

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 15 February at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: S Pewsey (in the Chair)
M Dalton J Jennings J Mahoney
S Murray

Also in attendance:

Councillors: R Brookes (until Min no RG50) D Wixley

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

2 members of the public

RG40 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Angold-Stephens and Omer.

RG41 Declarations of Interest

With regard to Agenda item 6.1, Financial Assistance, Councillors made the following declarations:

Cllr Brookes declared a non-pecuniary interest in the applications for the Loughton Methodist Church and Music@LMC, but as this was significant, would leave the meeting during the discussions on these items.

Cllr Dalton declared a pecuniary interest in the application for the Loughton Festival as he had previously entered into a financial contract with one of the organisers, and would leave the meeting during the discussion. He also declared a non-pecuniary interest in the application for the Roding Road Allotments and Leisure Gardens as he was acquainted with one of the allotment tenants.

Cllr Jennings declared a non-pecuniary interest in the applications for the Loughton Festival and the Yes Partnership as she knew the organisers, and the Epping Forest District Citizens Advice Bureau as she was the representative for Epping Forest District Council.

Cllr Mahoney declared a non-pecuniary interest in the applications for the 7th Epping Forest Scouting Group, 41st Globetrotters Explorer Scout Group, Loughton Arts Centre, Loughton Festival, Loughton Youth Project, New Vistas, Reindeer Explorer Scout Unit, Voluntary Action Epping Forest and the Epping Forest District Citizens Advice Bureau.

Cllr Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in the applications for the 7th Epping Forest Scouting Group, 41st Globetrotters Explorer Scout Group, Loughton Methodist Church, Music@LMC, New Vistas and the Reindeer Explorer Scout Unit, but as these were significant would not take part in the discussions and would leave the room should detailed conversations take place.

Cllr Murray also declared a non-pecuniary interest in the applications for GROW Community Garden, Loughton Festival, Loughton Youth Project, Love Loughton, Restore Community Centre, Restore Youth Activities, Noah's Ark Toddler Group, Roding Road Allotments and Leisure Gardens Association and Spark as he was acquainted with members of these groups.

Cllr Pewsey declared a non-pecuniary interest in the applications for the Loughton Arts Centre, Loughton Festival, Love Loughton, St Mary's Church Hope Centre Building Fund and Ignite, but as these were significant would take no part in the discussions or voting.

Cllr Wixley declared a non-pecuniary interest in the application for the Epping Forest District Citizens Advice Bureau as a member of that organisation.

RG42 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2017 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG43 Public Representations

Representatives from the GROW Community Garden and the Loughton Youth Project addressed the Committee in support of their financial assistance applications.

The Committee AGREED to bring forward the following item as members of the public were interested in their applications.

RG44 Financial Assistance

44.1 General Applications 2017/18

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

| Organisation | Amount granted £ | Power | Purpose of grant |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Associates of Epping Forest Field Centre | 240.00 | LGA 1972 s145 | Forest Family Activity in May 2017 |
| Cruse Bereavement Care Essex Area Epping Forest Client Services Committee | 220.00 | LGA 1972 s137 | Running costs |
| 7 th Epping Forest Scouting Group (1) | 0.00 | LG(MiscProv)A1976 s19 | Box Trailer |
| 41 st Globetrotters Explorer Scout Group (2) | 250.00 | LG(MiscProv)A1976 s19 | Purchase equipment for DofE scheme |
| GROW Community Garden (3) | 4,000.00 | LG(MiscProv)A1976 s19 | First year running cost |
| Loughton Arts Centre* | 250.00 | LGA 1972 s145 | Prizes – young artist competition |
| Loughton Festival * / *** | 2,000.00 | LGA 1972 s145 | Festival costs |
| Loughton Methodist Church ** | 500.00 | LGA 1972 s145 | Items for Creative Space Project |
| Loughton Youth Project | 4,000.00 | LGA 1972 s145 | Running costs for "The Space" |
| Love Loughton * | 450.00 | LGA 1972 s145 | Event costs |

