

THESE MINUTES NOT YET CONFIRMED

**LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL**

**RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the Meeting held on Tuesday 5 October 2021 at 7.45pm at Loughton Library & Town Hall.**

**Present:**

**Councillors:** J Jennings (in the Chair)  
R Brookes B Cohen S Murray  
M Stubbings

**Also present:**

**Councillor:** D. Wixley

**Officer:** M Squire (Town Clerk)

Two members of the Public

**RG22 Apologies for absence**  
No Apologies were received.

**RG23 Declarations of Interest**  
Cllr Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 19 Financial Assistance Applications as:  
(i) he is a patron of the Christian Drama Resource Centre. He would not participate in the ultimate decision making of the Committee; and  
(ii) as he knew applicants for the Restore Community Oakwood Hill Grow Garden request.

Cllr Brookes declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Restore Community Oakwood Hill Grow Garden as a member of the Methodist Church in Loughton.

**RG24 Confirmation of Minutes**  
The minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2021 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

The Committee agreed to move item 19, Financial Assistance – General Applications 2021/22, up the agenda order.

**RG25 Public Representations**  
Andrea Moles, Founder & Chair of the Christian Drama Resource Centre (CRDC) and Ruth Soundrajah, Centre Manager (CRDC) addressed the Committee in support of their Financial Assistance Grant Application for the CRDC.

**RG26 Financial Assistance  
General Applications 2021/22**  
The Committee NOTED that the total Financial Assistance budget for 2021/22 had now been reduced to a current balance of £9,624.00. A schedule of the financial grants (often scaled back) provided to date was distributed to members.

The Committee, noting the wide community benefit of the CRDC work and the valuable project work of 'Restore Grow', RESOLVED to make the following contributions from the scheme by granting financial assistance to:

Organisation	Amount £	Item	Power
Christian Drama Resource Centre	2,000.00	(a) Implement a database. (b) commission key new costume stock and props (c) create a digital directory of CDRC inventory.	General Power of Competence
Restore Community Oakwood Hill Grow Garden	2,000.00	Equipment, marketing and staff costs	General Power of Competence

Members also AGREED that

- (i) A summary list of previous individual grant allocations and figures, (for the relevant financial year) should form part of any subsequent agenda, where financial assistance grants are being discussed.
- (ii) Whenever possible, applicants from local community should be encouraged to apply for financial assistance from the outset (i.e. the beginning of the calendar year) when the main batch of applications are being assessed.

**RG27 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report**

The Town Clerk reported that

- (i) Cllr Murray had conducted an internal financial check during August. A further visit would be arranged soon.
- (ii) The transfer to online banking would be taken forward, once the new Deputy Town Clerk is in place.
- (iii) The ongoing problems with the previous water supply company appear to have now been resolved.

**RG28 Training and Conferences**

The Committee NOTED the report.

**RG29 Appointment of Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)**

The Committee NOTED the appointment of Mrs Kim Lumb as the new Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer (RFO). The Town Clerk would continue to be the RFO in the shorter term until Kim has settled into her new role.

**RG30 Finance & Office Assistant**

The Committee noted that interviews for potential candidates had taken place on the preceding day . An appointment had been made subject to contract and a formal announcement would be made soonest.

**RG31 Loughton Town Council (LTC) Organisation Structure**

The updated staffing organigram was received and NOTED.

**RG32 Christmas Closedown Arrangements**

The Committee AGREED to retain the existing framework, on the proviso that the office would close at 3pm on Wednesday 29 December 2021 and also on Thursday 30 December 2021. See below:-

Friday 24 December	Closed 12 noon
Monday 27 December	Closed
Tuesday 28 December	Closed
Wednesday 29 December	10am – 3pm

Thursday 30 December	10am – 3pm
Friday 31 December	10am - 12.45pm
Monday 3 January	Closed

- RG33 The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Celebrations – 2 to 5 June 2022**  
 The Committee AGREED that the lighting of a beacon on Hillyfields Green would be the best way forward to celebrate the occasion.
- AGREED that the office should extend an invitation (on a best-efforts basis) to a few local school choirs, town crier and piper to enhance the ceremony. It was suggested that commemorative mugs could be handed out to children who participate at the event.
- A further recommendation was made that the Town Council purchase a limited supply of festive bunting to distribute (on a first come, first served basis) to those residents who would be organising street parties to mark the Queen’s platinum jubilee celebrations.
- RG34 Citizens Awards**  
 The Committee NOTED the report. For reference purposes, the Town Clerk was asked to distribute to all Town Councillors a list of the recipients of the awards over the last eight years.
- RG35 Annual Town Meeting**  
 The Committee NOTED the report.
- RG36 Buckingham Court**  
 The Committee noted the Town Clerk’s update. He reminded Members that the building is not used at the moment and that the Council is incurring costs. He would investigate the pros and cons of instigating some hall hire at the premises.
- RG37 Finance**
- 37.1 Current Financial Position**  
 The Committee NOTED the current financial position and the Council’s current bank balances and most recent reconciliations.
- 37.2 Accounts Paid**  
 The Committee NOTED that payments totalling £61,895.94 as detailed on payment schedules no. 331-333, until 21 July 2021 had been made and entered on the accounts system, since the report to the meeting on 30 June 2021. The Town Clerk was asked to investigate whether Councillors signatures should be redacted from the financial papers.
- RG38 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2020/21**  
 The Committee NOTED the satisfactory AGAR (section 3) return and that the Notice of the ‘Conclusion of Audit’ dated 31 August 2021 had been posted on the Town Council noticeboards and website.
- RG39 Request for Credit Card limit increase**  
 Committee Members AGREED that the Town Council credit card limits should be increased to £1,500 for the Town Clerk and £1,000 for the Services Manager.
- RG40 Remembrance Service**  
 The Committee AGREED to make the donation under the General Power of Competence.

**RG41 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

The Committee RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the following item in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as they contained confidential information relating to contractual and staffing matters.

**RG42 Strategy and Staff Group (SSG) meeting 15 July 2021**

The Committee NOTED the update from the Town Clerk on this meeting and subsequent staffing developments.

Signed: .....

Date: 8 December 2021