

THESE MINUTES HAVE NOT BEEN CONFIRMED

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 8 October 2025 at 7.30pm at Loughton Town Council, Council Chamber, 1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ.

Present:

Councillors: M Owen (in the Chair)
I Allgood
S Murray
M Stubbings
N MacKinnon (from Min No. 134)
J Riley (as substitute for R Brookes)

Officers: M Squire (Town Clerk)
P Bryce (Deputy Town Clerk)

Also present:

Wendy Cockbill, Team Manager – Economic Development and Inclusion, Epping Forest District Council (EFDC)

1 x Member of the Public

RG132 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Brookes and Fontenelle. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Riley was the nominated substitute for Cllr Brookes for this meeting.

RG133 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest declared.

Cllr MacKinnon joined the meeting during the next item.

RG134 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2025 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG135 Public Representations

None were received.

RG136 Wendy Cockbill, Team Manager – Economic Development and Inclusion, Epping Forest District Council (EFDC)

(i) Establishing a Town Partnership

Members thanked Wendy Cockbill for her presentation and information provided, in establishing a Town Partnership for Loughton High Road and wider area.

Members AGREED that

- Loughton Town Council (LTC) will arrange an initial meeting with businesses, community groups and voluntary groups within the High Road area with assistance from EFDC and use the £1K initial funding on offer.

- The purpose of the meeting will be to ascertain if there is enough interest within the Town, and if it is feasible to progress with a Town Partnership.
- It should be made clear from the outset that LTC would not be taking ownership of the group and that any drawn up constitution, should reflect this.
- Due to stretched staff resources, overtime would be paid to relevant Town Council staff, (if required), noting that other projects needed to be delivered also, including enabling 'Fields in Trust' status for Jessel Green.

(ii) **Establishing a Loughton Broadway market**

Wendy provided a further update on plans for a potential market. Members NOTED from her report, that overall, the feedback had been positive to establish a market along Loughton Broadway, and discussions were still progressing with shop owners and tenants regarding the day of the week a market should be held. The shop owners all expressed a preference for market stalls to complement rather than compete with the existing businesses.

RG137 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report

The Town Clerk introduced Caroline Carroll, (the member of the public), as the newly appointed Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) who will be joining the Town Council on 3 November 2025. Caroline was attending to observe. He also informed members that the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) were working towards establishing 'hybrid ZOOM' meetings for the Town and Parish sector. However there is no definitive legislation in place yet, so such a format remains illegal until any official law is approved and passed by the UK Government.

RG138 Training and Conferences

Members NOTED the report.

RG139 Staff matters

139.1 Staff Salaries 2025/26

Members NOTED that the pay award for 2025/26 had been agreed and paid in August 2025.

139.2 Recruitment

Members NOTED the update on recruitment. Stephen Phillpot had been appointed Maintenance Assistant and joined on 1 September 2025. Olivia Drew had been appointed as Office Administrator and joined on 8 September 2025. Caroline Carrol has been appointed RFO and will join on 3 November 2025.

RG140 Christmas Closedown Arrangements 2025

Members AGREED to the Christmas closedown arrangements as follows:

Wednesday 24 December	Open 8.45am - Closed 12 noon
Thursday 25 December	Closed
Friday 26 December	Closed
Monday 29 December	10am – 3pm
Tuesday 30 December	10am – 3pm
Wednesday 31 December	Open 8.45am - Closed 12 noon
Thursday 1 January	Closed

RG141 Citizens Awards

Members AGREED the commitment to the Citizens awards for 25/26. Publicity will be circulated, and award presentations will be made at the Annual Town Meeting on 18 March 2026.

Members NOTED the requests made from residents to recognise lone workers who contribute to the local community and agreed that recognition is also made to those individuals.

RG142 Town Mayor Initiative

Members NOTED and congratulated Cllr Wixley for completing two of his Town Mayor's initiative, 'My Favourite Walk in Epping Forest.'

RG143 Annual Town Meeting

Members AGREED to continue with the Annual Town Meeting in its current format.

RG144 Flags

144.1 Windrush Flag

Members AGREED to defer the decision on the design of the flag as the Councillor who requested it was absent.

144.2 Emergency Services Flag

Members AGREED to purchase this flag.

144.3 Victory in Japan Day (VJ Day) Flag

Members NOTED that the Town Council marked the 80th anniversary of Japan's surrender and the end of World War 2 by flying the Union flag on 15 August 2025.

144.4 Flags in Loughton

Members AGREED that LTC adopt the EFDC stance on the recent spate of flag flying around Loughton. Nothing can be hung on Town Council property without prior approval.

RG145 Finance

145.1 Current Financial Position

The current financial position as of 31 August 2025 along with available funds in earmarked reserves as of 31 August 2025 were NOTED.

145.2 Accounts Paid

The Committee NOTED payments totalling £390,622.40 as detailed on payment schedules nos. 409-412 have been made since the report to the meeting on 9 April 2025 and that schedules and accompanying invoices are available at the Council offices for inspection.

RG146 Financial Assistance

Members AGREED to continue with the Financial Award Scheme for 2026/27. Members asked if there was room in the budget, to increase the donation fund by £5K.

RG147 Locality Fund

Members AGREED with the E&H Committee Min No.135 and the potential use of Locality Fund option to replace the deteriorating wooden decking at the Murray Hall which is widely used by the community.

- RG148 Banking**
Members NOTED the update.
- RG149 Precept**
Members NOTED the update.
- RG150 Internal Financial Check**
The Committee NOTED and thanked Cllr MacKinnon for the financial review.
- RG151 Internal Audit**
The Committee NOTED that the Internal Auditor would actually be visiting LTC offices on Wednesday 14 January 2026 and noted the 'date typo' on the original agenda.
- RG152 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/25.**
Members NOTED the report and oral update from the Town Clerk. Whilst all the annual figures had been signed off by the external auditor, PKF Littlejohn, they are yet to finally sign off the AGAR in full. The Town Clerk would chase a further response.
- RG153 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2025/26.**
Members NOTED the report and oral update from the Town Clerk. Whilst LTC already adheres to the GDPR requirements, this will need to be fully documented in forthcoming Resources & General Resources Committee meetings and endorsed by subsequent Town Council meetings, during the Town Council year.
- To conform with Assertion 10 of the 2025/26 edition of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), members must have their own designated Town Council e-mail address as this is a pre-requisite. Members AGREED that this must extend to all external Town Council staff.
- RG154 Remembrance Service**
The Committee AGREED to donate £150.00 to the Royal British Legion in support of the Poppy Appeal and towards the cost of the wreath to be laid by the Town Mayor at the Remembrance Service on 9 November 2025. Payment was approved under the Power of General Competence.
- RG155 Policies Review**
Members AGREED and noted the updates on the following policies
- 155.1 Investment policy**
Document revised for 2(iv)(b) to include Unity Bank
- 155.2 Retention of documents**
This National Association of Local Council's (NALC) document has not changed, but useful to bring to members attention from time to time.
- 155.3 Disability Accessibility Policy**
Members AGREED that a starting point would be to review all LTC assets and prepare a 'Mobility Policy' which demonstrates what we as LTC have currently in place and identify measures needed to improve. Members also agreed that officers should seek assistance from an outside professional body to ascertain expert disability accessibility advice.
- RG156 Financial Regulations**
Members NOTED and reviewed the changes, to be recommended to the Town Council meeting on 15 October 2025.

RG157 Future Work of the Committee

Members AGREED that a list of large potential capital projects should be produced for the next Resources and General Services meeting, in lieu of the existing Public Works Loans which mature over the next couple of years.

Signed:

Date: 3 December 2025