

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held at Loughton Library & Town Hall, Traps Hill, Loughton IG10 1HD on Tuesday 29 March 2022 at 7.45pm

Present

Councillors: C C Pond (in the Chair)
C P Pond K Valentine
G Wiskin D Wixley (as substitute for B Cohen)

Also, in attendance

Officers: Mark Squire (Town Clerk)
Paul Hoy (Services Manager)

EH83 Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Beales, Cohen, and Fontenelle. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Wixley had been nominated as substitute for Cllr Cohen for this meeting.

EH84 Declarations of Interest

Cllr C C Pond declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda items relating to the work of Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) and Essex County Council (ECC), as a member of these authorities. Cllr Wixley declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda items 14 as he is a member of Epping Forest District Councils' (EFDC) Public Scrutiny Committee.

EH85 Public Representations

None were received.

EH86 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report

The Town Clerk Reported the Thames Water (TW) would not now be making an ex-gratia payment to the council to compensate for disruption caused by the protracted road works at the junction of Valley Hill, Oakwood Hill, and Roding Road. TW had however offered to carry out voluntary work in the local community and Members were asked to suggest suitable locations for litter picking. The Town Clerk has already asked TW to clear their own site, next to the car park at the Roding Valley Recreation Ground from debris.

The Town Clerk also reported that members were please that Cllr Beales had attended the Annual Town Meeting on 16 March 2022. Owing to his exceptional prevailing circumstances, Cllr Beales would be extending his leave of absence from Town Council and Committee meetings. Members noted that this matter would be a formal agenda item at the next meeting of the Committee.

The Chairman informed the Committee that St Johns Church was at initial stages of preparation to formally close its churchyard making it a 'closed churchyard.' A report, detailing the possible implications for the Town Council, will be made to the Committee at its next meeting.

EH87 York Hill Benches – Min no EH71

The Committee NOTED that further to the recommendation by this committee at its

last meeting on 25 January 2022 to reinstate the two benches, the City of London Corporation (COLC), (who own the green) have blocked the return of the benches whilst they continue to deal with the wider issues of anti- social behaviour in the vicinity, as part of its ongoing work as members of the Community Safety Panel (CSP). The Committee AGREED that it would be prudent for the Town clerk to join the CSP in respect of this issue and any other future problems that may occur in Loughton.

EH88 Blue Plaques

The Chairman recommended that new public nominations for blue plaques are requested in the next edition of the Town Council's quarterly newsletter 'Think Loughton.'

EH89 Allotments

89.1 Willingale Allotments Report

The Committee NOTED that the current income is £3,475.00 and that all plots are currently let with a waiting list of 30 residents.

At a recent training course attended by the Allotment Officer, it was reported that it is not necessary to send out hard copies of the four-page tenancy agreement or management policy if there were no changes, and that a covering tenancy letter to be signed would be sufficient. The Committee AGREED that Officers should adopt this course of action.

The Committee NOTED that the mains water will be turned back on site on 1 April 2022 unless there is a continued overnight frost.

EH90 Signage

90.1 Signage to the Forest from Loughton Station / Town Centre – Min no EH 76.1

The Committee NOTED that an order has been placed for a multitude of signage from Loughton Station to the forest and vice versa. Relevant invoices will be sent to Essex County Council by 31 March 2022 to ensure that the council fulfils the terms of the Locality Grant it has secured for the signage and installation works.

90.2 Broadway Noticeboard - Min no EH 76.2

The Services Manager Reported that this matter was still in the hands of the legal departments of EFDC and Superdrug. However, the Town Council had recently been asked for updated information pertaining to the contractor who will be installing the noticeboard, and it is hoped that this is an indicator that progress is being made.

EH91 Requests from Epping Forest District Council's (EFDC's) Town Centre Manager - The Broadway Loughton (Debden)

The Committee considered the report and AGREED that Officers should progress this matter, in choosing the appropriate contractors and plan of action for the annual works involved. It was also AGREED that this matter would be reviewed after the first full year.

EH92 Salt Bin- Request – Min no EH 78

The Town Clerk reported that indications were that a salt bin for the forest end of Smarts Lane, Loughton would be forthcoming.

EH93 Community Events

93.1 Loughton Day 17.9.22 – Min no 79.3

The Committee NOTED that the organisation of the event is progressing well and gaining momentum, with a good response from Loughton community groups.

The Committee AGREED that members would run a Town Council stall, including a 'strawberries and cream' table at the event. The Town Council would also make a display, highlighting its responsibilities and achievements. It was also NOTED that as the Heritage Open Days are taking place on the same weekend, and it was highly unlikely that it would be possible to take part this year due to staffing constraints.

93.2 Loughton Wombles – Min no 79.4

The Committee NOTED that a fourth Wombles community litter pick took place on Saturday 26 March 2022 over three separate areas in Loughton. The Loughton Wombles will be invited to both the Jessel Green Fun Day and Loughton Day. Thanks were recorded to the Town Clerk for his promotion of this initiative.

EH94 Ride London

Following the Community Managers' attendance at a 'Zoom' conference meeting organised by the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) on 23 March 2022, the Town Clerk reported that three-day event would specifically impact Loughton on Sunday 29 May 2022, when the town will effectively be closed until early afternoon. The Committee also NOTED that the Town Clerk would investigate whether the Town Council was eligible to apply for grant funding, which is being made available by Essex County Council to financially support town and parish councils. Supporting the Community events and provision of cycle stands were suggested.

EH95 Loughton Market Policy

The Committee NOTED the report and considered the attached draft Markets Policy. It was confirmed that any future markets in Loughton would not be in direct competition with nearby Charter markets in Epping, Waltham Abbey and Enfield, and on that basis, it was AGREED to adopt the Markets Policy, and to notify EFDC.

EH96 Cemetery fees for 2022/23

The Committee NOTED the report and AGREED to increase fees by 5% and to round down to the nearest pound.

EH97 Christmas Lights 2022-24

The Town Clerk Reported that the Christmas Lights tender is now in the public domain with a closing date of 29 April 2022, and that eight companies had already expressed interest. It was AGREED that the Town Clerk would liaise with the Chairman and Vice Chairman to select the final contractor and design, in order to hasten procedures, in the absence of an immediate Environment and Heritage Committee meeting.

It was AGREED that the Town Clerk would write to Officers at Essex County Council to ensure that any replacement lamp columns in the High Road have the correct infrastructure to support Christmas lighting.

EH98 Waste Recycling issues

This item has been referred to the next meeting of the Committee.

EH99 Financial Position
Current Financial Position
The Committee NOTED the report.

EH100 Environmental Issues
No issues were raised.

EH101 Future Work of the Committee
No issues were raised.

Signed:
Date: TBC