



RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Members of the Resources and General Services Committee
are summoned to attend a Meeting at **7.45pm** on

Wednesday 11 October 2017

at Loughton Library and Town Hall, Traps Hill, Loughton IG10 1HD

to transact the business shown in the agenda.

Enid K Walsh
Town Clerk
5 October 2017

Councillor S Pewsey (Chairman)
Councillor J Angold-Stephens (Vice Chairman)

Councillors

M Dalton
S Murray

J Jennings
A Omer

J Mahoney

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

This meeting will be preceded by a presentation by Grant Maton from the Essex Wildlife Trust to the Town Mayor of a framed certificate acknowledging the Council's 10-year membership of this charity.

A G E N D A

1 Apologies for absence

To RECEIVE any apologies for absence.

2 Declarations of Interest

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 5 July 2017.

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 Matters for Report

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

5.1 Remembrance Service

In 2016, the Council made a donation of £100 to the Royal British Legion in support of the Poppy Appeal and towards the cost of the wreath laid by the Town Mayor at the annual Remembrance Service held in November. The Committee is asked to confirm that it wishes to make a similar donation this year. Payment will need to be approved under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

5.2 Data Protection

For information: To help the Council prepare for the changes in Data Protection law, which come into force in May 2018, the Chairman and Vice Chairman will attend training provided by the Essex Association of Local Councils on Thursday 9 November 2017. The Town Clerk is also taking part in two online webinars run by the Society of Local Council Clerks and Voluntary Sector Training.

5.3 Christmas & New Year Opening Times

For information, the Town Council offices will close on Friday 22 December 2017 at 12 noon, reopening as normal to the public from 9.30am on Wednesday 27 December until Friday 29 December at 4pm; then close on Monday 1 January 2018 with normal opening hours resuming on Tuesday 2 January 2018.

5.4 Annual Town Meeting

The 2018 Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 14 March 2018 commencing at 8pm in the Murray Hall. Whilst this is not a council meeting, all town councillors are expected to attend.

The Committee is asked if it wishes 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 2018/19 would also be presented with a certificate by the Town Mayor.

The Committee is also asked if it wishes to invite a guest speaker and make suggestions in this regard.

The meeting is usually concluded with refreshments and an opportunity for members of the public to speak informally with their councillors. Local businesses which have supported the local community would also be invited.

5.5 Insurance – Annual Review – Min no RG5.4

For information: A low claims bonus rebate of £268.26 has been received for the financial year 2016/17. However, following the office move, an additional premium of £30.72 has been levied to cover the Town Council's former offices at 1 Buckingham Court. This will be adjusted once the premises are occupied by a tenant.

5.5.1 Insurance Claim – Min no RG91.27

For information, the Council's insurance company's solicitor has confirmed that, following a court order issued by the judge, the claimant has withdrawn his claim. The solicitor reported that she had asked the court to issue a costs order against the claimant's solicitor to discourage such spurious action in the future by this firm.

5.6 Training and Conferences

To approve the attendance of councillors at the forthcoming Epping Forest District Council training sessions for the purposes of paying travel expenses:

2 October 2017, 6pm – 9pm, Code of Conduct, Cllr Omer

24 October 2017, 6pm – 9pm, Social Media – Cllrs Beales and Owen

5.7 Think Loughton

Deliveries of the quarterly newsletter with Royal Mail Door to Door are booked up to and including the Summer 2018 edition at an average cost £1,380 per standard edition, noting that the cost of the Summer edition with the extra weight of the Annual Report insert increases to £1,520. This covers the delivery of approximately 14,800 copies to all IG10 postcodes.

The Committee is asked to:

- i. CONFIRM that this method delivery should continue.
- ii. CONSIDER the use of a glossier paper for the newsletter. This would be at no additional cost* and with an option to try this for one edition only. An example copy will be available at the meeting.

*Printing costs for the four editions from December 2017 remain unchanged at £345 per edition for 15,200 copies. These costs are offset by the advertising.

5.8 Committee meetings

For information, owing to a clash with District Council meetings, the Chairman of the Recreation Committee has asked for the next meeting scheduled for the 1 November 2017 to be held on Wednesday 8 November 2017.

The Committee is asked to confirm this change.

