

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL
RECREATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 13 June 2018 at 7.45pm at Loughton Library & Town Hall.

Present:

Councillors: D Wixley (in the Chair)
B Cohen J Jogia A Omer (from Min no RC85)
S Murray M Stubbings
S Pewsey (as substitute for Cllr Brookes)

Also in attendance:

Officers: P Hoy (Services Manager)
E K Walsh (Town Clerk) (from Min no 88.6.2)

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Jogia to the Recreation Committee.

RC84 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Brookes. The Service Manager reported that Cllr Pewsey had been nominated as substitute for this meeting.

It was also NOTED that the Town Clerk had sent apologies for lateness as she was attending a meeting of the Epping Forest Consultative Committee.

Cllr Omer joined the meeting during the next item.

RC85 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Wixley declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 7, Loughton Centre for Young People, as he had been asked by a fellow councillor to help in finding alternative accommodation for Voluntary Action Epping Forest.

Cllr Murray also declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7, but did not consider it to be pecuniary or non-pecuniary.

RC86 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2018 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RC87 Public Representations

None were received.

RC88 Matters for Report

88.1 Playgrounds – Min no RC82.1

88.1.1 Traps Hill Playground

The Committee NOTED that an order for the replacement item of equipment – a double pony seesaw, has been placed at a net cost of £3,395.46 with installation anticipated during the first two weeks of July 2018.

The Services Manager reported that attempts to secure a significant contribution towards the costs of works to replace the vandalised trampoline were currently being dealt with by the Council's solicitor.

88.1.2 Safety Inspections

The Committee NOTED that the next 6-monthly inspections were to be carried out at all play areas on 5 July 2018.

88.1.3 Insurance

The Committee NOTED that that the annual premium for insuring all items of play equipment would be £328.29 inclusive of 12% insurance premium tax. The Resources and General Services Committee would be asked to consider the advisability of taking out this cover.

88.2 Community Events – Min no RC73.2

88.2.1 Annual Town Mayor's Charity Fun Run

The Committee NOTED that the 2018 Fun Run, held on Sunday 29 April on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground, had raised £510 for the Chigwell Riding Trust. The Chairman reported that the turnout had been disappointing possibly due to the poor weather, but this had not detracted from the friendly atmosphere at the event.

88.2.2 Play in the Park

The Committee NOTED the dates for the Play in the Park activities during the 2018 summer school holidays:

- Tuesdays 31 July, 7, 14, 21 & 28 August, 1.30–3.30pm, Roding Valley Recreation Ground
- Thursdays 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30 August, 10am–12 noon, Jessel Green

The Committee asked officers to ensure that these free, much valued events were advertised as widely as possible including to the local primary schools.

88.2.3 Jessel Green Fun Day – Min no RC82.2.3

The Committee NOTED that publicity for this year's community fun day to be held from 12 noon until 4pm on Sunday 15 July 2018 was underway and thanked Cllr Philip Abraham for volunteering to act as the official photographer.

Arrangements and activities will be as in previous years. The Council was particularly grateful to TfL who will arrange for the temporary diversion of bus services during the event at no cost to the Council.

The Chairman asked Councillors to support the event, particularly by way of assisting on the Town Council stall, advising visitors and helping with the raffle. It was noted that this year's charity was Oakview School, one of the Town Mayor's charities; the others being the Epping Forest Foodbank and St Clare Hospice, which will have a stall at the event.

It was also reported that the Assistant Town Clerk was still in discussion with the Council's insurance company regarding the cost and advisability of obtaining event cancellation cover for this year's event.

The Services Manager reported that T. Cribb and Sons would again be providing horse and carriage rides, with all donations going to Chigwell Riding Trust.

88.3 Willingale Road Playing Field

The Committee NOTED that a claim regarding possible tree root damage to a property in Willingale Road had been passed to the Council's insurance company. The Services Manager reported that a crown reduction of 40% would be carried out on one of the Town Council trees – a large oak to the rear of the property boundary. This work had been strongly recommended by the appointed Tree Root Liability Specialist and was scheduled to be carried out on Wednesday 20 June at a net cost of £1,100.

