florist, 51 The Broadway, IG10 3SP	National Autistic Society, 393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG.
Runners-up	Elliott James, 165 High Road, IG10 4LF	
	Woodbury Homes, 244 High Road, IG10 1RB	
Highly commended	Loughton Tiling, 70 The Broadway, IG10 3ST	
MULTIPLES / CHAINS		
Winner	Chigwell Window Centre, 305-307 High Road Loughton, IG10 1AH	Haven House Children's Hospice, The White House, High Road, Woodford Green, IG8 9LB.
Runner-up	Kaspa's, 301-303 High Road, IG10 1AH	
Highly commended	Lawlors, 120 High Road, IG10 4HJ	
CHARITY SHOPS		
Winner	St Clare Hospice, 72 The Broadway, IG10 3SY	St Clare Hospice Hastingwood Road Hastingwood Essex CM17 9JX
Runner-up	The Children's Society, 20 The Broadway, IG10 3ST	
EATERIES (Cafes, Pubs & Restaurants)		
Winner	Aura, 179-181 High Road, Loughton, IG10 4LF	Haven House Children's Hospice, The White House, High Road,

		Woodford Green, IG8 9LB.
Runners-up	Atesh Grill & Bar, 280-282 High Road, IG10 1RB	

Each of the category winners received a laminated certificate, along with an engraved cup (to keep for 11 months). Runners-up and highly commended received laminated certificates.

The Committee is asked to consider what format it wishes to adopt for this year's competition?

Report by Debra Paris
Planning Committee Clerk & Admin Officer

Agenda item 13 – Closed Churchyard

St John's Church – closed Churchyard Notes from meeting held on 30 May 2023

Attending

Geoffrey Wolfson, Church Warden St John's church
Mark Squire Town Clerk
Paul Hoy Services Manager
Pippa Bryce Burial Clerk

We met Geoffrey at St John's, and he gave us a tour around the grounds and explained that the memorial safety testing team had carried out the tests and a full report is available.

We spoke about the legality of a closed churchyard and our obligations as a Town Council. Mark explained that the Town Council will need to prepare a full report to Councilors on the Environment & Heritage (E & H) Committee for their consideration.

There was a lot to consider, financial, resources and whether the Town Council had the funds to take on the responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the churchyard, or whether they will pass to Epping Forest District Council (EFDC).

Geoffrey explained that he would like to be able to complete and submit to the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), closed churchyard documentation by September 2023. Mark explained that this may be tight for time as the next E&H Committee meeting is in June. We may only be able to produce an update for that meeting, with a full report being presented at the September meeting, Geoffrey understood this and agreed the submission could be later than September.

To fulfil the Town Council's due diligence the following questions, need to be answered.

Administration – how many man hours per week
Fielding telephone calls from families/visitors looking for graves / ancestry.
Confirmation that there will be no further interments in the Cremated Remains plots. Dealing with families who think that there are.
Burial registers – where will they stay – updating – are these to remain at Church and Sam to update where necessary.
Digitisation are burial registers available to view.

Maintenance of Grounds – schedule, routine, costs – EFDC once a month?

General maintenance – grass / hedge cutting.

Outbuildings – maintenance

Water – water butts, maintenance

Tree inspections/survey

Site plan

Are there any cremated remains plots for existing family graves with space or are these all closed – we would need to factor in digging if these plots are to be reopened.

Contract out digging of Full Burials – Les Hall?

Paths – maintenance and cleaning

Leaf sweeping October onwards.

Assisting visitors looking for graves

Rubbish collection – flower tributes, busy times, Mothering Sunday, Father's Day, Christmas, Community Service Team – remit, who overseas and schedule

PB 31.5.23

Email from the Town clerk to Church Warden dated 2.6.23

'As promised, I attach a due diligence list, that Loughton Town Council (LTC) would need to consider before coming to a decision on potentially taking over the St John's Churchyard as a Closed Churchyard. The emphasis is very much on ascertaining your current outgoings, both in terms of monetary costs and resources on an annual basis.

Administration

How many 'man' hours per week on average?

Fielding telephone calls from families/visitors looking for graves / ancestry per week on average?

Assisting visitors looking for graves

Confirmation that there will be no further interments in the Cremated Remains plots. Dealing with families who think that there are?

Maintenance of Grounds

Weekly schedule, routine, costs – EFDC once a month?

General maintenance – grass / hedge cutting?

Outbuildings – maintenance?

Water – water butts, maintenance

Tree inspections/survey – costs for the last 3 years?

Paths – maintenance and cleaning p.a.?

Leaf sweeping October onwards?

Rubbish collection – flower tributes, busy times, Mothering Sunday, Father's Day, Christmas,

Are there any cremated remains plots for existing family graves with space or are these all closed – we would need to factor in digging if these plots are to be reopened?

General points

We would need to have a comprehensive site plan?

We would make a further inspection of the Churchyard boundaries.

We would need to make an inspection of your burial registers.

Burial registers – where will they stay – updating – are these to remain at Church and Sam to update where necessary.

Future Digitalization?

Community Service Team – remit, who overseas and schedule?

We did establish at our meeting that there appear to be no legal obstacles to the transfer.

