

**LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL**

**RECREATION COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 2 November 2016 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court**

**Present:**

**Councillors:** D Wixley (in the Chair)  
R Brookes S Murray M Stubbings  
T Downing (as substitute for Cllr Cohen  
S Pewsey (as substitute for Cllr Girling)

**Also in attendance:**

**Councillors:** P Beales C Davies (from Min no RC21 until Min no RC21.4.3)  
L Girling (from Min no RC21.5.2)

**Officers:**

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

**RC17 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Cohen, Girling and Omer. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Pewsey had been nominated as Cllr Girling's substitute and Cllr Downing for Cllr Cohen for this meeting.

**RC18 Declarations of Interest**

No Declarations of Interest were received.

**RC19 Confirmation of Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 31 August 2016 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**RC20 Public Representations**

None were received.

Cllr Davies joined the meeting during the next item.

**RC21 Matters for Report**

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

The Chairman provided an update on behalf of Cllr Girling and reported that discussion with Essex County Council Cabinet Member Cllr Dick Madden had been very productive. A tour of the local Children's Centres would be undertaken on 25 November 2016 by Cllr Madden accompanied by five district councillors and two district officers.

Cllr Girling was now the Vice Chairman of the Epping Forest District Children's Centre Advisory Board, together with District Officer Gill Wallis. This enabled them to keep a close watch on how Essex was shaping its new contract.

Cllr Girling had also provided copies of reports from Essex Police that had been circulated to members by email.

## **21.2 Roding Valley Recreation Ground – Min no RC5.3**

### **21.2.1 Tennis Coaching**

The Committee NOTED that a £400 grant had been secured from the Health and Wellbeing Team at Epping Forest District Council to enable tennis coaching sessions to be arranged for 2017.

### **21.2.2 Pedestrian Access Gate**

The Committee NOTED that the Services Manager was investigating a suitable method for muffling the noise from the metal pedestrian gate at the Roding Road entrance to the Recreation Ground. A quotation of £325 had been received for measures that included the installation of a pneumatic self-closing gate with buffers.

### **21.2.3 Wild Flower Beds**

The Committee supported Cllr Murray's proposal to create a small wild flower area close to the Roding Road entrance. This would bring environmental advantages and enjoyment to visitors to the Recreation Ground. Signage would be installed to explain the change in maintenance in this area.

## **21.3 Playgrounds – Min no RC5.4**

### **21.3.1 Traps Hill Play Area**

The Committee NOTED that the Services Manager was arranging for the installation of an additional bolt for the self-closing gate at this play area at a cost of £120.

The Services Manager also reported on the recent act of vandalism to the trampoline equipment, which had led to this item being cordoned off. Initial costings for the repairs amounted to £1,750.

## **21.4 Community Events – Min no RC5.5**

### **21.4.1 Skate Park – Min no RC14.3**

The Chairman reported on the half term activities held at the Roding Valley High School on 27 and 28 October 2016 which this year included a caving experience and the Essex County Council Youth Bus. Both days had been reasonably well attended and the activities appreciated by families.

### **21.4.2 Park Run**

The Committee NOTED that arrangements for the new events to be held on Saturday mornings on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground were still to be confirmed by the organisers and the start date delayed until 2017.

### **21.4.3 Dog's Trust**

The Committee NOTED that the Dog's Trust had advised that it did not plan to provide sessions in Loughton during 2017 as it was concentrating its efforts to ensure dogs were microchipped to the London boroughs.

The Committee discussed Cllr Davies' suggestion for an event for dog owners and their pets but did not wish to progress it at this time.

Cllr Davies left the meeting.

#### **21.4.4 Christmas Events**

The Committee NOTED that the Town Council was supporting the Broadway Town Centre Partnership with the arrangements for the "Countdown to Christmas" event to be held on Friday 25 November 2016 in the Broadway from 3pm – 6pm.

A children's entertainer had been engaged at a cost of £190, two children's funfair rides booked at a cost of £700 net and a roast chestnut stall arranged.

