

**LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL**

**RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 10 October 2018 at 7.45pm at Loughton Library & Town Hall.**

**Present:**

**Councillors:** S Pewsey (in the Chair)  
M Dalton J Jennings J Jogia  
J Mahoney S Murray A Omer

**Also present:**

**Councillors:** D Wixley (from Min no RG137)

**Officers:** E Walsh (Town Clerk)  
B Smith (Assistant Town Clerk)

2 members of the public

**RG133 Apologies for absence**

No apologies for absence were received.

**RG134 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received

**RG135 Confirmation of Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2018 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**RG136 Public Representations**

None were received.

Cllr Wixley joined the meeting.

**RG137 Matters for Report**

**137.1 Insurance – Min no RG128.2**

**137.1.1 Landlord Rent Guarantee Insurance**

The Committee AGREED to take out the 36-month indemnity cover with a premium of £56.00 per year to cover the unpaid rent for any period during which the building was uninhabitable.

**137.1.2 HMRC Investigations**

The Committee considered the offer of “fee insurance” at £80 per annum to cover additional costs in responding to an investigation or enquiry raised by HMRC but took no further action in this regard.

**137.1.3 Insurance Rebate**

The Assistant Town Clerk reported that the Town Council had received a rebate of £76.82 for the reduction in the level of Fidelity Guarantee Insurance and low claim refund of £264.43 on the Commercial Combined Policy.

**137.2 Christmas Closedown Arrangements**

The Committee NOTED that, in line with the existing Council policy AGREED in February 2008, in addition to the statutory Bank Holidays, the Council Offices would also be closed on Christmas Eve, Monday 24 December 2018. This would be treated as a gratis day for staff.

The office hours will be as follows:

Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> December	Closed
Tuesday 25 <sup>th</sup> December	Closed
Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> December	Closed
Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> December	9.30 – 4.30
Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> December	9.30 – 4.30
Monday 31 <sup>st</sup> December	9.30 – 4.00
Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> January	Closed

**137.3 Referendum Principles**

The Committee NOTED the Government’s decision in 2018 to defer the setting of referendum principles for town and parish councils for three years conditional upon the sector showing restraint. However, this policy would be kept under active review.

**137.4 Remembrance Service**

The Committee RESOLVED to make a donation of £100 to the Royal British Legion in support of the Poppy Appeal and towards the cost of the wreath to be laid by the Town Mayor at the Remembrance Service on 11 November 2018. Payment was approved under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

**137.5 Annual Town Meeting**

The Committee NOTED that the 2018 Annual Town Meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 13 March 2019 commencing at 8pm in the Murray Hall. Whilst this was not a council meeting, all town councillors were expected to attend.

The Committee AGREED to continue with the usual format for the meeting by inviting local organisations and voluntary groups, particularly those in receipt of Financial Assistance from the Council, to mount displays at the event to attract more public interest. The organisations successful in their grant applications for 2019/20 would also be presented with a certificate by the Town Mayor. The meeting would conclude with refreshments and an opportunity for members of the public to speak informally with their councillors. Local businesses which had supported the local community would also be invited.

Members were asked to submit suggestions for a guest speaker to the Town Clerk for further consideration at the next meeting.

**137.6 Strategy and Staff Group**

The Committee NOTED that the Strategy and Staff Group had met on 8 August 2018. Topics discussed at that informal meeting included staffing and staff recruitment, arrangements for the death of a national figure and the 2019/20 budget.

**RG138 Financial Assistance – Min no RG129**

**138.1 General Applications 2018/19**

The Committee NOTED the current balance of £3,650 in the 2018/19 Financial Assistance budget.

The Committee RESOLVED to make the following contribution from the scheme by granting financial assistance to:

Organisation	Amount requested £	Item	Power
Rotary Club of Loughton	192.00	Promotional material	LGA 1972 s137

**138.2 Grant Claims**

The Committee NOTED that, following the receipt of additional information from the Loughton Youth Project satisfactory to the Working Group, the 2018/19 grant of £3,000 had been settled.

It has been reported that the Project was currently running under the control of the Essex Boys and Girls Club with particular reference to services secured via a grant from the Essex Police Fire & Crime Commissioner.

**RG139 Finance – Min no RG120**

**139.1 External Audit 2017/18**

The Committee NOTED the External Auditor's Certificate and that the Notice of Conclusion of Audit published on 28 September 2018 was currently displayed on the noticeboards around the town and on the Council's website.

The Committee expressed concern that the comments on the certificate regarding the treatment of direct debit payments were based on a technicality and this appeared to conflict with traditional banking methods.

**139.2 Internal Audit – Min no RG118.5**

The Committee NOTED that the next visit by the internal auditor would take place in November 2018. The auditor would follow the previously agreed 5-year work plan.

**139.3 Internal Financial Check**

The Committee NOTED that Cllr Angold-Stephens had accepted the appointment of being the councillor to carry out checks on the Council's financial transactions.

During her visit on 1 October 2018, Cllr Angold-Stephens inspected records connected with hall hire and expressed concern that the audit trail was difficult to follow. The procedure manual in this regard was to be checked and updated for review at her next visit.

The Committee thanked Cllr Angold-Stephens for her work.

**139.4 Current Financial Position**

The Committee NOTED the current financial position together with details of the funds available from earmarked reserves.

A copy of the Council's current bank balances and most recent reconciliations would be circulated to members shortly after the meeting.

The Town Clerk reported that the final instalment of the 2018/19 Precept (£332,500), collected by Epping Forest District Council, had been paid directly into the Santander bank account.

**139.5 Accounts Paid**

Payments totalling £254,896.02 as detailed on payments schedules nos 262 – 268 had been made since the report to the meeting on 4 July 2018. The schedules and accompanying invoices were available at the meeting for inspection.

The Committee NOTED for information, details of all Council payments in excess of £500 were provided on the Council's website on the strategic documents page.

**RG140 Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013**

The Committee NOTED the Draft Administration Strategy which had been circulated to members under separate cover.

**RG141 Future Work of the Committee**

No items were raised for future discussion.

**Signed** .....  
**Date:**       **5 December 2018**