

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 6 December 2017 at 7.45pm at Loughton Library & Town Hall.

Present:

Councillors: S Pewsey (in the Chair)
J Angold-Stephens M Dalton J Jennings

Also in attendance:

Councillors: D Wixley

Officers: E K Walsh (Town Clerk)
P Bryce (Administrative Assistant)

RG83 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mahoney, Murray and Omer.

RG84 Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were received.

RG85 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2017 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG86 Public Representations

None were received.

RG87 Matters for Report

87.1 Standing Orders

The Committee NOTED that at the meeting on 13 December 2017, the Council would be asked to carry out the annual review of the Standing Orders.

87.2 Annual Town Meeting – Min no RG76.4

Members considered suggestions for a guest speaker(s) at the Annual Town Meeting. It was AGREED to have the voluntary sector's contribution to town life as a theme and leave the final choice of speakers to the discretion of the Chairman and Town Clerk.

87.3 Think Loughton – Min no RG76.7

The Committee agreed to defer a decision on the choice of paper until the meeting on 10 January 2018. Officers were asked to investigate whether the glossier paper used more resources when recycled.

87.4 Staffing – Min no RG76.9

The Committee NOTED that job interviews for the post of Responsible Financial Officer and Assistant Clerk had been held on Wednesday 6 December 2017.

87.5 Christmas Card Competition – Min no RG76.10

The Committee NOTED the report of the 2017 competition and commented on the attractive display of the cards mounted in the foyer of the Library.

87.6 Essex County Council Grant Funding – Min no RG80

The report on the opportunity to secure grant funding to create a grounds maintenance apprenticeship scheme was NOTED.

The Committee AGREED to include an additional sum for this scheme within the Central Personnel budget of £6,600 in the 2018/19 budget and a further £6,000 in the forward plan for 2019/20.

87.7 Office Accommodation – Min no RG81

The Town Clerk reported that the lease for the rental of 1 Buckingham Court was in the hands of the solicitors.

RG88 Finance

88.1 Internal Audit

The Committee NOTED the satisfactory report from the internal auditor following his interim inspections at the Council Offices on 9 and 10 November 2017. A copy of his report had been circulated to all councillors and, as a further internal control measure, the original report had been sent directly to the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

Officers were thanked for the high quality of their work in this regard.

88.2 Internal Financial Check

The Committee thanked Cllr Omer for carrying out a financial check at the Council Offices on 23 November 2017. Areas covered during this visit included contracts, petty cash and VAT. Cllr Omer reported that everything checked had been in order.

88.3 Financial Position

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

A note of the Council's current bank balances and most recent reconciliations was circulated at the meeting.

88.4 Accounts Paid

Payments totalling £98,790 as detailed on payments schedules nos 245 – 248 have been made since the report to the meeting on 11 October 2017. The schedules and accompanying invoices were available at the meeting for inspection.

RG89 Financial Assistance

It was NOTED that a balance of £4,790 remained in the 2017/18 Financial Assistance budget.

The Committee RESOLVED to make the following contributions from the scheme by granting financial assistance to:

Organisation	Amount granted £	Item	Power
Loughton Voluntary Care Association	500.00	Office running costs and easy-access bus hire	LGA 1972, S145

RG90 Parish Remuneration Scheme Review

The Committee AGREED that the existing remuneration scheme was satisfactory and referred a decision on whether to increase the level of Parish Basic Allowance, currently set at £108 per annum, to full Council for consideration.

RG91 Employee Handbook Review

The Committee AGREED to include the following additional text in the Employee Handbook:

General Terms of Employment, Information and Procedures

R) Recording of Formal Meetings

We reserve the right to record any formal meetings whether conducted by us or a third party, a copy of the recording can be made available on request.

L) Telephone Calls/ Mobile Phones

It is illegal to use a mobile phone whilst driving (without a hands free set). It is our Council policy that you should not use any mobile phones whilst driving. You should pull over to the side of the road in an appropriate place before making or receiving any telephones calls. In the event of you being unable to pick up a call because you cannot find a safe place to stop, you must return the call as soon as conveniently possible.

RG92 Subscriptions Review

The Committee reviewed the current list of organisations of which it is a member and AGREED to continue to support those listed in the agenda without amendment.

RG93 Committee Priorities

93.1 As part of its overall plan and to complement the budget-making process, the Committee reviewed its priority list for 2018/19 and AGREED on the following:

Resources and General Services		
Priority	Main Function	Greater Detail/Current Position
Current activities		
High	New council accommodation	Move completed; Lease for 1 Buckingham Crt to be finalised
High	Seeking external funding sources	Targeted action
Low	Council structure	Continuing reviews
On-going activities		
Medium	Banking arrangements and investments	Kept under review
High	Running the Committee	
High	Admin for whole council	
High	Council and committee agendas and minutes	
High	All council finances, end of year accounts, audit etc.	
High	Management of Buckingham Crt	

High	Personnel and employment matters, staff management	Staff Handbook reviews as required
High	IT and office equipment	
High	Civic matters	Civic Celebrations incl Citizenship Awards
High	Annual Report	Preparation and printing
High	Newsletter	Editorial, printing and distribution
High	Noticeboards	Maintenance and installation
High	Publicity and website	
High	Annual Town Meeting	Arrangements and admin
High	Christmas card competition	Arrangements and admin
High	Emergency Plan	Amendments and circulation
High	Financial Assistance Scheme	Admin and finance
High	New legislative requirements	
High	Policy reviews	On-going
High	Responding to consultations	Variable
High	Contract reviews	On-going
High	Training Strategy	Annual review
High	Any other matters within the committee's terms of reference	
Low	Community Forum	Arrangements and admin

93.2 The Committee AGREED the following item for consideration by the Planning and Licensing Committee, as being suitable for a developer's Section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy contribution should the opportunity arise.

- i) Noticeboards

RG94 Estimates for 2018/19

94.1 Income

The Committee AGREED to:

- i. increase the current rate of 60p per sheet to 65p for the copying of A4 items included in the Publication Scheme.

94.2 The Committee's Rolling Programme

The Committee AGREED to the Rolling Programme as presented in the Agenda with the additional sum of £6,600 for the apprenticeship scheme – Min no RG87.6.

94.3 Expenditure

The estimates for 2018/19 as presented in the Agenda were AGREED such that the net figures were as follows:

Recourses and General Services Committee	£
Total budget expenditure (including committee recharge)**	198,445
Income	<u>32,850</u>
Net expenditure	165,595
Less income from earmarked reserves*	<u>-2,000</u>
Total net expenditure	£163,595

*Details of transfers from earmarked reserves:	
<i>Noticeboards</i>	<i>1,000</i>
<i>Office equipment</i>	<u><i>1,000</i></u>
<i>Total</i>	<i>2,000</i>

**** NB:** The total budget expenditure shown above currently includes a service recharge of -£253,000 (the 2017/18 figure). The 2018/19 figure would be confirmed by this Committee at its next meeting and a revised budget provided if appropriate.

RG95 Future Work of the Committee

95.1 Dementia Friendly Communities (Epping Forest District Dementia Action Alliance) – the Town Clerk would provide a report for the Committee meeting on 14 February 2018.

Signed

Date: 10 January 2018