5.9 Staffing – Min no RG70.2

5.9.1 Job Description

- * The Committee is asked to RATIFY the job description for the post of Responsible Financial Officer and Assistant Clerk drawn up by the Town Clerk in discussion with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of this Committee. (See pages 5 – 6)

For information, this post is now to be advertised with interviews likely to take place in mid-November 2017.

5.9.2 Concierge – Min no RG79.3

This new post provides general security for evening meetings of the Council and its committees in the library. The post holder will also act as a relief caretaker for the Murray Hall. Confirmation of the appointment to this post will be provided by the Town Clerk at the meeting.

5.9.3 Organisation Structure Chart

- * A copy of the revised chart is provided for information on page 7.

6 Finance

6.1 Precept – Min no RG38

For information, the second instalment of the 2017/18 Precept (£317,400), collected by Epping Forest District Council, was paid directly into the Santander bank account on 29 September 2017.

6.2 Audit

- * For information: A copy of the External Auditor's Certificate is provided on page 8. This will be reported formally to full Council.

The Notice of Conclusion of Audit was published on 8 September 2017 and is currently displayed on the noticeboards around the town and on the Council's website.

6.3 Internal Audit

For information, the next visit by the internal auditor is booked for Thursday and Friday, 9 and 10 November 2017. The auditor will follow the previously agreed 5-year work plan, but the Committee is asked if there is anything specific it would like the auditor to inspect.

6.4 Internal Financial Check

Cllr Omer has been invited to carry out a routine check on the Council's financial transactions and a report on his visit will be made at the meeting.

6.5 Financial Position

- * The current financial position is attached together with details of the funds available from earmarked reserves (see pages 9 – 10).

6.6 Accounts Paid

Payments totalling £187,452.66 as detailed on payments schedules nos 240 – 244 have been made since the report to the meeting on 5 July 2017. The schedules and accompanying invoices will be available at the meeting for inspection.

Copies of the latest bank account reconciliations will also be provided at the meeting.

For information, details of all Council payments in excess of £250 are provided on the Council's website on the strategic documents page.

7 Complaints Panel

To advise that the Panel met on 26 July 2017 to consider a complaint made by a resident relating to an investigation of an initial complaint concerning antisocial behaviour and car parking issues at the Kingsley Hall.

- * A copy of the Panel's recommendations is provided on page 11.

8 Health and Safety Policy Review

- * The Committee is asked to carry out a review of this policy (see pages 12 – 13).

9 Essex County Council Grant Funding

A new scheme of funding for parish and town councils has been announced by the County Council. The Committee is asked to CONFIRM whether it wishes to take advantage of this opportunity particularly with regard to an apprenticeship scheme.

- * A copy of the press release issued by the Essex Association of Local Council is provided on page 14.

10 Office Accommodation – Min no RG79

10.1 The move to the new office space on the first floor of Loughton Library was finally completed in July 2017 with the office reopening on 26 July 2017.

- * A report on related matters is provided on page 15.

10.2 Exclusion of the Press and Public

To RESOLVE to exclude the press and public from the next item under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as it contains confidential information relating to leases.

10.3 1 Buckingham Court

To consider an offer to lease the former Town Council Offices (see page 17).

11 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.

Note: No substantive discussion may take place under this item as the required statutory notice of the topics will not have been given.

Members are reminded that as part of its overall plan and to compliment the budget making process, at its next meeting the Committee will be asked to review its priority list and agree Estimates for 2018/19.

Enid K Walsh
TOWN CLERK
5 October 2017

Agenda item 5.9.1

Job Description – Responsible Financial Officer & Assistant Town Clerk

JOB DESCRIPTION

Overall Responsibilities:

The Responsible Financial Officer is a statutory office appointed by the Council.

The RFO shall administer the Council's financial affairs in accordance with proper practices and adhere to the Council's Financial Regulations.

As Assistant Town Clerk, they will deputise for the Town Clerk in his/her duties when necessary, and carry out the statutory and delegated functions of the Town Clerk in his/her absence.