From our conversation, I appreciate that it is unlikely, that you will be in a position to answer these questions before our next Environment & Heritage (E &H) Committee meeting on 14 June 2023. The following E & H meeting is set for 19 September 2023. Whilst there may be some timing issues on our exchanges, overlapping with the above meetings, we can maintain a running dialogue, with hopefully some conclusion by the Autumn / latest end of year.

Re publicity, the 'Think Loughton' deadlines for the Autumn edition - 7 July 2023.

Winter edition – 6 October 2023.

Spring 24 edition- 12 January 2024'

Thanks and Regards

Agenda item 14 – Weekly markets report

- Loughton Town Council (LTC) has been approached by an independent market operator who has been liaising with the Loughton Residents Association (LRA) regarding a proposed weekly Sunday market in Loughton High Street.
- The operator now predominantly organises food markets now.
- Typically, the goods on offer would be a selection of the following- fruit and veg, fish, butchery, bakery, Italian groceries, Indian food, Lebanese food, honeys and preserves, cheese, crepes, waffles, Mexican food, Caribbean food, Greek food, Biltong, renewable toiletries, good quality fashion and household items.
- They aim to attract back some of the farmers market traders we had before that are still operating. In addition to this LRA and local charities would also have a presence. They suggest, to make a weekly contribution to an agreed local charity by way of a “ground rent”.
- They anticipate advertising the market with a social media company and would ensure that each trader has hygiene certification and public liability insurance. They would also cover the operation with their company public liability insurance cover. They would keep an up to date register of traders and contacts. Most of the anticipated up take are very likely to be by traders who currently trade with them elsewhere.
- All stalls would be continental style often referred to as gazebo types but are much more robust. They would ensure that a market manager is on site throughout the operation. All traders would provide their own stalls which are suited for their trade and greatly cuts down servicing times at each end of the day.
- They have a Health and safety agent who will carry out risk assessments and set out a policy some of which are generic but others specific to the proposed Loughton operation.

You may recall that the LRA operated a Farmers market in Loughton on the first Sunday of each month. This ceased due to staffing and logistical problems at the time and Essex Farmers Markets continued it for a period, but it is believed that it ceased altogether at around the time Covid struck.

The dynamics have changed somewhat in that now LTC is the recognised Licensing Authority and not Epping Forest District Council (EFDC). LTC adopted its own market policy at the E & H Committee meeting 29 March 2022 – min EH95 refers.

Considerations

1. Policy document – the existing LTC market policy would need to be bolstered by including some EFDC wording from their updated policy document to keep up with the requirements of the current relevant legislation.
2. There are many public entities to approach and also some private landowners along the High Street.
3. An annual licence fee would need to be paid to LTC (Historic EFDC / LRA fee was £480). This aspect needs to be agreed.
4. LTC as Licensor would potentially allow the market operator to choose who they wanted to place on the respective stalls. The Town Clerk has sought legal advice as to whether it can license a stall which potentially has an LRA presence. The response is as follows *‘As you say the licence is granted to the market operator and it is up to them to licence individual stalls. The alternative is that the Council runs the market and allocates the stalls itself.*
The Council could advertise for a Market Operator to see if there is any interest from bodies other than the Residents Association. Without this, or similar action, the

Council could be accused of favouritism because of public perception that the two organisations are closely linked. I do not consider that having granted the licence the Council should try to exercise any control over the individual stalls

5. LTC has no current resources or budget to run a weekly market, so the importance of a reputable and reliable market operator is vital.

Members to review and recommend a way forward. Any decision made need to be ratified at full Town Council.

MS 6.6.23

Agenda Item 15
Financial Position
Current Financial Position

Summary Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 30/04/2023

Month No: 1

Environment & Heritage Committee Report

		Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Budget	Variance Annual Total	Funds Available	% of Budget
<u>Environment & Heritage</u>							
Christmas Best Dressed Window	Expenditure	340	0	350	350	350	0.0%
Cemetery (Church Lane)	Expenditure	56,389	4,146	63,398	59,252	59,252	6.5%
	Income	25,366	202	15,715	15,513		1.3%
Street Furniture	Expenditure	39,307	11,483	32,460	20,977	20,977	35.4%
Allotments	Expenditure	3,213	147	6,260	6,113	6,113	2.4%
	Income	3,842	0	3,630	3,630		0%
Lady Whitakers Mead	Expenditure	1,640	0	880	880	880	0.0%
Other Services	Expenditure	1,126	0	1,160	1,160	1,160	0.0%
Service Re-charge (1)	Expenditure	99,000	0	125,000	125,000	125,000	0.0%

INCOME – EXPENDITURE TOTALS

Environment and Heritage Expenditure	<u>201,015</u>	<u>15,777</u>	<u>229,508</u>	<u>213,731</u>	<u>213,731</u>	<u>6.9%</u>
Income	<u>29,208</u>	<u>202</u>	<u>19,345</u>	<u>19,143</u>		<u>1%</u>
Net Expenditure over Income	<u>171,807</u>	<u>15,575</u>	<u>210,163</u>	<u>194,588</u>		

Notes:

- 1) Service re-charge for 2023/24 is £125,000 which is deducted at the end of March 2024

Agenda Item 15
Financial Position
Current Financial Position

Earmarked Reserves

A summary of the Committee's reserves showing the amounts available from reserves as at 30/04/2023 is provided below:

Environment & Heritage Committee	30/04/2023
Christmas lights	350
Cemetery	17,292
Cemetery plot maintenance endowment (restricted fund)	8,262
Total	25,904