The Committee NOTED that the pedestrian footbridge from the Willingale Road car park onto the playing field had been repaired at a net cost of £1,522. The works also included clearing debris from the water course.

88.4 Loughton Cricket Club

The Committee NOTED that the final draft of the lease had now been agreed and it was hoped that the transfer of the land to the Town Council from the Trust, and the completion of the lease with the Club could be actioned without further delay.

88.5 Defibrillators – Min no RC82.5

The Committee NOTED that the installation of the equipment outside the Housing Office in The Broadway had been delayed by legal matters.

Operation of the equipment outside the Loughton Club and Morrisons would commence once the East of England Ambulance Service had included them on its data system.

88.6 Roding Valley Recreation Ground – Min no RC82.6.1

88.6.1 Improvements Project

A meeting to discuss the project held at the Roding Valley Recreation Ground on Friday 8 June 2018 was attended by members of the Working Party and Nick Emery, County Development Manager at the Essex Football Association. Mr Emery was given a tour of the facilities and was impressed by the quantity and quality of the football pitches.

Mr Emery advised that he would be meeting with officers from Epping Forest District Council's Community Health and Wellbeing Team to discuss district-wide sports provision following the publication of the playing pitch and facilities strategy report, part of the Local Plan evidence base. Following the meeting, he would make further contact with Town Council officers to advise on the funding and planning process for this project.

The Town Clerk joined the meeting.

88.6.2 Mobile Refreshment Facility – Min no RC82.6.2

The Committee NOTED that there had been a poor response to an invitation to operators prepared to provide hot and cold drinks and snacks on the Recreation Ground from April through September. This appeared to be as a result of the £410 cost of obtaining a street trading licence from Epping Forest District Council.

88.6.3 Walking Football – Min no RC82.6.4

The Chairman reported that the sessions were continuing to grow after a slow start and reiterated the social as well as physical benefits of the

activity. The Services Manager reported that the feedback he had received from the officer in charge of the sessions had been very positive and mirrored the views of the Chairman.

88.6.4 Tennis Coaching – Min no RC82.6.5

The Committee AGREED that tennis coaching sessions for children should be arranged during the summer holidays. Officers were currently considering several options for coaches and dates for the sessions.

88.6.5 Junior Parkrun

Further to the Committee's decision to allow a 3 – 4 month trial of the Junior Parkrun events on the Recreation Ground, officers have been advised that the applicant was currently seeking funding.

The Committee NOTED that the Services Manager had contacted the organiser of the adult Parkrun to offer storage space for their equipment in the football changing rooms as that facility would not be used for football for the foreseeable future.

88.6.6 Teens Unite Charity Event

The Committee AGREED to allow Teens Unite (the teenage cancer charity) to use a section of the Roding Valley Recreation Ground, free of charge, on Sunday 7 October 2018 to hold an obstacle race fundraising event for young people.

88.6.7 All-Weather Running Track

Councillor Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item, as he was acquainted with officers of Loughton Athletic Club.

The Committee was informed that following approaches from members of the public and OHERA, officers were considering options for introducing wider community use of the facility. The preferred option was for structured coaching sessions to be held at set times, to be delivered in partnership with Epping Forest District Council.

It was AGREED that an approach should be made to EFDC's Community Health and Wellbeing Team in this regard.

88.6.8 South Loughton Cricket Club – Min no RC82.6.6

Cllrs Murray, Stubbings and Wixley, together with the Town Clerk and Services Manager visited the Club on 6 June 2018 to meet with cricket club officials. This enabled an assessment of the potential impact of the club's request for a third storage container on the Recreation Ground. The meeting also provided a clearer insight into the cricket club's activities and its needs for greater storage.

