

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 9 May 2018 at 7.45pm at Loughton Library & Town Hall, Traps Hill, Loughton IG10 1HD.

Present:

Councillors: P Abraham (in the chair)

J Angold-Stephens	P Beales	R Brookes
T Cochrane	B Cohen	M Dalton
T Downing	J Mahoney	S Murphy
S Murray	T Owen	C C Pond
C P Pond	M Stubbings	D Wixley

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

Also present:

1 member of the public

143 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs C Davies, Jennings, Latchford, Omer and Pewsey.

144 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

145 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2018 were CONFIRMED as correct and signed by the Chairman.

146 Public Representations

None were received.

147 Questions Without Discussion

No questions were received.

148 Town Mayor's Engagements and Announcements

The Town Mayor Cllr Philip Abraham reported that, since the Council meeting on 7 March 2018, he had attended the following events:

Fly the Flag for the Commonwealth, Rotary Club Loughton, Buckhurst Hill and Chigwell – Youth Makes Music, St Clare Hospice Art Exhibition Private Viewing at the Gibberd Gallery in Harlow, the LADS Production “Come Back to the Five and Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean”, Motiv8 Epping Forest College Dance event, GROW Community Easter Egg Hunt, presentation of the Building Design Certificate to 1 Kings Green, Epping War Memorial Rededication Service, YES Motivation Conference, Memorial Service at Loughton Methodist Church for Heather, Lady Murray, East 15 Acting School opening of the Corbett Café & Library Grand Opening event, Epping Forest ReUse to present the tools bought with grant funding from the

Town Council and the Town Mayor's Annual Fun Run on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground.

A detailed list of the events was circulated at the meeting.

149 Matters for Report

149.1 Epping Forest District Dementia Action Alliance – Min no RG95.1

Following the Resources and General Services Committee's decision to join the Epping Forest District DAA to help create a more dementia-friendly community, the Council nominated Cllr Abraham as a potential local champion for the Alliance.

149.2 First World War Centenary Partnership

The Council NOTED that Cllr Pewsey would be attending a London and South East Meeting of this Partnership on Tuesday 15 May 2018 from 12.30pm – 4pm at the Imperial War Museum, London. This event enabled partners to share plans for Centenary commemorations in 2018 and discover the wide range of resources still available to support such activities in 2018.

149.3 Internal Audit

The Council NOTED that the internal auditor had completed and signed the Annual Internal Audit Report on page 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2017/18. A copy of his final report for 2017/18 had been circulated to members and would be considered by the Resources and General Services Committee at its meeting on 4 July 2018.

The Council thanked the officers for their work in this regard.

149.4 Defibrillators

The Council NOTED that defibrillators had been installed on the external walls of the Loughton Club in Station Road and Morrisons in the High Road. These would be available for public use once the registration on the East of England Ambulance Service's data list had been completed. The installation of the third defibrillator in The Broadway had been delayed by legal issues at Epping Forest District Council.

150 Reports from Members on Outside Organisations

150.1 Written reports on the following meetings were NOTED.

- i) Lopping Endowment – Cllr Pewsey
- ii) Broadway Town Centre Partnership – 8 March 2018 – Cllr Latchford
The Council NOTED that Cllr Owen would be attending an Essex County Council meeting on 15 May 2018 to question them about improvements to the central reservation in The Broadway previously requested by the Town Council and the Broadway Town Centre Partnership.
- iii) Epping Forest Citizens Advice – 19 April 2018 – Cllr Angold-Stephens

150.2 Cllr Abraham provided a verbal report on the recent OHERA meeting concerning the refurbishment of the Oakwood Hill Estate paths.

150.3 Cllr Wixley provided reports on the Roding Valley Meadows Local Nature Reserve Consultative Group, the Tree Wardens' training on the use of CAVAT and the Police Local Community Meeting held at the Murray Hall on 4 April 2018.

151 Reports from Committees

151.1 Planning and Licensing

The reports from the meetings held on 26 February, 12 and 26 March, 9 and 23 April were NOTED.

151.2 Recreation

The report from the meeting held on 28 March 2018 was NOTED.

151.3 Environment and Heritage

The report from the meeting held on 11 April 2018 was NOTED.

151.4 Resources and General Services

The reports from the meetings held on 25 April 2018 was NOTED and in particular:

i. Min no RG118.2 – Office Accommodation

On behalf of the Council, the Committee RESOLVED to execute the lease, the rental deposit deed and the side letter to enable it to be signed by the Chairman and Deputy Town Mayor; and

ii. Min no RG121 – Asset Register

The Committee carried out the annual review of the Asset Register.