Responsible to:

Town Clerk

Responsible for:

Finance Assistant

Duties:

Finance:

1. Keep the accounts of the Council according to the current Accounts & Audit Regulations.
2. In discussion with the Town Clerk and Services Manager, prepare draft estimates which, when approved, will form the annual budget for the next financial year.
3. Submit the Precept demand to Epping Forest District Council in a timely manner and provide any figures required for inclusion in the Council Tax Bill information leaflet as required by Statute.
4. As soon as practicable after the end of each financial year, complete the annual return and financial statements for approval by the Council.
5. Monitor the Council's income and expenditure against budget and provide regular financial reports to all the spending committees.
6. Ensure there are adequate and effective systems of internal control in place.
7. Report all correspondence from the internal and external auditors to the Council.
8. Responsible for authorising orders for works, goods and services.
9. Calculate, collect and reclaim all VAT due to the Council.
10. Administer the Council's payroll including the submission of monthly details to the wages service and payments to the HMRC and Essex Pension Fund.
11. Maintain the record of staff holidays and recalculate entitlements, as appropriate.
12. Maintain the Council's Assets Register and ensure an annual review is carried out by the Council.
13. Monitor and review the Council's insurance policy and cover provided and resolve all insurance claims as and when required.
14. Administer the Council's Financial Assistance scheme.
15. Undertake reviews of utility suppliers and contracts.
16. Any other matters related to the Council's finances.

Cont'd overleaf

Health and Safety

- The day-to-day responsibility for ensuring the Council's Health and Safety policy is put into practice.
- Ensure compliance with Health and Safety regulations including the arrangements for the training of staff.
- Ensure that the Council's obligations for Risk Assessment are properly met.

Data Protection

To be the Council's designated Data Protection Officer with responsibility for monitoring compliance and:

- Collecting information to identify processing activities.
- Analysing and checking the compliance of processing activities.
- Informing, advising and issuing recommendations to the Council and to its staff.

Freedom of Information

- To manage the Council's publication scheme.
- To ensure information requests from members of the public are dealt with in a timely manner.