### **21.5 Community Halls – Min no RC5.6**

#### **21.5.1 Loughton Youth Centre**

The Committee NOTED that:

- i. following the increase in the number of activities at the Centre, Louisa Stirling, District Youth and Community Commissioner (West Epping Forest) had been invited to address the Committee at the next meeting on 11 January 2017.
- ii. the Epping Forest Positive Activities Group had merged with the Essex Council for Voluntary Youth Service West Essex Cluster (ECVYS).

Cllr Girling joined the meeting.

#### **21.5.2 Murray Hall**

The Committee NOTED that a copy of the energy performance certificate confirming an above average C rating for the building was now displayed at the hall.

The specific recommendations made by the assessor would be considered in more detail with the priority to provide improved control for the heating and cooling system. Low energy bulbs would be used when replacements were necessary. Advice would be sought from the Council's engineering contractors on insulating various items of equipment in the plant room.

#### **21.5.3 Safeguarding**

The Committee NOTED that Epping Forest District Council had advised all community hall managers to include reference to Safeguarding and Prevent policies in their terms and conditions of hire.

It was AGREED to add the recommended text to the Terms and Conditions of Hire for the Kingsley and Murray Halls with an amendment to the Prevent text deleting item (ii).

### **21.6 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 leases for the Loughton Cricket Club and the Loughton Athletic Club, were in hand.

**21.7 Open Spaces – Min no RC5.12**

**21.7.1 Memorial Rose Garden**

The Committee CONFIRMED that an additional sum of £740 would be included in the 2017/18 budget to cover the summer watering of this garden. This provided for watering once a week for twelve weeks. Officers would investigate the costs for the installation of a stand pipe at the garden to provide a long term solution.

**21.7.2 Willingale Road Nature Reserve and Community Orchard – RC5.12.2**

The Committee NOTED that a volunteer day had been held on Thursday 27 October 2016.

**21.7.3 Hillyfields Open Space**

As reported to full Council, an informal public consultation was underway regarding a works' proposal by the City of London in partnership with the Town Council and Epping Forest District Council. This concerned the installation of a ditch and bund along the boundary of Hillyfields with Pyrles Lane and Rectory Lane to prevent vehicle incursions.

**21.8 Community Initiatives Fund – Min no RC7**

The Committee NOTED that the judging for this grant scheme was to be held on 30 November 2016.

**21.9 Training and Conferences**

The Committee approved Cllr Wixley's attendance at the EALC's Greens, Commons and Open Spaces course on 20 October 2016 to enable him to claim travel expenses.

Cllr Wixley provided a brief report on this course referring to issues connected with the registration of village greens.

**21.10 Essex Playing Fields Association Awards 2016**

As reported at the Council meeting on 19 October 2016, Cllr Wixley and the Services Manager had attended the Awards ceremony held at the Essex Cricket Club. They were presented with the following awards by Lord Petre, Lord Lieutenant of Essex:

Class 1, playing fields serving a population of 2,500 or more:

Gold awards for the Roding Valley Recreation Ground and Willingale Road Playing Field for a high standard of maintenance during the year.

Class 3, children's playgrounds:

Gold award for Westall Road play area for a high standard of maintenance during the year.

Classes 3 and 7

Overall winner in both these classes for Traps Hill play area for the 'high standard of maintenance' and 'exceptional work' carried out during the year.

It was understood that a cheque for £500 and a voucher from play equipment company Wicksteed would be forthcoming.

**21.11 Roding Valley**

The Chairman drew members' attention to a new publication, The Roding Valley at Loughton, Winter Snow, by local resident, Martin Hawkes.

**RC22 Financial Position**

The Committee NOTED the current financial report.

**RC23 Committee Priorities for 2017/18**

**23.1** As part of its overall plan and to complement the budget-making process, the Committee reviewed its priority list for 2017/18 and AGREED to the following:

