

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 7 December 2016 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: S Pewsey (in the Chair)
J Angold-Stephens M Dalton J Mahoney
P Beales (as substitute for Cllr Jennings)
D Wixley (as substitute for Cllr Omer)

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

RG21 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Jennings, Omer and Murray. The Town Clerk reported that Cllrs Beales and Wixley had been nominated as substitutes for Cllrs Jennings and Omer for this meeting.

RG22 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

RG23 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2016 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG24 Public Representations

None were received.

RG25 Matters for Report

25.1 Christmas Card Competition

The Committee NOTED the report of the 2016 competition and AGREED to maintain the current age categories for competition entries.

25.2 Annual Town Meeting – Min no RG14.3

The Committee NOTED that the new Principal and Chief Executive Officer of Epping Forest College, Saboohi Famili, had accepted the invitation to speak at the 2017 Annual Town Meeting.

25.3 Binding of Minutes

It was NOTED that the binding of minutes for the 2012-16 council and committee meetings had now been completed at a net cost of £580.

The Committee confirmed that arrangements should be made to archive all the bound volumes of minutes dating back to 1996 at the Essex Record Office together with back copies of the Think Loughton newsletter.

25.4 Extraordinary Council Meeting

The Committee NOTED that the hire of a professional sound system for the meeting held in the Murray Hall on 29 November 2016 had been at a net cost of £651.

25.5 Code of Conduct

A copy of the Report of the Standards Committee had been circulated to all members under separate cover. As a member of the Joint Standards Committee, it was strongly recommended that this Council adopted the revised Code and this would be proposed at the Council meeting on 14 December 2016.

25.6 Standing Orders

It was NOTED that at the meeting on 14 December 2016, the Council would be asked to review the Standing Orders. A copy of these had been provided to all members following their election in May 2016 and could also be found on the Council's website.

25.7 Staff Handbook

The Committee NOTED that a number of minor amendments to the Handbook have been recommended by the Council's HR advisor, Peninsula, to meet recent changes in legislation. Once staff had been consulted on these, a further report would be made to this Committee.

RG26 Finance and Audit

26.1 Internal Audit

The Committee NOTED that the first interim inspection by the Council's internal auditor had been undertaken on Monday 17 October 2016 and a copy of their report circulated to all councillors. No matters of concern had been raised by the auditor.

26.2 Internal Financial Check

The Committee NOTED that Cllr Omer had undertaken a financial check on 24 November 2016 with his work covering a review of the bank accounts, the Precept receipts, chip and pin payments and a VAT return. He reported that everything was satisfactory with officers very helpful in providing all the requested information and explaining his queries.

Cllr Omer was thanked for his work in this regard.

26.3 Financial Position

The Committee's financial position as at 7 December 2016 was NOTED. Details of the Council's current bank balances together with a copy of the most recent bank reconciliations were circulated at the meeting.

26.4 Investments

26.4.1 Investment Strategy and Policy

The Committee considered the draft policy and RECOMMENDED its adoption to the Council.

26.4.2 Investments Review

It was reported that the funds invested in the Santander 180-day Notice Account would be available for reinvestment on 8 December 2016.

The Committee RESOLVED to reinvest the balance in the Santander 180-day Notice Account.

26.4.3 Accounts Paid

Payments totalling £139,070.00 as detailed on payments schedules nos 223 – 226 had been made since the report to the meeting on 5 October 2016. The schedules and accompanying invoices were available at the meeting for inspection.

RG27 Members' Remuneration Scheme

The existing remuneration scheme was reviewed and members considered it met the Council's needs.

The Committee RECOMMENDED to the Council that the Parish Basic Allowance should be maintained at £108 per annum for 2017-18.

RG28 Subscriptions Review

The Committee reviewed the current list of organisations of which it is a member and AGREED to continue to support those listed in the agenda without amendment.

RG29 Committee Priorities

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

Resources and General Services		
Priority	Main Function	Greater Detail/Current Position
Current activities		
High	New council accommodation	Arrangements were in hand for the proposed move to offices in Loughton Library
High	Seeking external funding sources	Targeted action
Low	Honours Board	On hold, awaiting a suitable display position
Low	Council structure	Continuing reviews
On-going activities		
Medium	Banking arrangements and investments	Kept under review
High	Running the Committee	
High	Admin for whole council	
High	Council and committee agendas and minutes	
High	All council finances, end of year accounts, audit etc.	
High	Management of Buckingham Crt	
High	Personnel and employment matters, staff management	Staff Handbook reviews as required
High	IT and office equipment	
High	Civic matters	Civic Service incl Citizenship Awards
High	Annual Report	Preparation and printing
High	Newsletter	Editorial, printing and distribution
High	Noticeboards	Maintenance and installation
High	Publicity and website	

High	Annual Town Meeting	Arrangements and admin
High	Christmas card competition	Arrangements and admin
High	Emergency Plan	Amendments and circulation
High	Financial Assistance Scheme	Admin and finance
High	New legislative requirements	
High	Policy reviews	On-going
High	Responding to consultations	Variable
High	Contract reviews	On-going
High	Training Strategy	Annual review
High	Any other matters within the committee's terms of reference	
Low	Community Forum	Arrangements and admin

29.2 The Committee AGREED the following item 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) Noticeboards

RG30 Estimates for 2017/18

The Committee considered the estimates of income and expenditure for 2017/18.

30.1 Income

The Committee AGREED to:

- i. increase the fees and charges for the hire of the Council Chamber at Buckingham Court by 2%;
- ii. maintain the current rate of 60p per sheet of A4 for items included in the Publication Scheme.

30.2 The Committee's Rolling Programme

The Committee AGREED to the Rolling Programme as presented in the Agenda.

30.3 Expenditure

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

Recourses and General Services Committee	£
Total budget expenditure (including committee recharge)**	217,150
Income	<u>28,500</u>
Net expenditure	188,650
Less income from earmarked reserves*	2,000
Total net expenditure	£186,650
*Details of transfers from earmarked reserves:	
<i>Noticeboards</i>	2,000

**** NB:** The total budget expenditure shown above currently includes a service recharge of -£251,000 (the 2016/17 figure). The 2017/18 figure would be confirmed by this Committee at its next meeting and a revised budget provided if appropriate.

RG31 Future Work of the Committee

The Committee AGREED to consider the following items:

- i. The use of external consultants to provide Health and Safety support;
- ii. A social media policy.

The Town Clerk would prepare reports in this regard.

Signed
Date: 11 January 2017