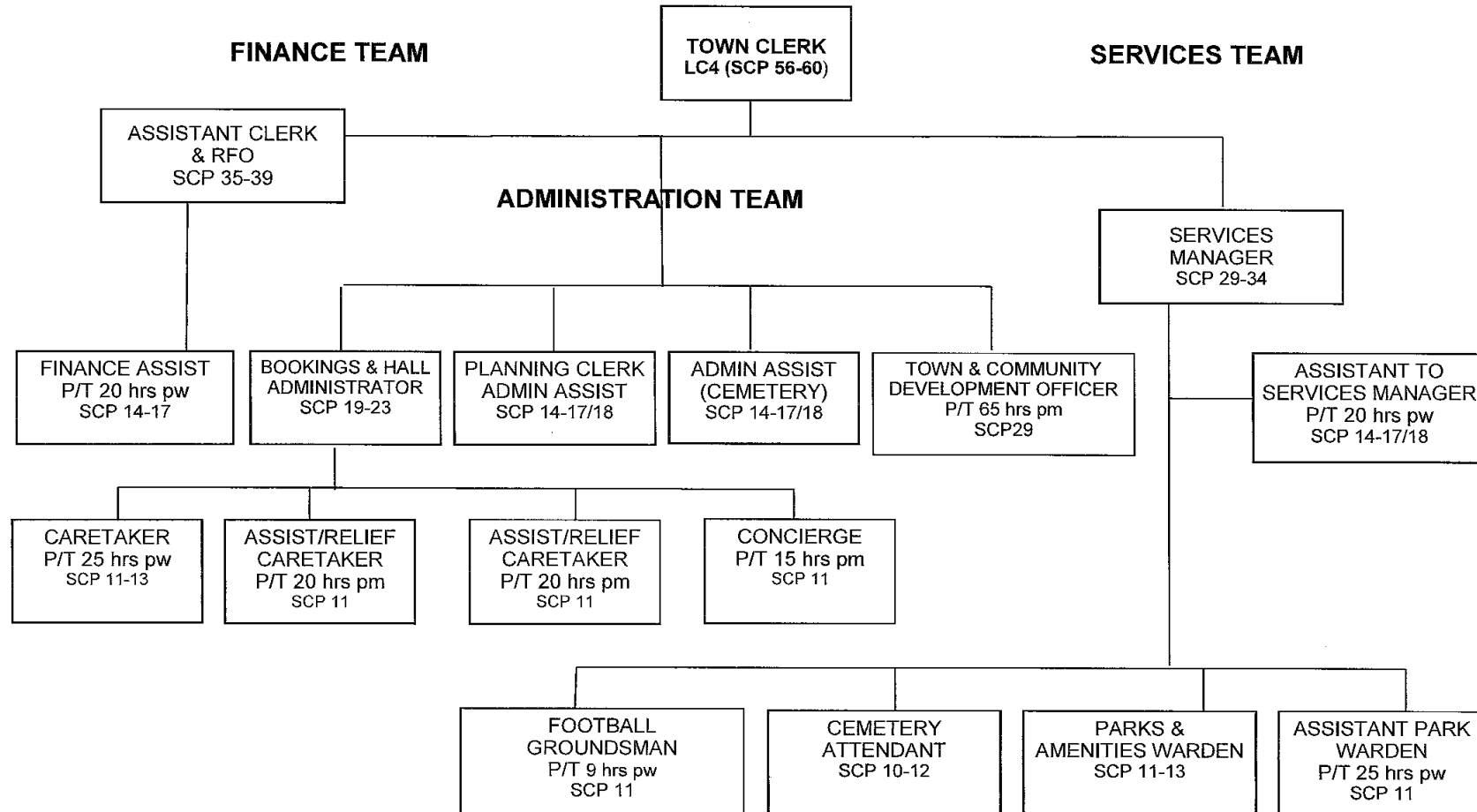
General

- Jointly with the Town Clerk and Services Manager, responsibility for the corporate and performance management of the Council.
- To undertake responsibility for staff management during the absence of the Town Clerk.
- Carry out tasks as directed by the Town Clerk, including both everyday items and special projects as necessary.
- To undertake training and attend conferences relevant to the role.
- Attend Council and committee meetings to clerk the meeting, take minutes and carry out other duties, including follow-up work. This post currently has particular responsibility for the Resources and General Services Committee as well as attending other meetings.
- Attend Council events and represent the Council at external functions.

This list of duties is not to be regarded as exclusive or exhaustive.

September 2017

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL ORGANISATION STRUCTURE



Agenda item 6.2

Section 3 – External auditor report and certificate

In respect of:

Enter name of
smaller authority here:

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

1. Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This smaller authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The smaller authority prepares an annual return in accordance with proper practices which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2017; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review the annual return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and does not provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

2. 2016/17 External auditor report (EX0166)

(~~Except for the matters reported below~~)* on the basis of our review of the annual return, in our opinion the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislative and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the smaller authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3. 2016/17 External auditor certificate

We certify/~~do not certify~~* that we have completed our review of the annual return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2017.

* We do not certify completion because:

External auditor signature PKF Littlejohn LLP

External auditor name PKF Littlejohn LLP Date 6/9/17

Note: The NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on 2016/17 accounts in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)

Summary Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 30/09/2017

Committee Report

		Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Budget	Variance Annual Total	Funds Available	% of Budget	
<u>Resources and General Services</u>								
Communication	Expenditure	17,192	10,185	18,800	8,615	8,615	54.2 %	
Office Expenses	Expenditure	12,054	4,572	12,300	7,728	7,728	37.2 %	
	Income	57	20	0	20		0.0 %	
Audit	Expenditure	2,860	0	2,900	2,900	2,900	0.0 %	
Central Personnel	Expenditure	300,976	105,833	316,300	210,467	210,467	33.5 %	
Council Expenses	Expenditure	14,628	10,517	14,150	3,633	3,633	74.3 %	
	Income	609	468	0	468		0.0 %	
Other Services (1)	Expenditure	23,426	18,546	11,250	-7,296	-7,296	164.8 %	
	Income	202	0	0	0		0.0 %	
Members' Expenses	Expenditure	2,106	35	3,000	2,965	2,965	1.2 %	
Buckingham Court	Expenditure	53,797	25,219	30,950	5,731	5,731	81.5 %	
	Income	9,611	300	28,500	-28,200		1.1 %	
Service Re-charge (2)	Expenditure	-251,000	0	-253,000	-253,000	-253,000	0.0 %	
Library (3)	Expenditure	0	2,250	13,700	11,450	11,450	16.4 %	
Grants (4)	Expenditure	35,328	19,274	35,500	16,226	16,226	54.3 %	
	RGS Expenditure	211,367	196,430	205,850	9,420	0	9,420	95.4 %
	Income	10,479	788	28,500	-27,712		2.8 %	
	Net Expenditure over Income	200,887	195,642	177,350	-18,292			

Notes

- 1) Other Services – this includes the ‘future accommodation’ budget with the balance of the expenditure for the building works and removals to be met from ear marked reserves.
- 2) The annual Service Re-charge is £253,000. The position as at 30.9.17 is £126,500.
- 3) The expenditure relates to the first two instalments of the service charge for the library office.
- 4) A number of the grants awarded in 17/18 are yet to be claimed. £4,790 is available in the general grants budget.