| | | | |
|---|---------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Music@LMC ** (4) | 0.00 | LGA 1972 s145 | Music festival costs |
| New Vistas | 250.00 | LGA 1972 s145 | Speakers and hall rental |
| Reindeer Explorer Scout Unit (5) | 300.00 | LG(MiscProv)A1976 s19 | Subsidised camps and equipment |
| Restore Community Centre | 4,000.00 | LGA 1972 s133 | Towards Centre running costs |
| Restore CC - Loughton Youth Activities | 900.00 | LGA 1972 s145 | Friday night open youth club |
| Restore CC – Noah's Ark Toddler Group | 600.00 | LGA 1972 s145 | Craft material, toys and special events |
| Revitalise Respite Holidays | 500.00 | LGA 1972 s145 | Respite breaks |
| Roding Road Allotment and Leisure Gardens | 250.00 | Allot & Small Holdings Act 1908 | To provide drinking water taps |
| Samaritans of Redbridge | 300.00 | LGA 1972 s137 | Running costs |
| Spark (6) | 0.00 | LGA 1972 s137 LGA 1972 S145 | Running costs an youth Club |
| St Mary's Church Loughton – Hope Centre Building Fund * | 800.00 | LG(MiscProv)A1976 s19 | 100 upholstered chairs |
| St Mary's Church Loughton – Ignite (youth and children) * | 450.00 | LGA 1972 s145 | MacBook Air & table tennis table |
| Voluntary Action Epping Forest | 500.00 | LGA 1972 s145 | Supported volunteering – transport costs |
| YES Partnership | 450.00 | LGA 1972 s137 | Work training conference for young people |
| | 21,210.00 | | |

* Cllr Jennings chaired the meeting for these five applications.

** Cllr Brookes left the meeting for the applications for the Loughton Methodist Church and Music@LMC.

*** Cllr Dalton left the meeting for the application for the Loughton Festival.

Notes:

- (1) In view of the amount of grant support provided by the Town Council to this group in recent years, they were encouraged to share equipment and facilities with similar organisations. As they would be looking at other funds raising options, if and when they neared their target they were invited to reapply to the town council for assistance with any shortfall.
- (2) This organisation is encouraged to share equipment and facilities, which should be readily available for the DofE scheme from similar local groups.
- (3) Members were very supportive of this project, recognising its benefits to the community, but were unable to fund the whole amount requested owing to the budget constraints.
- (4) It was unclear whether funding was requested for the music event to be held in March 2017. If so, the remaining budget for 2016/17 amounted to £81.60. Clarification would be requested and reported back to this Committee at its meeting on 12 April 2017.
- (5) As with the other scout groups, this unit was encouraged to look at sharing equipment and facilities in an effort to save resources and reduce costs.

- (6) As a duplicate application had been made to the PCC Fund, members were not able to grant any funds before the outcome of this application was known. A further report would be considered by the Committee at its meeting on 12 April 2017.

44.2 Citizens Advice Bureau

The Committee RESOLVED to grant £8,000 to the Epping Forest District Citizens Advice Bureau under the Local Government Act 1972 s142.

The Committee thanked Cllrs Angold-Stephens, Murray and Pewsey for their careful consideration of the applications at the meeting of the working group held on 31 January 2017.

Members also commented on the quality of this year's applications, recognising the important difference the organisations made to residents in Loughton.

RG45 Matters for Report

45.1 Accounts and Audit

45.1.1 Accounts and Audit 2015/16 – Min no RG16.1

The Committee NOTED the apology received from the Director of Resources at Epping Forest District Council regarding the amendment made, without notification, to the Town Council's precept figure in February 2015, which impacted on the audit statement for that year.

45.1.2 External Audit

It was NOTED that PKF Littlejohn LLP would continue in their role as external auditor for the Town Council for the period up to 2022.

45.2 Staff Handbook

The Committee NOTED the minor amendments made to the Handbook required to meet recent changes in legislation and best practice.

RG46 Finance

46.1 Internal Audit

The Committee NOTED that the Council's internal auditors, Auditing Solutions, had attended the Council Offices on 13 February 2017 for their second interim visit. No issues had arisen during their visit. A copy of their report would be circulated to all members in due course.

