

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RECREATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 15 June 2016 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court

Present:

Councillors: D Wixley (in the Chair)
R Brookes (from Min no RC3) B Cohen
L Girling (until Min no RC8) S Murray
M Stubbings P Beales (as substitute for Cllr Omer)

Also in attendance:

Councillors: S Pewsey

Officers: E K Walsh (Town Clerk)
P Hoy (Services Manager)

RC1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Omer. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Beales had been nominated as his substitute for this meeting.

RC2 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 8, The Lindens, as he knew the family who had submitted the request.

Cllr Brookes joined the meeting.

RC3 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2016 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RC4 Public Representations

None were received.

RC5 Matters for Report

5.1 Children's Centres in Essex – Min no RC190

Cllr Girling provided an update for the Committee following the consultation on proposed changes to Sure Start Children's Centres in Essex. He reported on his meeting with Epping Forest District councillors and officers at which Essex County Council officers were also present. Cllr Girling also confirmed he had registered to speak at the ECC Cabinet Meeting on 21 June 2016.

There was concern that the responses to the consultation from the Epping Forest District had not been fully taken into account and the Town Clerk was asked to encourage the other local councils in the district to reiterate their responses to ECC. She was also asked to circulate the consultation document and the Town Council's response to new members.

5.2 Epping Forest Positive Activities Group – Min no RC191.1

The Committee NOTED that the Town and Community Development Officer had attended a meeting of the Epping Forest Youth Strategy Group (YSG) Stakeholder Meeting on 2 June 2016.

A survey would be undertaken to consider whether the Positive Activities

Group should continue.

5.3 Roding Valley Recreation Ground – Min no RC191.2

5.3.1 Tennis Court Fencing

It was confirmed that the repair works to the fencing and gates had been carried out in March and that, to date, no further problems had occurred.

5.3.2 Noticeboards

The Committee NOTED that five new noticeboards had been installed in late April. However, as two of the locations were unsuitable those boards would be relocated. An additional noticeboard was also to be attached to the wall of the football changing rooms by Avondale Drive.

The Chairman requested that copies of the award certificates presented by the Essex Playing Fields Association be displayed in the noticeboards.

The Committee expressed its thanks to Cllr Owen who provided the orientation map for the displays.

5.3.3 Graffiti problems

The Committee confirmed that Epping Forest Countrycare should be asked to undertake additional planting on the Recreation Ground to obscure graffiti on garages by Broomfield Avenue.

5.3.4 South Loughton Cricket Club

It was reported that the Club, which held a lease from the Town Council, was laying a new electricity supply to the pavilion. The Club had undertaken to ensure the grounds were reinstated to a satisfactory standard.

Members asked that going forward a budgetary allowance should be made for improvements to the path around the Recreation Ground, particularly for the length from the Avondale field to Green Walk.

5.4 Playgrounds – Min no RC191.3

5.4.1 Traps Hill Play Area

Works to refurbish this play area were almost complete with the post installation inspection held on Thursday 9 June 2016. The independent inspector had confirmed the play area was safe to open to the public, although there were minor matters still to be addressed by the installer.

The initial response from the public had been very positive with the new equipment providing an exciting range of equipment for ages from toddlers up to 14 years of age.

The opening event was to be held on Saturday 9 July from 10.30am – 12.30pm with the official ceremony at 11am. Children's entertainment and refreshments would be available.

The Committee asked for its thanks to be minuted to all involved in this project, particularly the project manager, Maria Cooke. All councillors were encouraged to attend this event.

5.4.2 Safety Inspections

The next six-monthly RoSPA inspections carried out by an external inspector were scheduled for 12 July 2016.

The Services Manager, who was a qualified operational inspector, offered councillors an opportunity to visit the play areas with him to see what was involved in ensuring the equipment was maintained to a high standard for users. This was arranged for 9am on Tuesday 19 July 2016, meeting at Buckingham Court.

5.5 Events – Min no RC191.4

5.5.1 Jessel Green Community Fun Day

Arrangements for the annual Community fun day to be held on Sunday 17 July 2016 on Jessel Green were progressing well. The event would open at midday with a Rio style dance display by local school children arranged through Epping Forest District Council's Dance Engagement Officer.

Members commented that this would be an ideal occasion to canvas local residents' views particularly regarding the proposed changes to the 167 bus service.

5.5.2 Park Run

It was reported that the new Park Run events due to be held on Saturday mornings on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground were expected to start soon. More information on the scheme was available at www.parkrun.org.uk

[In view of problems experienced in other parts of the country, the popularity of this event would be monitored to ensure the impact to the area was minimised.](#)

5.5.3 Dogs Trust

There was to be another Dogs Trust event, on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground, on Thursday 21 July 2016 from 11am to 4pm.