Agenda item 6.5 cont'd

Earmarked Reserves:

A summary of the Committee's reserves showing the end of year transfers and the amounts available from reserves in this current financial year is provided below:

Resources & General Services Committee	1.04.17
Elections	8,000
Noticeboards	1,000
Office expenses	3,000
Communication	1,000
Council expenses	2,000
Accommodation	16,450
Buckingham Court maintenance fund	2,000
Honours board (£700 TFR to general reserves)	0
Total	33,450

Agenda item 7
Complaints Panel

Listed below are the recommendations of the Panel.

1. Review the management arrangements/booking procedures of Kingsley Hall as a matter of urgency.
2. As part of the booking process Loughton Town Council should ensure that hirers understand clearly that no parking facilities whatsoever are available in the Kingsley Hall car park and that this information should be passed onto their users. Also, that the parking bays outside the premises are for the use of residents only, as is sign posted.
3. Priority should be given to the concerns of the residents.
4. Hirers should be held responsible for any anti-social activities by any of their users of the Kingsley Hall.
5. The use of CCTV to monitor anti-social activities outside the hall was considered, but it was acknowledged that the area of concern is within the remit of Epping Forest District Council Housing Department.*
6. It was suggested as a matter of urgency that both EFDC housing department and Essex Police be invited to a meeting to discuss both the antisocial behaviour experienced, and what can happen in future with reference to enforcement action. Also, what action has been taken with reference to the act/s of vandalism as experienced by the complainant as this should not be left to one individual councillor to deal with.**

For information, these recommendations were considered by the Community Centres Working Party at its meeting on 29 August 2017 and then subsequently at the Recreation Committee meeting held on 6 September 2017 (see Min no RC53).

* EFDC's Safer Communities Partnership has been asked to reconsider the installation of a temporary CCTV system at the complainant's property.

** A meeting was held by the Town Council on 18 September 2017 at the Murray Hall, attended by officers from Epping Forest District Council and Essex Police and the complainant.

Following this meeting, Housing Services at EFDC has agreed to consider the feasibility of installing a removable bollard to provide exclusive use of the existing disabled bay by the complainant and the creation of an additional disabled parking bay in the car park for use by others.

Agenda item 8

The Committee is asked to carry out a review of this policy.

It is RECOMMENDED that in Section II, Organisation, item 4 be amended in the sixth bullet point by adding the text shown in bold italics.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY
Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Contents:	I	General Statement of Intent
	II	Organisation
	III	Arrangements

Part I of this document states the Council's general aims in regard to employees' health and safety. Parts II & III set out the action plan to achieve these aims.

I General Statement of Intent

- 1 The Council recognises its responsibility for the health and safety of its employees and is committed to pursue a policy which ensures, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees.
- 2 The commitment exists at all levels of the organisation.
- 3 The Council notes and accepts its duty as an employer to take all practical and reasonable steps to
 - safeguard health, safety and welfare at work
 - provide safe systems of work
 - provide and maintain safe plant and equipment
 - provide a safe and healthy working environment
 - provide information and training in safe practices
 - have regard for the health and safety of others who may be affected by the activities of the Council e.g. self-employed people, contractors, other users of the premises, members of the public
- 4 The Council will have regard to health and safety legislation, approved codes of practice, guidance notes and other relevant information issued by the Health and Safety Executive.
- 5 Responsibility for health and safety lies with both employers and employees, and the Council expects co-operation from employees to achieve its aims in respect of health and safety. Dereliction of duty in respect of health and safety may be treated as a disciplinary offence.
- 6 The Council will review and revise its safety policy as necessary and appropriate, will consult with employees on the policy, and will bring the policy and any subsequent amendments to the attention of employees.

II Organisation

- 1 Members of the Council have the overall responsibility for health and safety.
- 2 Day-to-day responsibility for implementation is delegated to the Town Clerk in the first instance, and then by such further delegation as may be put in place by the Town Clerk.

