



ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

Members are summoned to attend a Meeting

of the Town Council to be held at 7.30pm on

Wednesday 21 May 2025

**At Loughton Town Council, Council Chamber,
1 Buckingham Court, Loughton IG10 2QZ**

to transact the business as shown in the agenda.

**Mark Squire
Town Clerk
14 May 2025**

Cllr I Allgood
Cllr S Fontenelle
Cllr K-W Lee
Cllr S Murray
Cllr J Riley
Cllr K Valentine

Cllr R Brookes
Cllr A Fricker
Cllr N MacKinnon
Cllr J Obaseki
Cllr M Stubbings
Cllr D Wixley

Cllr C Davies
Cllr S Harriman
Cllr R Minhas
Cllr M Owen
Cllr R Sylvan

Cllr W Dodd
Cllr L House
Cllr S Murphy
Cllr C Pond
Cllr C Ubah

Note to Councillors:
If you are unable to attend the meeting,
please phone your apologies to the office on 020 8508 4200.

The meeting will be preceded by a minute's silence in memory of Cllr Caroline P. Pond who passed away on 13 May 2025. Cllr Pond served as Town Councillor for Alderton Ward from 2004-2008, and for St Johns Ward from 2008-2024. Also serving as Loughton Town Mayor from 2011-2012, and as District Councillor for St Johns Ward from 2002 to 2024.

A G E N D A

1 Election of the Town Mayor for 2025/26

To receive brief remarks from the retiring Mayor about her year of office, and short appreciations from Members.

The retiring Mayor, Cllr Katie Valentine will call for nominations and put them to the vote. This will be followed by:

- i The signing of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office by the Town Mayor for 2025/26.
- ii The presentation of the Chain of Office and Lord Citrine's ABC of Chairmanship.
- iii The new Town Mayor's acceptance speech.
- iv The presentation of the past Town Mayor's badge to the retiring Mayor.

2 Appointment of Deputy Town Mayor for 2025/26

To appoint the Deputy Town Mayor for 2025/26 and present the badge.

3 Apologies for Absence

To receive any apologies for absence.

4 Declarations of Interest

For Councillors to declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in any items on the Agenda.

Members are reminded that if their interests change, they must, within 28 days of becoming aware of the change, complete a new register of members' interests form and return it to the Town Clerk for submission to the Monitoring Officer.

5 Confirmation of Minutes

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 22 April 2025.

6 Town Clerk's Report

To report (for discussion only) on any further significant information/matters that may be of interest to Town Council members.

- Members to note that for reasons of ill health, Cllr Obaseki has been granted extended leave of absence until 17 June 2025 and Cllr House until 5 August 2025. It is recommended that Cllr Obaseki is granted further leave of absence for another month until 17 July 2025.
- Jonathon Glynn, Finance and Administration Officer will take over the duties of Town Mayor's Secretary from Pippa Bryce, Deputy Town Clerk from this meeting onwards. This will enable Pippa to spend more time on her enhanced role, as Deputy Town Clerk.

7 Appointment of Members, and Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman, of Council Committees for 2025/26

7.1 Planning and Licensing Committee

7.2 Recreation Committee

7.3 Environment and Heritage Committee

7.4 Resources and General Services Committee

All Committees consist of seven members.

7.5 Nomination of up to three persons per political group authorised to make substitutions in accordance with Standing Order 5e.

8 Nomination of Council Representatives for 2025/26

8.1 To nominate Council representatives to outside bodies for 2025/26 and, where appropriate, substitutes.

Council representatives on outside organisations are reminded that depending on the status of the organisation, e.g., charity, company, etc. by joining the board they could become liable if the organisation failed. The Council's insurance would not cover them.

* A list of organisations and current representatives, where appropriate, is attached (see page 4).

A number of these organisations are open to members of the public. Any non-council representatives attending these meetings should ensure they make it clear to the organisation that they are there in a personal capacity.

8.2 To review arrangements for reporting back on the activities of outside bodies

Representatives are requested to provide a written report, which is attached to the next Council agenda, on meetings which they have attended. A verbal report can be made on meetings attended within ten days of the Council meeting. Members are also requested to provide an annual report for the final Council meeting of the municipal year.

The Council is asked to confirm these arrangements.

8.3 Joint Standards Committee

To appoint a representative and a substitute to the Joint Standards Committee for 2025/26.

8.4 Grievance Hearing and Disciplinary Appeal Panels

To nominate a third member (not the Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor, a Committee Chairman nor the Vice Chairman of Resources and General Services Committee) to sit on the Grievance Hearing Panel, and one to sit on the Disciplinary Appeal Panel.

