

THESE MINUTES NOT YET CONFIRMED

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

**MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 17 July 2024 at 7.30pm at
1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ**

Present:

Councillors: K Valentine (In the chair)

I Allgood	R Brookes	C Davies
W Dodd	S Fontenelle	(from min no 29.4)
A Fricker	S Harriman	K-W Lee
N MacKinnon	R Minhas	S Murphy
S Murray	M Owen	C Pond
J Riley	M Stubbings	R Sylvan
C Ubah	D Wixley	

Officers: M Squire (Town Clerk)
D Paris (Planning & Licensing Committee Clerk)

Also

Present:

22 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs House and Obaseki.

23 Declarations of Interest

Cllr 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. He also declared an interest in Agenda Item 8.4 – Long Service Awards, having been a member of the Council who would qualify for such an award.

Cllr Wixley declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 9(I) being a member of the Epping Forest Heritage Trust. He also declared an interest in Agenda Item 8.4 – Long Service Awards, having been a member of the Council who would qualify for such an award.

Cllr Owen declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 14(II) – St John the Baptist – Closed Churchyard, as he is a member of that congregation and knows the Reverend.

24 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meeting held on 29 May 2024 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

25 Public Representations

None were received.

26 Questions Without Discussion

No questions were received.

27 Town Mayor's / Town Clerk's Report

The Town Clerk reminded Councillors, who had not already done so, to submit their personal profiles to be included on the Town Council website.

28 Town Mayor's Engagements and Announcements

The Town Mayor represented the Town Council and attended the following events. The National Jazz Archive performance at Loughton Baptist Church, D-Day Landings 80th Anniversary commemoration and beacon lighting on Hillyfields Open Space, Loughton Amateur Dramatics Society production of 'The Roundabout' by JB Priestley at Lopping Hall, Creative Summer Festival at New City College, Essex County Council Garden Party, Jessel Green Community Fun Day, Staples Road School Summer Fair, the opening of the Wildlife Garden at Woodland Grove Care Home and an official visit to Haven House Children's Hospice.

The Town Mayor gave a brief report on each event attended and expressed how much she had enjoyed each occasion.

Cllr Murray commended Cllr Valentine, on her very positive flying start in her role as Town Mayor, and also requested that the minutes record the thanks of all Councillors to Town Council Officers for all their hard work in organising the extremely successful D-Day Landings 80th Anniversary commemoration and beacon lighting on Hillyfields Open Space and Jessel Green Community Fun Day events.

29 Reports from Committees

29.1 Planning and Licensing

The reports from the meetings held on 20 May, 3 and 17 June, and 1 and 15 July 2024 were NOTED.

29.2 Recreation

The report from the meeting held on 29 May 2024 was NOTED.

Cllr Wixley asked if there had been any updates regarding the proposed cycle route, following an enquiry from one of his residents. The Town Clerk advised that the Epping Forest District Council, Public Health Improvement Officer, Health Improvement Team Manager – Customer and the Community, Fabrizio Ferrari, had responsibility for this, and were likely to be holding a stall at the Loughton Day community Day event on 21 September 2024, where he would be able to advise residents in this regard.

Cllr Murray commented on the excellent presentation regarding the Oakwood Hill Area in Loughton, min no RC6, and advised that since the meeting news had been received that the Council would be receiving Public Health Accelerator Funding and Safer Streets Funding Initiative for events taking place next week.

He also commented that the two new benches, recently installed, min no RC8.3, had gone down an "absolute storm" providing two great benches in good locations for local residents to enjoy.

29.3 Environment and Heritage

The report from the meeting held on 11 June 2024 was NOTED.

Cllr Murray requested that the passing of former Councillor Eddie Boatman, a founding member of Loughton Town Council, who served as a Town

Councillor from 1996 – 2004, recorded in the above minutes, be formally recorded in these minutes too, to enable all members to extend their condolences to the Boatman family.

29.4 Resources and General Services

The report from the meeting held on 26 June 2024 was NOTED.

The following matters were discussed

Councillor / Staff Long Service Awards (See minute RG12).

Following the preceding Resources and General Services Committee meeting on 26 June 2024, recommendations were AGREED at the Strategy & Staff Group (SSG) meeting on 29 June 2024, recognising commitment and service with long service awards. This included reference to and recognition of long service of Town Councillors from the last Town Council administration.

Recommendation for Town Councillors to approve is as follows: -

For Town Councillors

A certificate and bronze badge to denote 10 years' service.

A certificate and silver badge to denote 15 years' service.

A framed certificate and gold badge to denote 20 years plus service.

For Town Council staff

- 1 additional days holiday p.a. to denote 10 years' service
- 2 2 additional days holiday p.a. to denote 15 years' service.
3. 3 additional days (capped) holiday p.a. to denote 20 years' service.

Members AGREED the above recommendation.

