

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RECREATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held at Loughton Library & Town Hall, Traps Hill, Loughton IG10 1HD on Wednesday 12 January 2022 at 7.45pm

Present

Councillors: D Wixley (in the Chair)
K S Fontenelle L House N Mackinnon
S Murray M Stubbings K Valentine

Also in attendance

Councillors: R Brookes (until Min. no RC78)

Officers:

M Squire (Town Clerk)
P Hoy (Services Manager)

RC61 Apologies

No apologies for absence were received.

RC62 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Wixley declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 11 as he knows the requestee. Cllr Wixley also declared non-pecuniary interests in Agenda item 16 as a former committee member of the Loughton Film Club, and Agenda item 20 being a signature to the call-in of the original Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) proposal to plant all the trees on Jessel Green and additionally as an EFDC councillor for Fairmead Ward which includes Jessel Green within its boundaries. Cllr Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 11 as he has close links to the group. He did however declare that (as far as he knew) he was not a "trustee" of the group in question, as stated in the respondent's email. Cllr Mackinnon declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 8, as he was formerly employed by the security company in question.

RC63 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2021 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RC64 Public Representations

None were received.

RC65 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report

The Town Clerk Reported that EFDC did not object in principle to the request by Roding Valley Cricket Club (RVCC) to have an additional cricket pitch on the Loughton section of the Roding Valley Recreation Ground, subject to the usual due diligence and joint cooperation on any potential changes to the associated lease agreement. A site meeting with members of this Committee and other relevant parties would be arranged soon.

The Committee NOTED that an act of vandalism to one of the swings at the Traps Hill Playground had resulted in repair and replacement costs to a sum in the region of £800.00. The matter was now in the hands of the council's insurance

company, and it was hoped that a successful claim could be made for the financial costs incurred.

It was NOTED that an informal meeting was to be held with GFA Loughton FC on 18 January 2022, to discuss their aspirations for the Willingale Playing Field.

Roding Valley Recreation Ground (RVRG)

RC66 Planting Scheme and Footpaths – Min no RC47

The Committee NOTED that a further update has been sought from EFDC, Principal Engineer, Environmental Protection & Drainage Team, but that no further information was available currently. The Office would continue to chase delivery of these works.

RC67 Drainage Works – Min no RC48

The Committee also NOTED that a further update has been sought from EFDC, Principal Engineer, Environmental Protection & Drainage Team, but that no further information was available. The Office would continue to chase delivery of these works.

RC68 Car Park Gates – Min no RC49

The Committee NOTED that the tarmac work at the car park entrance had been completed by external contractors on Saturday 8 January 2022, and that the security contract wording with the local security firm has been verbally agreed and the start date for the opening and closing of the gate would now be on Monday 17 January 2022. Temporary signage had been altered to reflect the new date, as originally it had been stated that the regime would commence on 10 January 2022.

RC69 Playground – Min no RC50

The Committee NOTED that a fact-finding visit by the Town Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Services Manager to the comparable South Woodham Ferrers, Cold Norton and Runwell playground sites in Essex was due to be conducted on 13 January 2022. Following these visits the tender process would be commenced. The Town Clerk Reported that the Community Initiative Fund (CIF) a grant funding application had not been successful. However, there are substantial earmarked reserves in place and the potential for a Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) funding. It was AGREED that further prospective timelines for this project would be issued at each subsequent Recreation Committee meeting.

RC70 Tree Survey

The Committee NOTED that following the recent survey of trees at all council sites, RVRG has been reported as having many trees in need of extensive works or to be felled completely. The Services Manager reported on the positions within the recreation ground where the trees were situated and stated that two quotations remained outstanding, with only one having been received thus far. The Services Manager informed members that he would forward the tree inspection report to them at his earliest opportunity.

RC71 Memorial Bench/Tree request

The Committee reviewed a request from the co-founder of the Open Door Friendship group, for either a bench or tree in commemoration of recently deceased members of the group and AGREED that a bench on the RVRG would be most suitable. It was AGREED that the Town Clerk would contact the

requestee and discuss appropriate locations within the recreation ground, as well as matters relating to the purchase of the bench.

RC72 Condition of Avondale Close path at Junction with RVRG

The Committee NOTED that following contact from a local resident, the Services Manager would be seeking quotes for contractors to install a short length of pathway constructed of a compressed material at the entrance to the recreation ground via Avondale Close/Greensted Road.

RC73 Condition of Football Pitches

The Services Manager reported that football matches were increasingly having to be called off due to waterlogged pitches, resulting in extended football seasons, which in-turn resulted in the reduction of time between football seasons needed to maintain the pitches to a satisfactory level. Additionally, the Roding River ever more frequently bursts its banks leaving large sections of the grounds under water, occasionally during the summer months as well as during the football season. The Committee NOTED Officers concerns that an acceptable level of service was becoming increasingly more difficult to provide to football pitch hirers and AGREED that the Services Manager and the Chairman would visit the site to explore possible solutions.

Other Agenda Items

RC74 Murray Hall

The Committee NOTED that the redecoration of the main hall and entrance lobby had been completed and NOTED that a claim had been made for the remuneration of the costs for this and other restorative works, as well as for utilities costs' during the NHS's period of tenancy.

The Committee AGREED to the purchase of a basic domestic washing machine which would assist the caretaking staff and thanked the Halls Officer, Judy Graham for currently taking items home to wash.

RC75 Willingale Road Nature Reserve – RC46

The Committee NOTED that the Services Manager had arranged a site visit for Committee members on Friday 14 January 2022 at 9.30am. Damian Weller, EFDC CountryCare, would be in attendance. Members were reminded to be prepared for wet and muddy ground conditions.

RC76 Film Club request

The Committee NOTED that The Loughton Film Club had folded. The Committee considered the request that the old filming equipment should be given to the council to store until further use could be determined but declined the offer.

However, it was AGREED that any residual funds should be returned to LTC (subject to due diligence), as the Film Club was a regular recipient of Loughton Town Council grant funding. It was AGREED that any financial return would in-turn be added to the council's grant funding budget.

RC77 Financial Position

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

RC78 Estimates 2022/2023
The Committee NOTED the report.

Councillor Brookes left the meeting.

RC79 Future Work of the Committee
The Committee Chairman recommended that officers of Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) be invited to the next Recreation Committee meeting to provide a short presentation on community health and wellbeing needs. It was AGREED that the presentation would commence at 7.00pm and be completed by 7.30pm.

The Committee AGREED to suspend Standing Order number 3(ff) and AGREED to conclude the meeting by 9.40pm.

RC80 EFDC tree planting proposals for Jessel Green and Rochford Green
The Committee reviewed and supported the tree planting proposals from EFDC for Jessel Green and Rochford Green and AGREED that the response from this Committee should include the proposals that i) local schools are encouraged to take part in the planting, and ii) more native Oak trees are included in the planting schedule. * Councillor Murray thanked members of the Loughton Residents Association (LRA) for their work on the tree planting proposals.

Signed:
Date: 9 March 2022

- Subsequent to the meeting the Chairman was contacted by Tricia Moxey, a renowned expert on trees who had relevant information regarding the species of trees to be planted. Her comments in a lengthy e-mail were circulated to committee members and would be included in the Town Council's submission to EFDC.