46.2 Payments Procedures

46.2.1 The Committee CONFIRMED the list of payments currently made by direct debit as follows:

| Name | Gross Amount | Frequency | Due date | Purpose |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------|--|
| Peninsula Business Services Ltd | £241.92 | Monthly | 4 th | HR services |
| Epping Forest District Council | £2,131.00 | Monthly | 20 th | Business rates for Buckingham Court, Kingsley & Murray Halls, RVRG & WRPf changing rooms |
| World Pay (formerly Streamline) | Various | Monthly | 18 th | Hire of terminal for credit/debit card payments and associated fees/charges |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|------------|-------------|----------------------------|--|
| Crown Gas & Power | Various | Quarterly | 10 days after invoice date | Gas supply at Murray Hall, Kingsley Hall and Buckingham Court |
| Eon | Various | Monthly | Various | Electricity supply at Buckingham Court, RVRG, Cemetery, Murray Hall, Kingsley Hall, WRPf and Kings Green |
| Orange | Various | Monthly | 30 th | Mobile phones for external staff |
| NatWest | Various | Monthly | 27 th | Credit card purchases (in full, monthly) |
| Public Works Loan Board | £14,103.22 | Half yearly | 19 th Jan/July | Loan repayment Buckingham Court |
| Public Works Loan Board | £18,295.62 | Half yearly | 28 th Mar/Sept | Loan repayment Murray Hall (1) |
| Public Works Loan Board | £17,849.89 | Half yearly | 1 st June/Dec | Loan repayment Murray Hall (2) |

46.2.2 The Committee CONFIRMED the list of authorised signatures for each account as follows:

No 1 CURRENT ACCOUNT (NatWest)

Position

Current holder 16/17

As agreed at Annual Council meeting 18 May 2016

Town Mayor

Carol Davies

Deputy Town Mayor

Philip Abraham

Chairman of Resources & General Services

Stephen Pewsey

Chairman of Environment & Heritage

Christopher C Pond (not in conjunction with CPP)

Chairman of Recreation

David Wixley

Chairman of Planning & Licensing

Jill Angold-Stephens

Additional Signatory see RGS Min 160.5

Caroline P Pond (not in conjunction with CCP)

No 2 PAYROLL ACCOUNT (NatWest)

As above plus

Town Clerk

Enid K Walsh

Deputy Town Clerk

Shirley Haynes

Officer

-

Chairman of Resources & General Services

Stephen Pewsey

Town Mayor

Carol Davies (not set up)

Chairman of Environment & Heritage

Christopher C Pond

Chairman of Planning & Licensing

Jill Angold-Stephens

No 5 For & on behalf of Loughton Town Council – Security Deposits (NatWest)

| | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Town Clerk | Enid K Walsh |
| Deputy Town Clerk | Shirley Haynes |
| Officer | Paul Hoy |

NatWest Business Reserve

The Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, Admin Officer (as on No 2 a/c), Town Mayor and Chairman of Resources Committee.

Santander Business Reserve Account

| | |
|--|---|
| Chairman of Resources & General Services | Stephen Pewsey |
| Chairman of Environment & Heritage | Christopher C Pond (not in conjunction with CPP) |
| Chairman of Planning & Licensing | Jill Angold-Stephens |
| Additional Signatory see RGS Min 160.5 | Caroline P Pond (not in conjunction with CCP) |
| Operator | Enid K Walsh |
| Operator | Shirley Haynes |

Santander 180 Day Notice Account

| | |
|--|--|
| Chairman of Resources & General Services | Stephen Pewsey |
| Chairman of Environment & Heritage | Christopher C Pond (not in conjunction with CPP) |
| Chairman of Planning & Licensing | Jill Angold-Stephens |
| Additional Signatory see RGS Min 160.5 | Caroline P Pond (not in conjunction with CCP) |
| Operator | Enid K Walsh |
| Operator | Shirley Haynes |

Nationwide Business Instant Saver

| | |
|--|--|
| Chairman of Resources & General Services | Stephen Pewsey |
| Chairman of Environment & Heritage | Christopher C Pond (not in conjunction with CPP) |
| Chairman of Planning & Licensing | Jill Angold-Stephens |
| Additional Signatory see RGS Min 160.5 | Caroline P Pond (not in conjunction with CCP) |
| Operator | Enid K Walsh |
| Operator | Shirley Haynes |