<b>Current Priority</b>	<b>Main Function</b>	<b>Greater Detail (current position)</b>
<b>Current Activities</b>		
1	RV Recreation Ground – improvements to changing rooms exterior & surrounding area to include a refreshment facility and toilets	Planning application to be submitted. Internal works to be included. External funding TBC
2	Skate park facility	Monthly events during summer months whilst the search for a suitable site continues.
3	Playgrounds	New works/upgrading
4	Land adjacent to Willingale Road Allotment	Use as a nature reserve/community orchard. Some clearance and environmental studies undertaken
5	Provision of Public Access Defibrillators	Collaboration with stakeholders
6	Roding Valley Recreation Ground	Registration as a “Field in Trust”
7	Roding Valley Recreation Ground path maintenance	Including the diverted path by Charlie Moules bridge – no action at present. EFDC assisting in monitoring the erosion
8	Outdoor gym at other locations	Monitor the success of the new Willingale Road Playing Field facility
9	Solar energy installations for Council buildings	Further research and budgetary allowance
10	Renaming of the Roding Valley Recreation Ground	Under consideration
11	Youth Forum	No action at present. Collaboration with Epping Forest Youth Council
<b>On-going Activities</b>		
High	Running the committee	Agenda, reports, research, minutes, finance, admin
High	Kingsley and Murray Halls	Bookings, admin, finance, maintenance and works
High	Millennium Remembrance Grove	Tree replacements and maintenance
High	Open spaces including the Memorial Garden in Roding Road	Maintenance
High	Willingale Road Playing Field and Roding Valley Recreation Ground	Football lettings, maintenance and works

High	Playgrounds/outdoor gyms	Maintenance
High	Responding to consultations	Variable
High	Any other matters within the committee's terms of reference	As detailed in the Standing Orders

**23.2** The Committee AGREED the following items 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. Skate Park facility
- ii. Play areas (new works/upgrading)
- iii. Major improvements to the Roding Valley Recreation Ground changing rooms and car park area
- iv. Outdoor gym facilities

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

**RC24 Estimates for 2017/18**

The Committee considered its Estimates for 2017/18.

**24.1 Income – Fees and Charges**

The Committee AGREED that fees for:

- i. hire fees for the use of the Kingsley and Murray Halls and football facilities would be increased by two per cent with effect from 1 April 2017 in accordance with September's RPI;
- ii. clubs using Council land for football training would not currently be charged (unless reserving a pitch for training);
- iii. fees for the use of Council land by television/film crews:
  - 1) News stories, small scale regional programmes, small scale documentaries – no charge
  - 2) Major documentaries, large scale investigative programmes - £255 a day
  - 3) Dramas, films, advertisements - £510 a day  
Subject to:
    - a) officers may negotiate other fees if required.
    - b) users agreeing to the Council's condition of use
    - c) additional fees may be charged if vehicles are to be taken on to the ground
    - d) users are responsible for the reinstatement of any damage caused to the open spaces, playing fields or recreation ground and their appurtenances
    - e) users indemnifying the Council against any claims arising from their use of the open spaces, playing fields or recreation ground
- iv. the maximum annual licence for commercial organisations using Council land for business related activities would be £510 per annum for 2017/18 with officers having the discretion to offer reduced fees where appropriate.

- v. fees for fun fairs and any other activities not included above would be referred to the Committee for further consideration.

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

**RC24.2 Rolling Programme**

The Committee AGREED to the Rolling Programme as presented in the Agenda with the addition of a £20,000 additional budget sum towards the Roding Valley Recreation Ground play area refurbishment.

**RC24.3 Estimates for 2017/18**

The Estimates for 2017/18 as presented in the Agenda were AGREED such that the net figures were as follows:

Recreation Committee	£
Total budget expenditure**	718,045
Income	113,385
Net expenditure	604,660
Transfers from earmarked reserves*	- 161,700
<b>Total net expenditure**</b>	<b>442,960</b>
* Details of transfers from earmarked reserves:	
<i>Charlie Moules Bridge repair fund</i>	<i>20,000</i>
<i>Skate park facility</i>	<i>33,000</i>
<i>Roding Valley Recreation Ground improvements</i>	<i>100,000</i>
<i>Defibrillators</i>	<i>1,200</i>
<i>Murray Hall energy efficiency measures</i>	<i>7,500</i>
	<b>£161,700</b>

\*\* **NB:** The total budget expenditure currently included a service recharge of £131,000 (the 2016/17 figure). The 2017/18 figure would be confirmed by the Resources and General Services Committee at its meeting on 11 January 2017 and a revised budget provided to the Recreation Committee at its next meeting if appropriate.

**RC25 Future Work of the Committee**

No items were raised.

Signed: .....  
Date: 11 January 2017