9 Membership of Internal Council Groups

To confirm or amend the membership of the following internal groups:

9.1 Strategy and Staff Group (includes the Complaints Panel)

Membership: Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor and the Chairman of each of the Committees, Cllr S Murray as representative from the minority group. Exceptionally, one or two additional members if specially required may be appointed by the Council if there is a special reason to include that person/those people. There must be a clear rationale stated for inclusion.

Note: It is always open to the group to invite a member to a particular meeting if special knowledge, etc. is required.

9.2 Financial Assistance Working Group

Membership: Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Resources and General Services Committee, Cllr Murray and past Town Mayor.

The Group usually meets in January to consider the annual round of applications.

9.3 Recreation Projects Working Group

Membership: Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Recreation Committee and other members to be nominated by this Committee.

10 General Power of Competence

To reaffirm the use of the General Power of Competence in the forthcoming Civic Year. S1.1 of the Localism Act 2011 states 'A local authority has power to do anything that individuals generally do'. The essence is that if a proposed action fits this, eligible councils do not need to look for another power. i.e. a power of first resort.

11 Confirmation of Standing Orders

To receive and confirm the Town Council's Standing Orders (existing document on Town Council website).

12 Confirmation of Financial Regulations

To receive and confirm the Town Council's Financial Regulations (existing document on Town Council website). Adoption of the newer 2024 National Association of Local Councils (NALC) recommended template for Financial Regulations will be reviewed at the next Resources & General Services Committee meeting on 25 June 2025.

13 Year End Financials 2024/25

To receive and approve. The Town Clerk will provide further background information. These accounts have been audited by our internal auditor, Heelis & Lodge on 13 May 2025 and a copy of this report will be available at the meeting.

13.1 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ending 31 March 2025, including.

- (i) AGAR (Section 1) for the Year ended 31 March 2025 (see pages 6).
- (ii) AGAR (Section 2) for the Year ended 31 March 2025 (see page 7).
- (iii) AGAR – to NOTE the completed and signed Annual Internal Audit Report on page 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25 will be circulated following our internal year-end audit on 13 May 2025 (see page 5 for details of requirements).

13.2. Annual Accounts

To receive and approve the Annual Accounts for the Year ended 31 March 2025 (see pages 8 – 11). This statement of accounts has been prepared in accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, i.e., on an income and expenditure basis with a statement of balances and complies with Proper Practices in completing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

**Mark Squire
TOWN CLERK
14 May 2025**

Agenda item 8**8.1 Nomination of Council Representatives for 2025/26**

Details of the representatives for the past year may be found in the Council minutes for the meeting held on 15 May 2024.

Organisation	2024-25 representative(s)
Lopping Endowment	Cllr J Riley
Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) – Epping Forest Branch	Cllrs Fontenelle and Wixley
Local Councils' Liaison Committee	Cllrs Davies and Wixley
EALC - Local Councils Forum and AGM	Cllr Wixley
<i>ECC Parish Passenger Transport Meeting</i> <i>(Now defunct – no need for a representative)</i>	
Tree Wardens (appointed by Epping Forest Countrycare)	Cllrs Fontenelle, Fricker and Wixley
Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership	Cllrs Brookes, Davies, Murray, and Ubah
Essex Police local community meetings	Cllrs Fontenelle, House and Wixley
Roding Valley Nature Reserve Consultative Group	Cllrs MacKinnon and Wixley (with Cllr Murray as a District Councillor on the Management Committee)

Agenda item 13.1

13.1 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ending 31 March 2025

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

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During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable
			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

13/01/2025 12/05/2025 DD/MM/YYYY

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

H. HEDDIS (HEDDIS & LODGE)

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

SIGNATURE

Date

12/05/2025

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

	Agreed		‘Yes’ means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors’ rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority’s accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each ‘No’ response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

21/05/2025

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

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Agenda item 13.1

13.1 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ending 31 March 2025

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	
1. Balances brought forward	491,775	465,924	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	904,300	993,909	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	231,919	204,579	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	520,079	538,341	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	100,497	100,497	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	541,494	622,147	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	465,924	403,427	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	434,815	413,264	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	531,193	533,671	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	266,268	178,479	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓ The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

