

THESE MINUTES NOT YET CONFIRMED

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RECREATION COMMITTEE

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Loughton Town Council, Council Chamber,
1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ on Wednesday 6 September
2023 at 7.30pm**

Present

Councillors: D Wixley (in the chair)
S Fontenelle (from Min no. 239) L House
N MacKinnon S Murray M Stubbings
K Valentine

Also in attendance: Cllr R Brookes

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

RC236 Apologies

No apologies had been received.

RC237 Declarations of Interest

Councillors Wixley and Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 12 as both are acquainted with the resident, that is requesting the bench. Councillors Brookes, Murray and Wixley declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda items relating to the work of Epping Forest District Council (EFDC), as all are District Councillors. Cllr Murray also declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 9 as a member of South Loughton Cricket Club.

RC238 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 31 May 2023 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Councillor Fontenelle joined the meeting during the next item.

RC239 Public Representations

None were received.

RC240 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report

Discussions are ongoing with neighbouring businesses at Buckingham Court regarding the installation of a number of electric charging points.

Details of the transfer of Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) Grounds Maintenance Services to Qualis Management are awaited. Since the Recreation Committee last sat on 31 May 2023, the council has received monthly bills from Qualis, but they have not yet been analysed.

The Chairman and the Town Clerk both reported on news of the imminent construction by EFDC of a brand-new playground on the Oakwood Hill Estate. The Town Council has only this week been informed of the existence of the plans for the playground, and that it has been funded through the Government's '2022-23 UK Shared Prosperity Fund' (UKSPF). It has also been intimated by officers at EFDC

that the Town Council will be asked to assume responsibility for ongoing inspections, maintenance, and litter clearance, having had no prior consultation in any part of the development process. The Committee AGREED that the award of funding of this type was welcomed in Loughton, but that the Town Clerk would write to EFDC with a number of questions.

He will ask EFDC to confirm their plans for the playground, once it has been constructed, and report back to the Resources and General Service Committee on 4 October 2023.

Roding Valley Recreation Ground

RC241 Playground – Min no RC214

The Committee NOTED that the new children's playground was opened to the public on Thursday 24 August 2023, with the official opening ceremony taking place on Friday 1 September 2023. An invitation is to be extended to a selection of staff and pupils of both Alderton and Whitebridge Schools as a thank you to both schools for their contribution to the consultation process. It was NOTED that the playground was proving to be very popular and was being enjoyed by large numbers of children.

The Town Clerk reported on a conversation that had taken place with the relative of a severely disabled child regarding the seats that form part of the new inclusive roundabout, specifically the absence of a harness that is essential to allow the child to safely use this piece of equipment. It was AGREED that a harness set would be purchased and made available to use by this particular family, and an accompanying notice would be displayed at the playground asking that the Town Council should be contacted by anyone affected by this issue.

RC242 Trees

242.1 Oak Processionary Moth – Min no RC215.1

The Committee NOTED the report, and NOTED that EFDC Countrycare has organised a 'Mad about Moths evening on Weald Common, North Weald Basset on Friday 8 September 2023, between 8pm and 10pm.

RC243 River Way – Garages / brick wall – Min no RC216

The Committee NOTED that all asbestos was removed by Southern Asbestos Services Ltd, a Government approved contractor on Thursday 3 August 2023, from around the proposed tree planting site. It was AGREED that the Chairman and Cllr MacKinnon will arrange the tree planting in the autumn and would be assisted by Cllr Stubbings. Any other members of the Committee were welcome to lend a hand.

Councillor Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in the next agenda item, as a member of South Loughton Cricket Club.

RC244 South Loughton Cricket Club (SLCC)

244.1 SLCC's request for a bench in memory of Mr Rob Glendinning – Min no RC217

The Committee NOTED that the bench has now been installed as planned.

244.2 SLCC's request email DATED 29 August 2023

The Committee NOTED the request by SLCC to submit plans for a re-build of its cricket clubhouse. It was AGREED that the Town Clerk and Services Manager would engage with SLCC at this early stage of the process and report back to the Committee at its next meeting.

RC245 Roding Valley Cricket Club (RVCC) – Min no RC218

The Committee NOTED that despite some difficulties, the final documentation to be signed off by all relevant parties should be completed shortly.

RC246 Cranleigh Gardens Parking - RC220

The Committee NOTED that the over marking of the cross hatching, parking bay markers and NO PARKING caution, in the small car park in Cranleigh Gardens, was carried out on 28 June 2023.

