

THESE MINUTES NOT YET CONFIRMED

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RECREATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held at Loughton Library & Town Hall, Traps Hill, Loughton IG10 1HD on Wednesday 2 November 2022 at 7pm

Present

Councillors:

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

Also in attendance R Brookes

Officers:

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

Also present:

Fabrizio Luca Ferrari, Public Health Improvement Officer, Community Culture and Wellbeing, Epping Forest District Council (EFDC)

RC149 Apologies

No apologies for absence were received.

RC150 Declarations of Interest

Councillors Wixley, Murray and Brookes declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 3, as all are EFDC district councillors.

RC151 Health and Wellbeing Presentation

Mr Fabrizio Luca Ferrari, Public Health Improvement Officer, Community Culture and Wellbeing, EFDC, was welcomed to the meeting. Mr Ferrari gave a presentation to the committee on community health and wellbeing needs in the district, and afterwards invited members to ask questions. Mr Ferrari was thanked for attending the meeting and for sharing the work of his department with members.

RC151 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2022 were AGREED, noting the additions made from those circulated at Min no. 131, to record that Cllrs Murray and Brookes were also in attendance at the site meeting detailed in the item. Also that the site meeting was in connection with the EFDC Local Plan construction and the proposed designation as a Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG).

RC152 Public Representations

None were received.

RC153 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report

Following an update by the Town Clerk, the Chairman extended thanks to the Services Team, grounds maintenance contractors and volunteers for awards recently won in the Essex Playing Field Association's annual 'Best Kept Playing Fields' competition. The awards were as follows:

Class 1 – Playing fields serving a population of 2,500 or more

Roding Valley Recreation Ground – certificate of merit
Willinagle Road Playing Field – certificate of merit

Class 3 – Children’s Playgrounds

Traps Hill – over all category Runner-up
Newmans Lane – Silver Award
Westall Road – Silver Award

Roding Valley Recreation Ground (RVRG)

RC154 Playground – Min no RC132

The Town Clerk reported that EFDC had confirmed in writing that no planning permission was required for the new playground, although a ‘Certificate of Lawful Development’ would be obtained.

The Committee NOTED the report.

RC155 Tree Survey – Min no RC133

The Services Manager Reported that work is due to be completed on all remaining trees during week commencing 7 November 2022. The Committee NOTED that the lost Cherry trees will be replaced in a rolling programme of works, to be commenced during 2023.

RC156 New Bench – Min no RC134

The Committee AGREED to delay the installation of a new seat close to the tennis courts until after the installation of the new playground, as it was likely that a new bench in this vicinity was likely to be incorporated into the overall playground project.

RC157 River Way- Garages / brick wall – Min no RC136

The Services Manager Reported that a purchase order had been issued for a new chain-link fence to replace the brick wall that was formerly the border between River Way garages and the recreation ground, and that it was anticipated that work would commence within the next seven days. It would be useful to also plant some native hedging and engage EFDC Countrycare for this purpose.

RC158 Hedgerows Survey – Min no RC138

The Chairman Reported he would discuss appropriate ways to enhance hedgerows with Officers of Epping Forest Countrycare. Following these discussions, the Services Manager would hold discussions with EFDC grounds maintenance officers to agree a suitable programme of works to support this scheme.

RC159 Footpath adjacent to the River Roding

The Committee considered the concerns of a local resident who recently highlighted the poor state of sections of the footpath. As the costs of footpath replacement/repairs are so high, and with very limited budget capacity, it was AGREED that the Town Clerk will write to the Director of Planning Services at EFDC to follow-up on EFDC’s proposal to designate the RVRG as a Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG). Should that plan go ahead resulting in additional funding for enhancements to the RVRG then the priority would be on pathway repairs. The Town Clerk will provide a report at the next sitting of the committee.

Other Agenda Items

RC160 Town Council Van – Min no RC140

The Town Clerk reported that together with the Service Manager, they had visited three Van dealerships in Harlow on 28 October 2022. Only one viable option presented itself during the visits, and it was felt that a little more research was required before a final decision is made.

The Committee AGREED that following the further research the decision on a suitable way forward should be left to the Town Clerk and all Town Council committee Chairmen, to proceed at the earliest opportunity.

RC161 Willingale Road Nature Reserve – Min no RC141

The Chairman reported that he visited site during the last volunteer work session carried out by Epping Forest Countrycare on 6 October 2022. The Services Manager reported that a further work session had been arranged for Thursday 5 January 2022, and that all members were invited to join in.

RC162 Murray Hall – Min no RC142

No new items were reported.

RC163 Kingsley Hall – Essential works to the rear garden wall and gate – Min no RC143 (ii)

The Services Manager Reported that a third quote was forthcoming and that a decision would be made on receipt of the third quote.

RC164 Jessel Green Fun Day

The Town Clerk Reported that he will liaise with the various Community Group partners in the New Year, regarding plans for the 2023 event, and further updates will be provided at future Recreation Committee meetings.

RC165 Broadway Town Centre Partnership (BTCP) request

The Committee NOTED that the council was not in a position to support a Christmas event on The Broadway this year, and it was AGREED that it should be stated in these minutes that the original request was made by Cllr Brookes directly and not by the BTCP.

RC166 Financial Position

The Committee NOTED the report.

RC167 Estimates for 2023/24

The Committee NOTED the projections for estimates / budget for 2023/24 and AGREED to increase the council's fees and charges for 2023/24 by 7%, keeping it below the current Retail Price Index (RPI) rate. The Committee AGREED to the draft budget but accepted that some figures may need to be updated at the final budget meeting in early January 2023 as the budget would be financially challenging.

The Committee AGREED to suspend Standing Order number 3(ff) and AGREED to conclude the meeting by 9.00pm.

RC168 Committee Priorities

The Committee reviewed its priorities for 2023/24 and AGREED to move 'Solar energy installations for council buildings' up to number 1. The Chairman AGREED

that initial enquiries should be made and the costs of a feasibility study ascertained
A report will be made at the next meeting.

RC169 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

Signed:

Date: 11 January 2023