

THESE MINUTES NOT YET CONFIRMED

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 6 July 2016 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: S Pewsey (in the Chair)
J Angold-Stephens
J Mahoney (until Min No RG7.1)
A Omer
M Dalton
S Murray (from Min No RG7.6)
J Jennings

Also in attendance:

Councillors: D Wixley

Officers: E K Walsh (Town Clerk)
S Haynes (Deputy Town Clerk)

RG1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Murray.

RG2 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

RG3 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2016 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG4 Public Representations

None were received.

RG5 Matters for Report

5.1 Fly a Flag for the Commonwealth – Min no RG233.7

The Committee CONFIRMED that the Town Council would again take part in next year's celebrations to mark Commonwealth Day on Monday 13 March 2017.

The Town Clerk reported that a year four class of children from St John Fisher Roman Catholic Primary School had recently taken part in a mock council meeting in which they had RESOLVED to write to their head teacher to encourage the school to participate in the celebrations.

5.2 Strategy and Staff Group

The Committee NOTED that the Strategy and Staff Group had met on 6 June 2016. The topics discussed at that informal meeting included staffing, office accommodation, councillor attendance at events, Standing Orders and Christmas lights.

5.3 Website – Min no RG289.2

The Committee praised the new Town Council website, which had been published online in April 2016. It was NOTED that the annual hosting, warranty and support fee amounted to £235 net of VAT, with a further £1,500 left in the budget to cover staff training and further development of the site.

It was proposed to add a new consultation page to encourage and assist residents in responding to local issues.

5.4 Insurance – Annual Review – Min no RG289.3

The Committee NOTED that since the renewal and following the exclusion of tree felling under the Employers Liability Section, an additional premium of £39.51 including IPT (@ 9.5%) had been applied to ensure Town Council staff were covered for low level tree pruning work.

Building Valuations

It was also NOTED that, as part of the renewal process, a free building reinstatement cost valuation had been carried out on Council properties by Barrett Corp & Harrington Ltd.

The Committee AGREED to apply the revised valuations shown below, noting that this would result in a pro rata refund of £479.19 on the annual premium.

Material damage – buildings & subsidence	Current sum insured £	Revised valuation £
Buckingham Court	505,813	507,000
Cemetery buildings	229,303	159,000
Kingsley Hall	404,651	330,000
Willingale Road Changing Room	134,884	95,000
Community Centre	2,554,362	2,122,000
Drinking fountain	47,209	22,000
RVRG changing rooms	479,690	368,000
LAC buildings	281,818	216,000
War Memorial	142,767	64,000
Willingale Road Allotments	8,402	92,000

5.5 Election Costs

It was NOTED that the net costs of the May 2016 Town Council elections paid to Epping Forest District Council were £21,359.66. This was lower than anticipated following the uncontested election in the Fairmead ward.

5.6 Emergency Plan – co-ordinators

The Committee carried out its annual review of the Town Council's Emergency Plan and appointed Cllrs Angold Stephens and Omer as deputy co-ordinators.

The Town Clerk reported that she would be attending a workshop organised by the District Council at the end of September/early October regarding community resilience.

RG6 Internal Audit

The Committee NOTED the internal auditor's report of his final inspection for 2015/16. This had confirmed that no significant issues had arisen during this period.

The next visit by the auditor was anticipated in September 2016.

RG7 Finance

7.1 Fidelity Guarantee Insurance Cover

The Committee reviewed the end of year balances and AGREED that the level of fidelity guarantee insurance cover, currently set at £1.4 million, was adequate for its needs.

Cllr Mahoney left the meeting.

7.2 Investments

i) **Nationwide Business Instant Saver**

It was NOTED that the interest rate on this account would reduce from 0.95% gross to 0.75% gross with effect from 21 July 2016. This account paid a variable rate of interest and provided instant access.

ii) **Santander 180 Day Notice Account**

The Committee NOTED that in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of this Committee, the balance of funds in this account had been rolled over for a further 180 days with a new maturity date of 8 December 2016. On maturity, the Council could withdraw or reinvest the funds. The interest rate of 1.15% gross would continue as a fixed rate for the lifetime of this account.

7.3 Internal Financial Check

The Committee AGREED to continue with the practice of appointing a councillor to carry out random checks on the Council's financial records. Members thanked Cllr Mahoney for his work during the past years and appointed Cllr Omer to carry out checks on the Council's financial transactions during 2016/17.

7.4 Training

It was NOTED that the Essex Association of Local Councils was offering a training session on Budget and Precept at its offices in Great Dunmow on Thursday 14 July 2016 at a cost of £50. Any members wishing to attend this course were invited to contact the Town Council Office.

7.5 Salary Payments

The Committee AGREED to transfer the responsibility for the monthly BACS payments of staff salaries and the members' parish basic allowances and expenses where claimed, to its current payroll service provider, Acumen Wages Service, at a monthly net fee of £20.

Cllr Murray joined the meeting during the next item.

7.6 Financial Position

The Committee NOTED the end of year financial report together with details of the Committee's earmarked reserves.

A note of the Council's current bank balances and most recent bank reconciliations were circulated at the meeting.

It was also noted that the first instalment of the Precept together with the full LCTS grant was received on 29 April 2016.

7.7 Accounts Paid

The Committee NOTED that payments totalling £353,983.80 as detailed on payments schedules nos 207 – 213 had been made since the report to the meeting on 6 April 2016. The schedules and accompanying invoices were available at the meeting for inspection.

It was also noted that details of all Council payments in excess of £250 were provided on the Council's website.

RG8 Council Policies

The Committed NOTED the list of the main Council policies and that the documents would be subject to a rolling review.

RG9 Future Work of the Committee

The Committee AGREED to undertake a review of the Council's financial strategy and reserves policy; the Town Clerk would prepare a report for future discussion initially by the Strategy and Staff Group.

Signed.....
Date: 5 October 2016