The Committee AGREED to grant permission for an additional 20' metal storage container subject to the following conditions:

- i. Before installation the SLCC must secure from the Planning Authority a Certificate of Lawfulness for this container: Reason - to ensure the impact on the Green Belt was legally considered;

- ii. The container must be painted green and installed to the right-hand side and parallel to the existing 20' container;
- iii. Suitable native hedging is to be planted alongside the container to provide camouflage.

The Committee also CONFIRMED that SLCC's informal arrangement with a local football club should be regularised by a 'side letter'.

The Committee also AGREED to undertake a rent review as allowed for by the existing lease. The Town Clerk was asked to undertake the review, based on RPI increases since 2008, and report to the next meeting.

The Committee AGREED to suspend Standing Order number 1(ff) and AGREED to conclude the meeting by 9.40pm.

88.6.9 Grounds Maintenance

The Committee NOTED the report regarding the length of the grass left alongside the river on the recreation Ground. This had been a conscious decision as it was accepted that the longer grass helped reduce bank erosion by (i) deterring people and their dogs from either walking too close or allowing their dogs to run down the banks and (ii) allowing plants to grow and help 'knit' the ground together. This unmown strip was also beneficial for ecological reasons allowing wild flowers to flourish for the benefit of insects with seed heads being produced thus providing a food source for birds.

88.6.10 Fly-tipping

The Committee NOTED that there had been four incidents of fly-tipped lounge furniture in the changing rooms' car park since the start of 2018. The council was grateful for the assistance of Epping Forest District Council officers in ensuring the prompt removal of the furniture at a reasonable cost.

It was NOTED that the security of the car park was an issue that will need careful consideration during the design stage of the improvement project.

88.6.11 Royal Oak Sign

The Committee NOTED that the large post and pub sign secured by the Environment and Heritage Committee from the developers of the Royal Oak site in Forest Road had been delivered to the Roding Valley Recreation Ground car park for safe storage.

88.7 Kingsley Hall

The Committee AGREED to replace the damaged section of the brick wall at the rear of the property with a double-sided close-boarded fence at the same height. The net cost was £3,750 and this cost included the removal of the small brick flower bed at the base of the wall.

The Services Manager also reported that the two wooden-slatted benches in the yard had been removed as they were beyond repair.

88.8 Murray Hall

The Committee NOTED that E15 Acting School, the Hall's regular weekday hirers, had re-booked for the academic year 2018/19 with a net rental income of £36,130 for the period September 2018 – May 2019.

88.9 Open Spaces

88.9.1 Hillyfields – Min no RC82.10.1

Cllr Wixley, the Town Clerk and Services Manager had met with David Chapman, Project Delivery Manager for Flood Alleviation at Essex County Council, on 12 June, to discuss the creation of a water storage area on land close to the junction of Pyrles Lane and Rectory Lane. Also present were engineers from the District Council and representatives from the City of London Corporation.

Mr Chapman had agreed to attend the next Recreation Committee meeting on 29 August 2018 to provide a detailed briefing for members on the proposals.

The Committee AGREED to suspend Standing Order number 1(ff) and AGREED to conclude the meeting by 10pm.

88.9.2 Standard Green

The Committee CONFIRMED that the Town Clerk may apply for a licence to the City of London Corporation, to allow refreshments to be served on the green during the classic car rally, held as part of Heritage Open Days on Sunday 9 September 2018.

88.9.3 Kings Green

It was NOTED that the grass had been cut unevenly on the green to provide protection for the spring bulbs.

88.10 Committee Responsibilities

The Chairman invited Committee members to join him for a walk around the Roding Valley Recreation Ground and would circulate some proposed date/times.

RC89 Financial Position

89.1 End of Year Report

The accounts for 2017/18, approved by full Council on 9 May 2018, together with details of the transfers to and from earmarked reserves, were NOTED.

89.2 Current Financial Position

The current financial position was NOTED.

RC90 Loughton Centre for Young People

The Committee considered the report on a potential sub-letting of part of the building to VAEF and agreed to take no further action pending a formal approach from Essex County Council.

RC91 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

Signed:
Date: 29 August 2018