46.2.3 The Committee CONFIRMED the limits of authority for each account signatory as follows:

| Account no | Limit |
|------------|---|
| 1 | Member cheque signatories only - no limit; Working balance kept at around £20,000 |
| 2 | Imprest account. Balance held at £35,000 to cover autopay, HMRC and pension payments. Other items subject to £150 cheque limit for officers. |

| | |
|----------|---|
| 3 | Transfers only to no 1 Account |
| 4 | Transfers only to no 1 Account |
| 5 | Imprest account – balance held at £3,000. Security deposit refunds only - £500 cheque limit for officers. |
| 6 | Transfers only to no 1 Account |
| 7 | Transfers only to no 4 Account |

46.3 Mileage allowances

The Committee CONFIRMED that, in view of the associated administration costs, it did not wish to introduce the recovery of VAT on the fuel element of this allowance at the current time. However, this would be kept under annual review by this Committee.

46.4 Financial Position

The Committee's financial position as at 31 January 2017 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.

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

46.5 Accounts Paid

It was NOTED that payments totalling £174,137.38 as detailed on payments schedules nos 227 – 230 have been made since the report to the meeting on 7 December 2016.

The schedules and accompanying invoices were made 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 on the strategic documents page.

RG47 Financial Regulations

47.1 Annual Review

The Committee undertook the annual review of the Financial Regulations. It was AGREED to recommend to full Council that no amendments were required and that the document met the Council's needs at the present time.

47.2 Financial Limits

The Committee CONFIRMED the financial limits below and AGREED that they were adequate as follows:

| Topic | Amount | Last reviewed | Last changed |
|---|---------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Limit of imprest on no 2 a/c | 35,000 | Feb 2016 | April 2010 |
| Limit of officers signing cheques on no 2 a/c | 150 | Feb 2016 | April 2010 |
| Limit of imprest on Security Deposits a/c | 3,000 | Feb 2016 | April 2006 |
| Limit of cheques on Security Deposits a/c | none | Feb 2016 | April 2006 |

| | | | |
|---|------------------|----------|------------|
| Petty cash imprest | 150 | Feb 2016 | - |
| Urgent repair work etc without budgetary provision (FR 3.4) | 5,000 | Feb 2016 | April 2008 |
| Additional audit work of external auditor (FR 12.1) | 750 | Feb 2016 | May 2004 |
| Tenders to be obtained (FR 12.3, 12.6 & 12.8) | over 50,000 | Feb 2016 | May 2004 |
| 3 quotes to be obtained (FR 12.8) | 10,000 to 50,000 | Feb 2016 | May 2004 |
| 3 estimates to be obtained (FR 12.8) | 2,000 to 10,000 | Feb 2016 | May 2004 |
| Public Contracts Regulations 2015 apply | over £25,000 | Feb 2016 | Feb 2016 |
| Bad debts may be written off by RFO | 250 | Feb 2016 | Feb 2014 |
| Credit card: | | | |
| No 1 Town Clerk | 1,000 | Feb 2016 | Nov 2004 |
| No 2 Services Manager | 500 | Feb 2016 | Feb 2014 |

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

RG48 Insurance – Annual Review

The Committee CONFIRMED the level of cover as follows, noting that relevant items would be subject to review when the office relocation had been finalised:

| 1 Material damage – buildings & subsidence | 16/17 | 17/18 |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| Buckingham Court | 507,000 | 519,823 |
| Cemetery buildings | 159,000 | 163,021 |
| Kingsley Hall | 330,000 | 338,346 |
| Willingale Road Changing Room | 95,000 | 97,403 |
| Community Centre | 2,122,000 | 2,175,668 |
| Drinking fountain | 22,000 | 22,556 |
| RVRG changing rooms | 368,000 | 377,307 |
| LAC buildings | 216,000 | 221,463 |
| All-weather running track | 41,422 | 42,417 |
| War Memorial | 64,000 | 65,619 |
| Willingale Road Allotments | 92,000 | 94,327 |
| 2 Business Interruption | | |
| Additional expenditure | 100,178 | 100,178 |
| Loss of revenue | 188,000 | 192,395 |
| | 16/17 | 17/18 |
| 3 Contents | | |
| Buckingham Court | 69,000 | 70,613 |
| Kingsley Hall | 2,900 | 2,968 |
| Murray Hall | 41,832 | 42,810 |
| Cemetery office & outbuildings | 500 | 5,000 |