- 3 Supervisors of employees are responsible for the detail of the health and safety of those employees.
- 4 Employees have a duty
 - to take reasonable care to avoid injury to themselves or others (employees, contractors, public etc)
 - to co-operate to meet statutory requirements
 - not to interfere with or misuse anything provided to protect safety
 - to obey safety rules
 - to familiarise themselves with health and safety instructions
 - to report all accidents and incidents **whether or not injury was sustained, including occasions where there was a potential for this,** and to assist with the investigation of such.
- 5 The Town Clerk and other supervisors will meet with employees from time to time and as necessary to discuss matters relating to health and safety. All employees should raise any health and safety concerns with their supervisor or with the Town Clerk as soon as those concerns become apparent.

III Arrangements

- 1 The Council will issue detailed guidance and instruction and give training and supervision as necessary. It will assess the risks arising from its activities and take appropriate action.
- 2 Detailed policies, procedures, systems and practices in respect of health and safety will be drawn up as necessary for specific aspects of the Council's activities to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation and guidelines. They will form annexes to this policy.
- 3 The Town Clerk and/or other supervisors will from time to time carry out checks to ensure that employees are working safely. Workplaces and equipment will also be subject to regular checks in respect of health and safety.
- 4 Hazards and defects should be reported to the Town Clerk or a supervisor immediately. If reports are made verbally in the first instance, they should be followed up by a written report confirming the nature of the problem, its severity, and any recommendation for action.
- 5 The Council will engage the services of specialists as necessary to advise or carry out tasks which it is unable to do itself.
- 6 The Council will make such reasonable resources available as are required to ensure health and safety at work.
- 7 Good communication is vital to the success of health and safety arrangements and will be inherent in the activities of the Council and its employees.

This policy was last reviewed by the Council's Resources and General Services Committee on 8 October 2014.

Agenda item 9

Essex County Council Grant Funding is to be made available for town and parish councils and other properly constituted groups.

Projects spearheaded by town and parish councils, residents' groups, housing associations and other properly constituted groups can benefit from grant funding thanks to a new scheme managed by the Essex Association of Local Councils with £500,000 of new funding provided by Essex County Council.

The Fund will provide support communities across Essex providing them with the opportunity to directly prioritise, enhance, develop and grow community facilities.

Examples of schemes which could receive funding are Handyman projects, community hubs and cafes, work to maintain hedges and greensward as well as Community Volunteers, Business and Groundsperson apprentices and initiatives aimed at preventing anti-social parking and littering.

Essex Association of Local Councils chief executive officer Joy Darby said: "*The schemes benefiting from funding will be those judged to be making a real difference in villages, towns and communities across Essex.*"

The EALC is pleased to be asked to manage this for Essex County Council and thanks the elected members for their continued support and the provision of opportunities to enhance the county of Essex.

This unique fund will allow communities through local parish and town councils and other formally constituted groups to apply for revenue funding for projects that are designed to support communities by adding value to existing services or introducing new services.

Essex County Council and the Funding Board will be looking for innovative ideas that will enhance and make a real difference to strengthen communities, by adding small but significant pieces of work."

Applications for the first Funding Board, which will meet in December, can be submitted from mid-October.

The Essex Association of Local Councils will appoint a Local Services Fund Officer who will manage the scheme at the EALC on behalf of Essex County Council.

The Funding Board will meet four times a year with applications to be received two weeks before a Funding Board meeting.

Grant recipients will be required to report back to the EALC every six months.

Grants of £10,000 per bid, or £15,000 over a three-year period, are available with an expectation of matched funding.

Briefing sessions for would-be applicants as well as sessions giving advice on submitting applications will be held at the Essex Association of Local Councils' Dunmow offices four times a year.

Agenda item 10.1

Office Accommodation – Min no RG79

The Committee is asked to NOTE the following costs incurred this financial year as previously agreed with the exception of the removal costs which were the lowest of three quotations received:

Item	Contractor	£
Building works	Tarbrooks	15,554.00
Project management	Martyn Pattie Architects*	1,413.40
Building regulations inspection fee	Epping Forest District Council	212.04
Removal costs	Pretlove's	1,950.00
		19,129.44

*The architects' fees were reduced by £585 from that quoted, as it was only necessary for them to undertake 2 site visits.

As reported under agenda item 6.5, Financial Position, these costs will be offset by the Future Accommodation fund in earmarked reserves and any shortfall met from within the new Library budget heading.

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