152 The Annual Governance Statement

The Council members acknowledged their responsibility for ensuring that there was a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2018 and made positive responses to each of the nine statements shown on the Annual Governance Statement as follows:

1 We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.

The accounts were prepared by the RFO on an income and expenditure basis in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations and guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England (A Practitioner's Guide). This is scrutinised by the Resources and General Services Committee and through the internal audit process.

2 We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.

The Council carried out the annual review of its systems of Internal Audit and Internal Control and their effectiveness at its meeting on 7 March 2018 (Min no 141.1) and agreed a Statement of Internal Control (Min no 141.1.2).

At this meeting members also reviewed and updated the Council's Risk Assessment and Management document (Min no 141.3).

3 We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and proper practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the council to conduct its business or on its finances.

The Council operated within a robust set of governance arrangements, resulting from controls identified in the Risk Assessment which are reviewed annually. Measures also include regular reviews of Standing Orders and Financial

Regulations, training for councillors and staff and identification of powers for all council payments.

4 We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

As in 2017, the Council will provide an inspection period from Monday 4 June 2018 to Friday 13 July 2018 for the exercise of electors' rights. This entitled any person interested to inspect and make copies of the Annual Return, books, invoices, receipts etc at the Council Offices in normal working hours during this period.

Notices to this effect were to be displayed on the Council's noticeboards around the town and on the Council's website where the Statement of Accounts and accompanying documentation were also to be displayed commencing this year on 4 June 2018.

5 We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and / or external insurance cover where required.

At its meeting on 27 March 2018, the Council carried out the annual review of the Risk Assessment and Management document (Min no 141.3) which included details of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required. The Council's insurance cover was reviewed on 14 February 2018 (Min no RG111).

6 We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.

Following the annual review of the system of internal audit and its effectiveness in April 2015, Auditing Solutions were re-appointed as the Council's internal auditors for a five-year period 2015/19 Min no (RG235.6). The auditors spent two days with the Council on 9 and 10 November 2017 with a final end of year visit on 19 April 2018 to inspect the annual accounts. The scope of their work followed the outline programme drawn up in 2015 with councillors and officers afforded the opportunity to request coverage of particular areas especially when new working procedures or responsibilities were introduced. The reports from the internal auditor were presented to all councillors and any issues raised by him following the end of year visit reviewed at the next meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee.

During 2017/18, the Council has continued the practice of appointing a member to carry out spot checks on the accounts throughout the year. The reports on these visits were also minuted.

7 We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.

The Resources and General Services Committee has been charged with responding to any and all matters raised by the internal and external auditors. No matters arose during this past year.

8 We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this smaller authority and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.

The RFO has considered these matters and debtors and creditors were included in the end of year accounts.

9 Trust Funds – in our capacity as the sole managing trustee we have discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the funds / assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.

Not applicable.

The Annual Governance Statement was APPROVED and the Chairman and Town Clerk authorised to sign Section 1 of the Annual Return.

153 Accounts and Audit 2017/18

153.1 The Annual Return, the document that formed the Council’s statutory accounts for the year 2017/18, and the following supporting papers were considered:

- i) Income and expenditure reports by committee;
- ii) The balance sheet as at 31 March 2018;
- iii) Details of the transfers to and from earmarked reserves together with the supporting notes.
- iv) Supporting notes to the accounts.

153.2 Reserves Policy

The Council NOTED that the actual level of general reserves as at 31 March 2018 stood at £320,242 which, at 60.06% of the estimated net running costs for 2018/19, was within the limits set by the Council’s Reserves Policy.

153.3 Accounting Statements 2017/18

Having considered the documents provided with the Agenda, the Council APPROVED Section 2, Accounting Statements 2017/18, as shown and authorised the Town Mayor to sign the statement at the bottom of Section 2 to confirm that the accounting statements presented fairly the financial position of the Council and its income and expenditure for the year 2017/18.

On behalf of the Council, the Town Mayor welcomed Brent Smith, the recently appointed Assistant Town Clerk, to the Council.

154 Co-option

154.1 Candidate’s Address

Ms Jayna Jogia accepted the Town Mayor’s invitation to give a brief address to the Council.

154.2 The Council CONFIRMED it was willing to proceed to co-opt.

154.3 Suspension of Standing Orders

The Council RESOLVED to suspend the first sentence of Standing Order 1.u and to conduct a vote by signed ballot, for this agenda item only.

154.3 Voting

Following the signed ballot, the Town Mayor announced that Ms Jogia had been co-opted to the Council by a unanimous vote.

154.4 Ms Jogia signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took her seat at the table.

Signed.....
Date: **23 May 2018**