| | | |
|---|-------------|--------------------|
| 4 Engineering | | |
| Passenger lift | 500,000 | 500,000 |
| 5 All risks | | |
| Town Mayor's Badge of Office | 2,580 | 2,593 |
| Silver Gilt Chain of Office and case | | |
| Best Allotment in Loughton Cup | 1,260 | 1,267 |
| Silver Plated Rose Bowl | | |
| Noticeboard at Traps Hill | 1,666 | 1,675 |
| Garden Machinery (Cemetery) | 4,500 | 1,500 |
| Garden Machinery (Willingale Road Allotments) | 3,500 | 3,518 |
| Skate Ramps and Associated Equipment | 20,500 | 21,016 |
| 6 Money | | |
| 16/17 and 17/18 | | |
| Loss of non-negotiable money | | 250,000 |
| Estimated annual carryings | | 10,106 |
| Loss of other money – in transit | | 1,000 |
| in the private residence of authorised employee | | 500 |
| on the premises during business hours | | 1,000 |
| on the premises outside business hours | | 500 |
| Personal injury (assault) benefits | Capital | 10,000 |
| | Weekly | 100 |
| 7 Public Liability | | |
| (incl Hirers' Liability of £2m and Environmental Statutory Clean Up Costs Cover of £1m) | | 10m |
| 8 Employer's Liability | | |
| (includes up to 60 salt and grit volunteers) | | 10m |
| 9 Libel and Slander | | |
| | | 500,000 |
| 10 Fidelity Guarantee (Employees & Members)* | | |
| | | 1.4m |
| * This level to be reviewed when end of year balances were known | | |
| 11 Personal Accident (Employees, Members & Volunteers) | | |
| Employees (Death) | Capital sum | 5 x annual salary |
| Temp Total Disablement | Weekly sum | 50% of weekly wage |
| Temp Partial Disablement | Weekly sum | 25% of weekly wage |
| Members (up to age 80)* | Capital sum | 50,000 |
| Temp Total Disablement | Weekly sum | 200 |
| Temp Partial Disablement | Weekly sum | 100 |
| Volunteers (up to age 80) | Capital sum | 10,000 |
| Temp Total Disablement | Weekly sum | 200 |
| Temp Partial Disablement | Weekly sum | 100 |
| *specific arrangements were available for those aged over 81 | | |

| | |
|--|---------|
| 12 Legal Protection | |
| Employment Disputes, Compensation Awards, Legal Defence, Property and Personal Injury, Tax Protection, Contract Disputes, Statutory Licence Protection Management Liability automatically included | 250,000 |
| 13 Business Travel – cover for all employees, council members and accompanying spouses included automatically for journeys made in connection with council business | |
| Medical | 1m |
| Personal property | 2,000 |
| Money/cheques | 1,000 |
| Disruption/cancellation | 2,000 |
| Travel delay | 500 max |
| Personal liability | 2m |
| 14 Vehicle – fully comprehensive, excess of £250 from 1.4.17 | |

RG49 Essex Pension Fund

The Committee NOTED that the employer's contribution rate for the Essex Pension Fund would be increased from 16.7% to 19.9% with effect from the 1 April 2017. However, this increase would be fully offset by inclusion of the separate cash deficit amount, currently £8,697 per annum, within this contribution rate.

Cllr Brookes left the meeting

RG50 Health and Safety Policy

The Committee reviewed the Health and Safety Policy and CONFIRMED that it met the Council's requirements.

RG51 Training Strategy

The Committee NOTED that in the current financial year, in addition to the induction training provided for all members in May 2016, five councillors had attended courses on topics including the Code of Conduct, Planning and enforcement, and general councillor training.

Eight members of staff had attended training on a wide range of topics including routine playground inspections, customer care, a cemetery workshop on creating a garden of remembrance, VAT for town and parish councils, social media, fire extinguisher training and basic legionella awareness.

The Committee reviewed the Training Strategy and AGREED that it met the needs of councillors and staff members at the current time.

RG52 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised for future discussion.

Signed

Date: 12 April 2017