RC247 Resident’s request for a bench – RC221

The Committee NOTED that the bench, including commemorative plaque, was installed on 4 September 2023. The Services Manager AGREED to forward photographs of the installed bench to all members Committee.

A request for a further bench by a local resident, had been made to Cllr Stubbings, but as this was not a commemorative bench it could not be considered in the current financial year. It could however be considered to be included in the programme of works in 2024/25.

A further request for a bench, with a commemorative plaque, had been received by the Services Manager. The location was likely to be close to the lake and discussions were ongoing.

RC248 Mental Elf Charity Event – RC222

The Committee NOTED that the Mental Elf charity, who had originally wanted to host an event on the RVRG in late autumn 2023, had now decided to cancel the event.

RC249 Skate Park Request

The Committee NOTED the Town Clerk’s oral report of a discussion that had taken place with a representative of the recently formed “Roding Valley Recreation Ground Skatepark Group”, regarding the group’s wish to have a skatepark situated within the RVRG.

The Committee NOTED the request and were supportive of the group’s general request, but AGREED that it could not support such an initiative at this stage until more information was known. It was therefore AGREED that in the first instance, the Chairman, Town Clerk and Services Manager would hold a meeting with the group, and a full report would be made to the Committee at its next sitting on 31 October 2023.

Other Agenda Items

RC250 Town Council Community Halls

250.1 Murray Hall – Electricity bills

The Committee NOTED that the current electricity provider is causing problems with erratic and nonsensical estimated bills, despite actual meter readings being submitted, and that Officers continue to work towards a resolution to this issue.

250.2 Kingsley Hall – Publicity

The Committee NOTED that a publicity campaign has commenced via Town Council media channels, to encourage more use of the hall in the afternoons.

RC251 Jessel Green Fun Day – Min no RC226

The Committee NOTED that the Jessel Green event, staged on Sunday 25 June 2023, had proven to be a great success once more, with bumper crowds in attendance. The Town Clerk reported that there had been a different ticketing system this year which had resulted in lower takings than in 2022, and that a full evaluation of this issue, as well as costings, would be considered during the preparations for the event in 2024.

RC252 Skate Ramps – Min no RC227

The Committee NOTED that discussions are still ongoing between EFDC and the skateboard company on the works needed to restore the equipment. The Services Manager reported that he would be discussing all issues related to this matter with officers at EFDC on Monday 11 September 2023, and that a full report would be made at the next sitting of the Committee on 31 October 2023.

RC253 Willingale Road Nature Reserve – Min no RC201

The Committee NOTED that a moth survey, carried out by Tim Harris of Wren Wildlife and Conservation Group, in conjunction with EFDC Countrycare, had been carried out on 3 and 4 July 2023. The observations and results following the exercise were NOTED by the Committee.

The Committee NOTED that the asbestos water tank, unearthed by Countrycare volunteers on their previous work session, had been removed by Southern Asbestos Services Ltd, a government approved contractor, on Thursday 3 August 2023, and that the next Countrycare work session has been booked for Thursday 14 September 2023

RC254 Environment & Heritage Committee 28.3.23. Minute 229 Financial Savings

The Committee NOTED that the Town Clerk will arrange the meeting at the first opportunity, which should include a representative of Qualis.

RC255 Proposal for British Sign Language Signs in our Playgrounds – Min no. 230.

The Committee NOTED that a customised sign had been installed at the new RVRG playground. The remaining signs for the other playgrounds may have to be staggered due to budget considerations.

RC256 Filming on Loughton Town Council (LTC) Open Spaces

The Committee NOTED the report and AGREED to update the council's existing filming policy to include all council facilities and to amend its indemnity figure if appropriate. Furthermore it was AGREED that the Town Clerk would contact the Filming Location Booking Agent to seek more information, and Cllr MacKinnon, in his professional capacity, offered his assistance.

RC257 Financial Position

The Committee NOTED the report.

The Committee AGREED to suspend Standing Order number 3(ff) and AGREED to conclude the meeting by 9.30pm.

RC258 Financial Savings

No items were raised.

RC259 Future Work of the Committee

The Committee noted that a set of tennis nets at RVRG were showing signs of disrepair and it was AGREED that they should be monitored and replaced if there was further wear.

The Town Clerk AGREED to progress the arrangement of defibrillator training for all staff and Councillors at the earliest opportunity.

RC260 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Committee RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the following item in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as it contains confidential information relating to contractual matters.

RC261 Potential Insurance Claim

The Committee NOTED the report and AGREED to implement Option 1. Councillor MacKinnon was thanked for his help in this matter.

Signed:
Date: 31 October 2023