

**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 15 January at 7.30pm**

**Present**

**Councillors:** D Wixley (in the chair)  
R Brookes (substitute for Cllr House) A Fricker (substitute for Cllr MacKinnon)  
S Murray M Stubbings  
R Sylvan K Valentine

**Also in attendance:** Cllr I Allgood  
Cllr S Fontenelle

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

**Also Present:** Cllr Chidi Nweke, Epping Forest District (EFDC) Councillor

The Town Clerk noted that a member was recording the meeting.

**RC71 Apologies**

Aologies had been received from Cllrs House and MacKinnon. The Town Clerk reported that Cllrs Brookes (for Cllr House), and Fricker (for Cllr MacKinnon) had been appointed as substitutes for this meeting.

**RC72 Declarations of Interest**

Cllrs Murray and Allgood declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda item 5, as both were involved in the Men's shed project, (albeit tentative trustees at present). Cllr Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 8, as he is acquainted with the family who have requested the memorial bench.

**RC73 Confirmation of Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2024 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**RC74 Public Representations**

None were received.

**RC75 Roding Valley Recreation Ground - Changing Rooms – Potential 'Mens Shed' Project – Min nos RC56 & RC59**

EFDC Councillor, Chidi Nweke, was welcomed to the meeting and provided a further update on the potential project to convert the derelict changing rooms to a 'Men's Shed' workshop for the benefit of the local community. Cllr Nweke reported the following:

- Discussion had been held with Qualis regarding arranging for a full structural survey to be carried out on the buildings.
- To assist with funding applications, a lease with minimum term of 10 years would need to be agreed with LTC.
- Large companies, including building material suppliers, had been approached

regarding assistance in the conversion of the buildings into a space suitable to house a men's shed.

- The registration of the Loughton Men's Shed group was ongoing, and it will be stated as a Community Shed.
- The cost (stated as £900.00) of the structural survey should be met by LTC as the leaseholder of the buildings.

The Committee considered the final point and AGREED that the council should pay for the structural survey, with the money to be taken from the Roding Valley Recreation Ground (RVRG) improvement works budget.

#### **RC76 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report**

- The Committee NOTED that the Speed Indicator Device (SID) is imminently due to be installed in Valley Hill by the EFDC Highway Rangers.
- The Committee NOTED that the memorial bench plaque at the corner of Borders Lane / Colson Road has now been installed.
- The Committee NOTED that the former Town Councillor who has offered to pay for a new bench and plaque at the Memorial Garden, has now been approached with the various costings.

Cllr Sylvan declared a non-pecuniary interest in the next item, as she has entered a contract to run an 'after school club' as part of the ongoing project at Oakwood Hill.

- The Chairman reported on the first annual stakeholder event for Oakwood Hill on Friday 15 November 2024, organised by the EFDC Community Engagement Team, at Oakwood Hill Community Hall, Loughton, that he and several fellow councillors had attended. The event provided EFDC officers with the opportunity to highlight key projects that have been developed in the Oakwood Hill area, and to explore the priorities for the area and how they could be addressed. Cllr Murray has been keeping members informed on all developments pertaining to the Oakwood Hill project.
- The Chairman reported that EFDC Local Plan included proposals to protect Epping Forest from recreational pressures. The Roding Valley Recreation Ground (RVRG) had thus been designated as a SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space). An enhancement project, details not yet known, was to be funded from Section 106 monies.
- More details can be found in the agenda and minutes of the EFDC Cabinet meeting held on the 9 December 2024 at which the Chairman had addressed the Cabinet in order to ensure that LTC will be consulted on the proposals.
- The Vice Chairman also provided an update on EFDC 'Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation' -RVRG – Enhancement Project funding. Specific details will emerge in due course.

#### **Roding Valley Recreation Ground (RVRG)**

#### **RC77 Roding Valley Cricket Club (RVCC) – Min no RC58**

The Town Clerk reported that there had been no further progress, but that he is continuing to chase the RVCC on a regular basis.

#### **RC78 New Bench**

The Committee NOTED that a local resident has requested a bench, to incorporate a memorial plaque, ideally to be installed in the 'running track' field. The Services Manager met with the requestee on 2 January 2025, the desired position, close to

the wooden footbridge, was identified, and the memorial bench policy and payment details discussed and agreed in principal.

**RC79 Wilding of grass areas**

The office has been requested to set up a site meeting with EFDC / Qualis, with a view to, if necessary, in delaying grass cutting until after the blooming of wild flowers had faded in the RVRG fields behind Avondale Drive and Greensted Road. The Committee AGREED that the Services Manager should arrange the meeting, which he, the Town Clerk, the Chairman and Councillor Murray would all attend.

**Other Agenda Items**

**RC80 Newmans Lane Playground Project – Min no RC61**

The Committee NOTED that the preferred playground contractor 'Proludic' has been on site since Monday 6 January 2025, and that good progress was being made. Completion is set for the end of January 2025 (weather permitting). In the absence of the Town Clerk, the Services Manager will liaise with the Chairman, Vice Chairamn and Town Mayor regarding an opening ceremony, to include Oalkview School once the project has reached a conclusion.

**RC81 Jessel Green**

**81.1 Jessel Green Community Funday**

It was AGREED that this event will be held on Sunday 6 July 2025.

**81.2 'Fields in Trust' status - Min no RC64**

Work on this project will commence at the first available opportunity to include local residents questionnaire/consulation/ feedback. It was AGREED that Neil Bartlett, 'Save Jessel Green' campaign would be included in this process. A request was made for members (including ward members) to help in the distribution of hardcopy correspondence to local residents in this respect.

**RC82 Town Council Community Halls**

**82.1 Murray Hall – Min no 65.1**

The Committee NOTED that the hall floor was sanded, treated and polished (last time 2022) in December 2024 at a cost of £3,670, the majority of which will be funded from the remaining 'Halls earmarked funds' of £3,005.

**82.2 Kingsley Hall**

The Committee NOTED that during the pre-Christmas period, our regular flooring contractors attended the hall and carried out minor repairs to 2 no. damaged sections of flooring, and applied 2 no. coats of industrial strength floor polish. Following on from the above, it was also NOTED that the flooring for Kingsley Hall will need replacing entirely, at some point in the latter part of the next financial year.

**RC83 Tree Whips**

The Committee NOTED that Cllr MacKinnon has at his disposal some 100 tree whips, which can be planted at various Town Council sites. Various options were discussed, and it was AGREED that the Chairman would liaise with Cllrs MacKinnon and Fricker, and the Services Manager, to select the most suitable sites, once the exact species of the Whips is known. Several members of this committee volunteered to assist in the planting.

**RC84 Financial Position**

The Committee NOTED the current financial position as of 31 December 2024 together with the details of the funds available from earmarked reserves.

**RC85 2025/26 Budget**

Members NOTED the 2025/2026 Budget, as detailed at the preceding Resources and General Services budget meeting.

**RC86 Future Work of the Committee**

Nothing to report.

Signed: .....

Date: 11 March 2025