Cllr Fontenelle joined the meeting during this item. He confirmed that he would not be recording this meeting and had no declarations of interest to make.

It was also NOTED that The Town Mayor's chain needs a 'makeover' which the Town Clerk will organise. He will also investigate adding the particular 'years' service, to be added to the 'Past Town Mayors' badges.

It was AGREED that the Town Clerk would pursue enquiries regarding this item and report back to Members on the cost for approval to proceed with this proposal.

Budget – Virements (minute RG 20)

Members AGREED to this proposal and confirmed that the new agreed limits would be included in the latest Financial Regulations.

Town Council's Banking Arrangements / Signatories (minute RG 21)

Cllrs Riley and Fricker were nominated as the two further banking signatories to check and approve payments on the new Unity electronic banking system.

Town Council Christmas Card

Cllr Davies suggested, following the recent sighting of the Northern Lights in Debden and the subsequent postings on social media of photos of this phenomenon by residents, it might be worth considering the re-introduction of a photographic competition for next year's Christmas card. This is a medium more popular with today's generation and could offer a more interesting subject for the Council Christmas card, whilst also engaging with Loughton residents. It was AGREED to consider this as an option for next year.

30 Reports from Members on Outside Organisations

Written reports on the following meetings were NOTED

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- i. Local Authorities Liaison meeting - Tuesday 14 May 2024
Cllr Murray requested that a formal letter of congratulations be sent on behalf of the Town Council to the new Superintendent, Jacqueline Eggleston, particularly as she is the first female to hold this position. The Town Clerk advised that he had sent his congratulations in a personal capacity and would follow up as requested.
 - ii. Lopping Hall – AGM Tuesday 9 July 2024 – Cllr J Riley.
 - iii. Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership AGM – 11 July 2024
Cllr Brookes reported that following the recent elections, whereby she now represents Whitebridge Ward, she will no longer be able to continue as Interim Chair of this Committee. Cllr Allgood will temporarily be assuming this role.

The Town Mayor thanked Cllr Brookes for all her efforts and hard work in undertaking Interim Chairmanship of this group.

31 Councillor Vacancy on Planning & Licensing Committee

Cllr Dodd was nominated as the member for the remaining vacancy.

32 Councillor Information

The Town Clerk thanked those Councillors who had confirmed the information they wished to be documented in the autumn 'Think Loughton' newsletter and advised that for those who did not respond by the given deadline, the existing information held would otherwise be included.

33 Town Councillor E-mail Addresses

See minute RG267 below Loughton Town Council (LTC) email addresses

It was AGREED to adopt the preferred recommendation of :

CllrJohnSmith@ – all followed with **@loughton-tc.gov.uk**

as a standard Town Councillor e-mail address for all members, with the exception of Cllr Davies, who would prefer the option of CllrJSmith@

Members requested that the domain address be amended to just "@loughton.gov.uk". The Town Clerk agreed to look into this possibility with the Council's IT Consultant and also to discuss the ease of access obviating the use of Microsoft authenticator.

34 Loughton High Road – Weekly Food Market

Members NOTED that EFDC have instructed their solicitors for a draft document for the market provider (Hughmark) to use the pavement outside Centric Parade.

35 Recommendations from SSG meeting 29 June 2024

I. Recording of meetings by Town Councillors

As an interim measure it was agreed that the following paragraph would be added to Standing Orders.

Subject to Standing Order 3 r, a Town Councillor may be permitted to record the meeting subject to

- Informing members and guest(s) to the meeting before the first agenda item that he/ she will be recording the meeting
- the recording of the meeting is not to be passed on to any third party in any form
- the recording itself will be deleted within 2 weeks

This wording would be reviewed again at a future date, following further research by the Town Clerk.

Cllr Wixley requested that all guests attending Council meetings be made aware of the above three points.

Whether the meetings should be recorded in-house and how and if this would be taken forward would be discussed at the next SSG meeting.

The Town Mayor informed Cllr Fontenelle that he would be invited to the next meeting of the SSG to discuss any relevant issues.

II. St John the Baptist - Closed Churchyard

Members reviewed and AGREED that Loughton Town Council would take over the responsibility of maintenance work of the St Johns Churchyard, when it becomes a Closed Churchyard.

The clerical and administrative functions would remain with the Church. The additional costs involved, including the appointment of a part time cemetery attendant were NOTED. The extra costs may lead to an increase in the precept which would need to be conveyed to residents, (providing the rationale behind the developments) in due course. A Service Level Agreement between St Johns Church and the Town Council would need to be drawn up to clarify the responsibilities of each party.

I. Staffing Matters

Members NOTED

- the retirement of the existing Deputy Town Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer in October 2024.
- planned recruitment of a new Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

Members thanked the Deputy Town Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer for all her hard work in this role and sent their good wishes for a very happy retirement.

The Town Clerk reported that no applications had been received to date, although a couple of application packs had been sent out, following enquiries.

Signed
16 October 2024