5.6 Community Halls – Min no RC191.5

Officers reported that bookings at both the Kingsley and Murray Halls were at their usual levels with E15 Acting School confirmed as a regular hirer for the period September 2016 – June 2017.

For information, a licence to sublet the Loughton Youth Centre (the building next to the Murray Hall), leased to Essex County Council by the Town Council, had been agreed with Spark. Spark, the Loughton branch of Worth Unlimited, was a youth work charity. Sessions would be operated part-time until the full-time work commenced in September 2016. Spark was very grateful for the support of the Town Council in this regard.

ECC was also working on a licence for the Essex Girls and Boys Club to provide more activities at the Centre.

A meeting of the Community Halls Working Party was to be convened shortly.

5.7 Leases – Min no RC191.6

The 5-year licence for use of the Recreation Ground by Roding Valley High School had been completed with an annual rent of £2,500. ECC were also liable for the Town Council's legal fees of £500.

There were various outstanding legal matters including the transfer of the Loughton Cricket Club grounds, located off Traps Hill, to the Town Council and the new lease for the Loughton Cricket Club. The Council's solicitor was finalising the documents in response to new issues raised by the LCC.

The Loughton Athletic Club had accepted the result of the rent review with the new annual rent set initially at £1,400. The increase from £1,200 has been based on RPI rates during the period of the previous lease. Further discussions on the new lease were to be held with the LAC trustees.

5.8 Essex Playing Fields Association Awards 2016 – Min no RC191.7

The Committee NOTED that the entries for the 2016 Best Kept Playing Field competition had been submitted with the results to be announced in the autumn.

5.9 Legal Highs – Min no RC191.8

It was reported that new legislation, the Psychoactive Substances Act, had been introduced criminalising the production, distribution, sale and supply of such materials.

The small silver canisters containing nitrous oxide were exempt when used as a food preparation (as a propellant for whipped cream), but would be considered a psychoactive substance if sold with the likelihood of being used recreationally for a psychoactive effect. The onus would be on the supplier to ensure the product was only sold for exempt purposes. The use of nitrous oxide as a party drug deprived the body of oxygen and could be fatal when taken in excess. Essex Police were prepared to investigate if intelligence on the suppliers could be provided.

A copy of the report from the Services Team on the large quantities of silver nitrous oxide canisters being left at several venues in the town was provided to councillors. Members expressed grave concerns that this was a potential public order matter. The Town Clerk would again raise this issue with the Safer Communities Partnership and enquire whether Community Protection Orders would be effective in reducing this problem.

5.10 Essex County Fire & Rescue Service - Leading the way to a safer Essex – Min no RC193

A copy of the report on the consultation circulated to members in April was NOTED.

5.11 Council Vehicle

The Council vehicle, a Nissan Primastar van had been purchased new in March 2013 and until recently had proved reliable. The Town Clerk reported that, in April with the vehicle just out of warranty, the clutch had failed and was replaced at a net cost of £717. This issue had been raised with Nissan UK but a disappointing response received.

More recently, the vehicle had developed an oil pressure fault and been out of service, whilst the Nissan service centre at Buckhurst Hill investigated the problem.

The Committee delegated this matter to the Town Clerk in discussion with the Chairman.

5.12 Open Spaces

5.12.1 Memorial Rose Garden

The Committee NOTED the report and that no new memorials would be installed in the garden as per the terms of the Faculty granted by the Diocese of Chelmsford.

5.12.2 Willingale Road Nature Reserve and Community Orchard

It was NOTED that Epping Forest Countrycare was holding a free 'Mad about Moths' event on the Willingale Road Nature Reserve and Community Orchard on Friday 2 September 2016 from 8pm until late.

5.13 Committee Priorities

The Committee's priorities for 2016/17 agreed in November 2015 were NOTED.

RC6 Financial Position

The Committee NOTED the end of year financial report for 2015/16 together with details of the transfers to and from earmarked reserves.

RC7 Community Initiatives Fund

Details of this grant scheme provided by Essex County Council were NOTED.

The Committee proposed the installation of outdoor table tennis tables on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground and the Willingale Road Playing Field as suitable items for submission to this scheme.

The Committee AGREED to suspend Standing Order number 1(ff) and AGREED to conclude the meeting by 9.45pm.

Cllr Girling left the meeting during the next item.

RC8 The Lindens

The request from a resident in The Lindens asking for the wooden bollards installed in 2009 to be removed was considered in detail.

The Committee AGREED unanimously that the bollards should remain.

RC9 Future Work of the Committee

The Committee AGREED to consider the following item:

- i. Tennis coaching sessions at the Roding Valley Recreation Ground – Cllr Omer was asked to prepare a report.

Signed:

Date: 31 August 2016