[Signature] RED

Date

13/05/2025

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

21/05/2025

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Agenda item 13.2

13.2 Annual Accounts

28/04/2025

Loughton Town Council 2024 - 25

09:57

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2025

31st March 2024		31st March 2025		
Net Value	Fixed Assets	Cost of Asset	Depreciation	Net Value
0		0	0	0
	Current Assets			
37,563	Debtors	2,039		
9,996	Vat Refunds	31,679		
9,866	Prepayments	23,164		
93,795	Current Account	37,644		
38,746	No 2 Current Account	35,832		
102,297	Capital Reserve	230,810		
93,723	Santander Business Reserve	0		
106,104	Nationwide Building Society	108,358		
0	Unity Bank	471		
150	Petty Cash	150		
14,623	Creditors	0		
506,864			470,145	
506,864	Total Assets			470,145
	Current Liabilities			
0	Creditors	19,186		
8,225	Accruals	17,169		
21,550	Receipts in Advance	17,063		
3,895	Security deposits	6,950		
3,870	Key deposits	4,261		
3,400	Booking Deposits	2,089		
40,939			66,718	
465,924	Total Assets Less Current Liabilities			403,427
	Long Term Liabilities			
0			0	
465,924	Total Assets Less Long Term Liabilities			403,427
	Represented By			
280,024	General Reserve			302,924
7,600	EMR Hillyfields Drainage Works			7,600
2,542	EMR Grant Funding			0

13.2 Annual Accounts / continued

28/04/2025

Loughton Town Council 2024 - 25

09:57

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2025

31st March 2024		31st March 2025
	0 EMR RVRG Changing Rooms	15,000
	0 EMR Willingale Fencing	5,000
	350 EMR Christmas Lights	350
	17,292 EMR Cemetery	17,292
	8,262 EMR Cemetery Plot Endowment R	8,262
	0 EMR Cemetery - Closed Churchya	10,000
	24,855 EMR Elections	10,000
	20,000 EMR Local/Neighbourhood Plan	15,000
	95,000 EMR Playgrounds	0
	5,000 EMR Halls	10,000
	5,000 EMR Salt Bins	0
	0 EMR Speed Indicator	2,000
	465,924	403,427

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the authority as at 31st March 2025 and reflects its Income and Expenditure during the year.

Signed :
Chairman _____ Date : _____

Signed :
Responsible
Financial _____ Date : _____

13.2 Annual Accounts / continued

Loughton Town Council 2024 - 25		
Income and Expenditure Account for Year Ended 31st March 2025		
31st March 2024		31st March 2025
	Income Summary	
904,300	Precept	993,909
904,300	Sub Total	993,909
	Operating Income	
1,312	Buckingham Court	745
37,100	Grants	0
30,012	Kingsley Hall	32,002
109,079	The Murray Hall	112,934
7,163	Other Services (Rec)	7,469
4,459	Roding Valley Recreation Gnd	3,649
125	Open Spaces	125
12,395	Cemetery (Church Lane)	18,351
0	Street Furniture	5
4,020	Allotments	4,457
2,152	Will. Rd. Playing Field	0
880	Other services (EH)	1,728
23,222	Other Costs and Income	23,112
1,136,219	Total Income	1,198,488
	Running Costs	
17,050	Communication	16,382
12,594	Office Expenses	15,782
3,926	Audit	3,772
407,806	Central Personnel	418,820
14,675	Council Expenses	14,685
339	Other Services (RGS)	39,208
1,723	Members' Expenses	1,316
58,313	Buckingham Court	54,182
(371,000)	Service Re-charge (RGS)	(396,000)
375	Christmas Best Dressed Window	340
31,399	Grants	36,733
19,031	Kingsley Hall	19,373
122,998	The Murray Hall	161,085
15,671	Other Services (Rec)	14,445
196,000	Service Re-charge (Rec)	211,000
159,717	Roding Valley Recreation Gnd	190,854
19,522	Open Spaces	20,236
57,994	Cemetery (Church Lane)	61,428
160,249	Playgrounds	137,153
38,648	Street Furniture	27,022
4,536	Allotments	6,627
1,180	Cemetery (Debden Lane)	2,170
12,211	Will. Rd. Playing Field	14,602
2,114	Other services (EH)	4,769
125,000	Service Re-charge (EH)	132,000
50,000	Service Re-charge (PL)	53,000
0	Van	0
1,162,070	Total Expenditure	1,260,984

13.2 Annual Accounts / continued

Loughton Town Council 2024 - 25			
Income and Expenditure Account for Year Ended 31st March 2025			
31st March 2024			31st March 2025
	General Fund Analysis		
267,530	Opening Balance		280,024
1,136,219	Plus : Income for Year		1,198,488
<hr/>			<hr/>
1,403,749			1,478,511
1,162,070	Less : Expenditure for Year		1,260,984
<hr/>			<hr/>
241,679			217,527
(38,345)	Transfers TO / FROM Reserves		(85,397)
<hr/>			<hr/>
280,024	Closing Balance		302,924
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