

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 11 January 2023 at 7.00pm at Loughton Town Council, Council Chamber, 1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ.

Present:

Councillors: M Owen (in the Chair)
R Brookes W Kauffman
S Murray M Stubbings
C P Pond (as substitute for B Cohen)
C C Pond (as substitute for J Jennings)

Also Present D Wixley
Councillors: S Fontenelle

Officers: M Squire (Town Clerk)
K Lumb (Deputy Town Clerk / RFO)

There were no members of the public present.

RG179 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Cohen and Jennings. Cllr C P Pond had been nominated as substitute for Cllr Cohen and Cllr C C Pond as substitute for Cllr Jennings. Cllr Owen (Vice Chairman) would chair the meeting in the absence of Cllr Jennings.

RG180 Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were received.

RG181 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2022 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

RG182 Public Representations

There were no public representations.

RG183 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report

The Town Clerk and Chairman had nothing to report.

RG184 Notification of external auditor appointment for 2022-23 to 2026-27

The Committee NOTED that the SAAA (Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments), have announced following the conclusion of its procurement process, the

appointed auditor for the 5-year period from 2022-23 – 2026-27 is PKF Littlejohn LLP.

RG185 Policies Review

Cllr Fontenelle arrived during this agenda item.

Members AGREED and RESOLVED to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge and requested that this protocol forms part of the Councillors induction pack.

The Committee NOTED the Local Government (Disqualification) Act 2022 change April 22.

RG186 Internal Financial Check

The Committee NOTED that Cllr Murray visited the office on the 15 December 22 and undertook a financial check on the Purchase Invoices and Cheques from the beginning of the 2022/23 financial year to date. The Chairman thanked Cllr Murray for his support.

RG187 Financial Assistance Working Group

The Committee AGREED that the members of this working group will be Councillors M Owen and S Murray. Cllr C C Pond will confirm the third member imminently. * The working group will continue to assess the financial grant applications and provide recommendations to the next Resources and General Services Committee meeting for the 2023/24 financial year.

RG188 Council-wide Priorities 2023/24

The Committee discussed and NOTED the Council-wide priority lists for 2023/24, with the ongoing status of priorities and areas of focus to be considered / recommended by relevant Committees.

RG189 Considerations for 2023/24 Estimates following the Strategy & Staffing Group meeting of 19.12.22.

The Town Clerk provided some background, highlighting the key details and recommendations.

The Committee discussed and NOTED the salient points and recommendations from this meeting and requested that potential 'sponsors' are sought to support the forthcoming Town Council events.

*Subsequently Cllr G Wiskin confirmed as the third member.

RG190 Estimates for 2023/24**190.1 Budget Review**

The Town Clerk provided an overview of the rationale and content of the draft budget calculations, which were NOTED by the Committee.

190.2 Services Recharges

The Committee NOTED the report.

190.3 Tax Base

The new restated Tax Base for 2023/24 for Loughton Town Council, was NOTED by the Committee.

190.4 Committees' Estimates & RECOMMENDATIONS for Precept to Council

The Committee recognised the exceedingly difficult economic climate, not least the current 'cost of living' and 'utility costs,' crises which would be reflected in the expenditure categories for the following financial year. Also noted was the significant reduction in Earmarked Reserves.

The Committee NOTED the draft estimates and RECOMMENDED to Council that the precept for 2023/24 be set at £904,300, with the budget details (preservice recharges) as follows:

| Committee | Income | Expenditure |
|---|----------------|--------------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Resources and General Services | 2,000 | 575,121 |
| Environment and Heritage | 19,345 | 104,778 |
| Recreation | 151,862 | 482,972 |
| Planning and Licensing | 0 | 200 |
| | 173,207 | 1,163,071 |
| Interest | 7000 | |
| Increase / Decrease in Earmarked Reserves | | |
| Resources & General Services | | -9,624 |
| Environment & Heritage | | -13,000 |
| Recreation | | -55,940 |
| Planning and Licensing | | 0 |
| | | |
| Total | 180,207 | 1,084,507 |
| Net requirement | 904,300 | 71.39 |
| Final Net Requirement | 904,300 | |

This results in charges to band D increasing 9.56% from £65.16 (2022/23) to £71.39 (2023/24), (still comparably low) which equates to a rise of £6.23 annually, £0.12 weekly. Members reiterated that the Council has worked intensively to keep this increase as low as possible.

190.5 Public Loans Outstanding's

The Committee NOTED the information provided on the current status of the public loans outstanding.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 7.42 pm.

Signed:
Date: 8 February 2023