

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 Tuesday 11 March 2025 at
7.30pm**

Present

Councillors:

D Wixley (in the chair)	
I Allgood (substitute for Cllr House)	N MacKinnon
S Murray	M Stubbings
R Sylvan	K Valentine

Also in attendance:

Officers:

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

RC87 Apologies

An apology had been received from Cllr House. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Allgood had been appointed as substitute for Cllr House for this meeting.

RC88 Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Murray and Allgood declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda item 6, 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.

RC89 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2025 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RC90 Public Representations

None were received.

RC91 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report

- The Chairman reported that two officers who had previously worked closely with the Town Council, had recently departed EFDC. Phil Hawkins, formerly Manager of the Grounds Maintenance Team, and Gill Wallis, formerly Community, Health and Wellbeing Manager, were thanked for all they had done for the Town Council, and both were extended the very best wishes of this Committee and of the Town Council.
- The Chairman reported that two 'Play in the Park' sessions, funded by the Town Council and free of charge to attendees, had been arranged for Tuesday 8 April 2025 (10.00am to 12.00 noon) at Roding Valley Recreation Ground (near the tennis courts), and on Tuesday 15 April 2025 (10.00am to 12.00 noon) at Jessel Green (by Colebrook Lane Playground).
- The Chairman reported that the lighting of a beacon, to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day, would be taking place at Hillyfields Open Space on Thursday 8 May 2025 at 9.00pm. All members of this Committee, and the wider Council, were invited to attend the event.

- **RC79 Wilding of Grass Areas** – The Chairman reported on a site meeting that he attended with Cllr Murray, the Services Manager and staff from Qualis Grounds Maintenance, to discuss leaving designated sections of the Roding Valley Recreation Ground (RVRG) uncut, to encourage the growth of dandelions. Several options were discussed, but ultimately it had been AGREED to not delay grass cutting for this year, therefore no action would be taken.
- The Chairman commented on the pleasing spectacle created by the spring flowers now on display on Kings Green. The committee NOTED that a Facebook post displaying a photo of the flowers had been well received by the general public.
- The Town Clerk reported that the Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) Highway Rangers had cleared the Lower Road street sign that had been obscured by overgrown vegetation, following a request by officers. It was AGREED that this item would also be reported at the forthcoming Environment and Heritage Committee meeting on 26 March 2025.
- The Committee NOTED that the former Town Councillor who had offered to pay for a new bench and plaque at the Memorial Garden had accepted the various costings, and orders for the bench and its installation. Payment had been received and the bench would now be installed.
- The Town Clerk reported that he had been approached by members of Loughton Athletic Club (LAC) with regards to meeting to discuss their plans for the refurbishment of the LAC building. The meeting will also include discussions about the renewal of the LAC lease which is due to expire in May 2028, and a full report would be made to the next meeting.
- The Town Clerk reported that the occupant of a property in Greensted Road, had contacted officers regarding Connifer trees bordering the RVRG. The Services Manager further reported that following a site meeting with the occupant, the trees were found to have been within the boundary of the property. No further action is required in this matter.
- The Chairman reported that he had been in contact with members of LAC regarding security issues, specifically access to the roof of its building at RVRG, and had put several suggestions forward.

Roding Valley Recreation Ground (RVRG)

RC92 Roding Valley Recreation Ground - Changing Rooms – Potential ‘Mens Shed’ Project – Min nos RC56, RC59 & RC75

The Town Clerk reported that an asbestos survey had now been conducted, and that the results showed only a minimal level of asbestos present in the buildings. An independent structural survey would now be carried out, and a full report made at the next meeting.

RC93 Roding Valley Cricket Club (RVCC) – Min no RC77

The Town Clerk reported that although dialogue with officials from RVCC remained ongoing, there had been no further tangible progress.

RC94 New Bench – Min no RC78

The Services Manager reported that the bench, incorporating a memorial plaque, that a local resident had requested, to be installed in the ‘running track’ field, has been delivered and will be installed as soon as the ground conditions allow for vehicle access onto the RVRG.

The Committee AGREED that officers should advise dog owners to deposit dog waste bags into general litter bins in the event that dog waste bins are full to overflowing. Notices will be affixed to all dog waste bins throughout the RVRG.

Other Agenda Items

RC95 Newmans Lane Playground Project – Min no RC61

The Town Clerk reported that the project was now completed, with the exception of some minor ‘snagging’ issues. The Play Company ‘Proludic’, that supplied the equipment and carried out the installation, had conducted a very good job and had been user friendly throughout the process. The project has been paid for, with 5% of costs being retained for a period of 6 months to cover for any immediate issues arising.

On a sour note it was reported that a small section of safety surfacing underneath the multi-play unit had been damaged by arson. This would be repaired in due course. Unfortunately, there had also been other incidents of graffiti at this early stage.

An opening ceremony has been arranged for Friday 14 March 2025 at 10.30am, and all members of this Committee are invited to attend. The playground will be officially opened by the Town Mayor, and it is hoped that pupils and staff from Oakview School will also be in attendance. The event has been advertised locally, and a number of ‘goody bags’ are to be provided by Proludic for those attending. Representatives from EFDC, including Councillor Holly Whitbread, had also been invited to attend.

RC96 Town Council Community Halls

96.1 Murray Hall – Min no 65.1

There were no items to report.

96.2 Kingsley Hall

The Committee NOTED that the current morning nursery will be closing on Tuesday 22 July 2025. The Town Clerk reported that as none of the existing staff wish to carry on the nursery, another hirer would be sought. The nursery has been sent an itinerary of items to clear from the premises in the meantime.

RC97 Tree Whips

It was AGREED that the tree whips will be planted at RVRG, with any excess being used at Lady Whitakers Mead. A work party will be convened to carry out the planting in the coming weeks, when resources and time allow

RC98 Loughton Cricket Club (LCC) Boundary

The Town Clerk reported that he and the Services Manager had carried out a site visit to check the measurements of the new amended boundary. However, in the absence of anyone from Thornton Rones, another visit will be necessary to clarify certain points. This is likely to be in early April, and a full update will be made at the next meeting.

The Committee NOTED that the Town Clerk will soon arrange to meet with LCC officials, to discuss the roles and responsibilities of all relevant parties. A full report will be made at the next meeting.

RC99 Davenant Playing Fields – Min no RC63

The Town Clerk reported that further correspondence had been received from the school regarding whose responsibility it is for repairs to the school's perimeter fence, which borders both Willingale Road Playing Field and Lady Whitakers Mead. The school's Compliance Officer has once again been asked to access the relevant paperwork which will clarify this matter. A further update will be provided as and when this information has been made available.

RC100 Financial Position

The Committee NOTED the current financial position.

RC101 Future Work of the Committee

Nothing to report.

Signed:

Date: 28 May 2025