

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RECREATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 31 August 2016 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court

Present:

Councillors: D Wixley (in the Chair)
R Brookes
S Murray
B Cohen
M Stubbings
A Omer (from Min no RC14.2.2)

Also in attendance:

Councillors: S Pewsey

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

RC10 Apologies

No apologies for absence were received,

RC11 Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were received.

RC12 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2016 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RC13 Public Representations

None were received.

RC14 Matters for Report

14.1 Children's Centres in Essex – Min no RC5.1

In the absence of Cllr Girling the Committee agreed to defer this item until a future meeting.

14.2 Roding Valley Recreation Ground – Min no RC5.3

14.2.1 Football

The Committee NOTED that bookings for the 2016/17 season were much as in previous years, with one Saturday team and six Sunday teams confirmed.

There would also be junior league football on the Willingale Road Playing Field this coming season using two mini pitches and two 5v5 pitches.

The Committee supported Cllr Murray's comments regarding the high standard of maintenance at the Recreation Ground this summer and the increased number of members of the public attracted to the facilities.

Cllr Omer joined the meeting.

14.2.2 Tennis Coaching

Members thanked Cllr Omer for his research on the provision of affordable tennis coaching for children and adults on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground tennis courts.

The proposal was for hour-long sessions on a Saturday afternoon for each of the age groups 4 – 6, 7 – 10 and 11 – 16, employing an experienced and qualified professional coach at £30 per hour. Alternatively, intensive coaching could be provided in the October half-term holidays. Officers would seek advice on this from the Sports Development Team at Epping Forest District Council and also confirm whether any S106 monies from the David Lloyd Centre development agreement were available to help fund the new activity.

The Committee AGREED this should be progressed by officers with participants required to pay a small fee of £2 per hour for the training.

14.3 Skate Park

The Committee NOTED that Skate Loughton had held a well-attended session at the Roding Valley High School on the evening of Tuesday 30 August 2016.

Arrangements for the annual autumn half term event at the school to be held on 27 and 28 October 2016 were discussed. The Committee AGREED to provide:

- i. A trailer cave for one day only at a net cost of £1,000, from the Community Events budget; and
- ii. A large half-pipe with professional display riders and coaching at a net cost of £1,990.

14.4 Playgrounds – Min no RC5.4

14.4.1 Traps Hill Play Area

The success of the new play area and the official opening ceremony held on Saturday 9 July 2016, were NOTED.

In response to calls from residents for an additional play area in the town suitable sites were being sought by officers.

14.4.2 Safety Inspections – Min no RC5.4.2

It was NOTED that the six-monthly inspections of all the play areas had been undertaken by an external inspector in July 2016 at a net cost of £395 with the minor matters identified in the report receiving attention.

The Committee congratulated the Services Manager, Paul Hoy, on his successful re-examination by the Register of Play Inspectors International which confirmed his competence to carry out operational inspections of children's playgrounds.

Mr Hoy was also thanked for the opportunity for councillors to visit the play areas with him to show the work involved in ensuring the equipment was maintained to a high standard for users.

14.5 Events – Min no RC5.5

14.5.1 The Committee congratulated all staff involved in the success of the well-run annual community fun day held on Sunday 17 July 2016 on

Jessel Green. This had been well attended with the new attractions, which included a petting zoo, kite flying and archery, proving popular. A budget report would be presented once the income from the ticket sales has been confirmed by the partner organisations.

14.5.2 It was reported that arrangements for the new Park Run events to be held on Saturday mornings on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground were not yet confirmed by the organisers. It was noted that a number of Xplorer sessions had been held and officers would check as to the success of these events.

14.5.3 The Dog's Trust event, also held on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground, on Thursday 21 July 2016, had been less well attended as this was a particularly hot summer day.

14.5.4 Discussions on arrangements for possible Christmas events were being held by officers with partner organisations. The Broadway event had been confirmed for Friday 25 November 2016.

14.6 Community Halls – Min no RC5.6

The Committee NOTED that the Community Halls Working Party had met on 23 August 2016. Discussion topics had included the regular use of Loughton Youth Centre by Spark, a youth work charity, the receipt of reports on income and expenditure, hall bookings and maintenance.

The Town Clerk informed the Committee that the Council's insurers had introduced new conditions concerning the use of bouncy castles and inflatables by hirers at the Murray Hall. In future, the hirer must ensure that the supplier:

- i. provided a qualified operative to supervise the equipment during its use; and
- ii. had public liability insurance with a minimum level of cover of £10m.

The Terms and Conditions of hire would be amended to reflect this requirement.

14.7 Leases – Min no RC5.7

The Committee NOTED that the outstanding legal matters, including the transfer of the Loughton Cricket Club grounds to the Town Council together with the new lease for the Loughton Cricket Club, and the new lease for the Loughton Athletic Club, were in hand.

14.8 Legal Highs – Min no RC5.9

It was reported that following the introduction of the new legislation, the Psychoactive Substances Act, criminalising the production, distribution, sale and supply of such materials, there had been a marked reduction in the amount of littering of the small silver canisters on Council-owned sites. Monitoring by Council staff would continue until the end of September 2016.

14.9 Essex County Fire & Rescue Service - Leading the way to a safer Essex – Min no RC5.10

Members NOTED that the results of the consultation had been published with the draft implementation plans for the service changes to be presented to the Fire Authority on 7 September 2016 for approval. Option 2 had been the

preferred choice, with a 2 per cent increase in the authority's precept and, locally, the loss of one fire appliance at Loughton Fire Station.

14.10 Council Vehicle – Min no RC5.11

The Committee NOTED the report and that the net maintenance costs to date amounted to £1,558. This was over budget, but as the total vehicle running costs would be re-charged to the Open Spaces, Playgrounds and Roding Valley Recreation Ground cost centres at the end of the financial year, it was noted that those budgets had the capacity to absorb the additional costs.

14.11 Open Spaces – Min no RC5.12

14.11.1 Memorial Rose Garden

The Committee expressed its thanks to Cllr Angold-Stephens who had visited the garden regularly to undertake watering particularly of the new climbing rose planted in memory of her husband, former councillor Ken Angold-Stephens.

As some of the original plants appeared to be less well suited for this dry site, they would be replaced by more hardy shrubs as necessary.

14.11.2 Willingale Road Nature Reserve and Community Orchard – RC5.12.2

Members were reminded that Epping Forest Countrycare were 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. Routine maintenance work was also to be carried out on 27 October 2016 at a net cost of £360.

14.12 Community Initiatives Fund – Min no RC7

The Committee NOTED that a grant application for financial assistance for the provision of two new outdoor table tennis tables, one each on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground and the Willingale Road Playing Field had been submitted to Essex County Council. The budgeted cost for the supply and installation of the tables and honeycomb rubber safety matting was £4,100.

RC15 Financial Position

The Committee NOTED the current financial report.

RC16 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

Signed:
Date: 2 November 2016