

THESE MINUTES NOT YET CONFIRMED

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Tuesday 5 July 2022 at 7.30pm at Loughton Library & Town Hall.

Present:

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

Also present:

Councillor: D Wixley

Officer:

M Squire (Town Clerk)
K Lumb (Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer)

There were no members of the public present.

RG110 Apologies for absence

An apology was received from Cllr Owen.

RG111 Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were received.

RG112 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2022 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

RG113 Public Representations

There were no public representations.

RG114 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report

The Town Clerk had nothing to report. The Chairman raised concern regarding the recent "hacking" of some councillor e-mails. The Town Clerk AGREED to consult our IT Support.

RG115 Training and Conferences

The Committee NOTED the update on staff training.

RG116 Work Experience

The Committee NOTED the update on the sixth form student joining the office team to undertake work experience from Monday 18 July 2022 – Friday 22 July 2022, and expressed how pleased they were to be supporting a student.

RG117 Finance

117.1 Current Financial Position

Following discussion on current interest rates, the Committee's financial position as at 30 April 2022 along with available funds in ear marked reserves as at 31 May 2022 were NOTED.

117.2 Accounts Paid

The Committee NOTED that payments totalling £409,951.55 as detailed on payment schedules nos. 349-352 have been made since the report to the meeting on 13 April 2022, and that schedules and accompanying invoices are available for inspection at the Council offices.

RG118 Precept

The Committee NOTED the first instalment of the 2022/23 Precept, £414,832.00, was received into the Council's Santander bank account on 29 April 2022.

RG119 Internal Financial Check

The Committee AGREED to continue with the appointment of a Town Councillor to undertake internal financial checks during the year and accepted Cllr Murray's offer to continue in this role for 2022/23.

Cllr Murray AGREED to provide some date options for July and August for a visit to the office to undertake a review of current finances.

RG120 Internal Audit

The Committee NOTED the clear Internal Audit Report received from our Internal Auditors, Healis & Lodge dated 12 May 2022, and congratulated the officers concerned.

RG121 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2021/22

The Committee NOTED that the AGAR was submitted to the External Auditors, PKF Littlejohn LLP on 21 June 2022, and that the completed confirmation of dates for the provision of public rights form has been displayed on our noticeboards and posted on our Town Council website.

RG122 Financial Assistance

The Committee discussed and considered the financial assistance applications received and AGREED the following contribution from the 2022/23 Financial Assistance scheme:

- £1,000.00 – awarded to The Lopping Endowment Corporate Trustee Limited, for the purchase of a defibrillator

The Committee requested Grant a Smile CIC be asked for the following further information for their understanding and consideration, due to insufficient information in the application:

- A more detailed breakdown of costings and understanding required for this project, including showing:
- How and on what the project and any potential funding would be spent.

Subject to receipt the Committee will re-consider this application at the next Resources and General Services Committee on 5 October 2022.

The Committee requested that both of the applicants be advised that any future applications for the Council's Financial Assistance Application Scheme, unless an emergency, would need to be made within the scheme timelines.

Cllr Wixley recommended that "Grant a Smile" could be asked if they would like to participate in Loughton Day to raise funds. Following discussion, the Committee AGREED that 'Grant a Smile' should be made aware and asked the Town Clerk to also check and ensure organisations who have received a 2022/23 grant award have been invited to participate in Loughton Day.

Cllr Wixley also requested that the Council defibrillators were checked to ensure the post codes were visible in the small white boxes on the front of the defibrillator cases. The Town Clerk NOTED this request.

RG123 PC Upgrades

The Committee discussed and NOTED the issues with the office computers memory and AGREED the spend of c£550 + VAT to update these accordingly.

RG124 Flag Flying

The Committee NOTED the report.

RG125 Christmas Card Competition 2022

The Committee NOTED that this year's competition will be launched prior to the autumn meeting of this Committee.

Following discussion, it was AGREED to continue and publicise accordingly in the historic format, with the following amendment:

- Inclusion – theming the Competition "Celebration Cards" to encourage more diversity, e.g., Hanukkah and Diwali as well as Christmas.

RG126 Policies Review

126.1 Code of Conduct

The Committee reviewed and AGREED the Code of Conduct Policy, with next review June 2024.

126.2 Code of Conduct Annexe 3 Complaints Procedure

The Committee reviewed and AGREED the Code of Conduct Annexe 3 Complaints Procedure, with next review June 2024.

RG127 Local Government Boundary Commission

The Committee reviewed and AGREED the recommended response to EFDC, as drafted by the Environment and Heritage Committee at their meeting on 22 June 2022.

RG128 Civic Service / Citizenship 2023 award

Following discussion, the Committee AGREED the Town Mayor may hold a Civic Service in the Loughton Synagogue around the last weekend in February 2023.

Members also AGREED not to incorporate the Citizenship 2023 award into the Civic Service, but to keep this as part of the Annual Town Meeting.

RG129 Buckingham Court

The Committee NOTED the update from the Town Clerk on the office move back to Buckingham Court and correspondence from Essex County Council. Members

AGREED to delegate authority to the office to continue and carry out works, as necessary.

The Town Clerk AGREED to review whether more prominent “Loughton Town Council” signage on the building would be possible.

RG130 Office photocopier

The Committee received and NOTED the position with the current office photocopier and AGREED to delegate authority to the office to pursue and deliver new arrangements subject to the approval of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of this Committee.

RG131 Essex Wildlife Trust (EWT) annual subscription fees

Following discussion, the Committee AGREED not to currently renew the subscription, and asked the Town Clerk to advise the Essex Wildlife Trust that due to the large increase in annual membership, this will not be renewed for now, pending further discussion.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee expressed a big “thank you” to the Town Clerk and Staff for the organisation of the Jessel Green event, and their gratitude to everyone for the delivery of such a wonderful day.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 9.09pm.

Signed:

Date: 5 October 2022