

**LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL
RECREATION COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday 8 March 2017 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court

Present:

Councillors: D Wixley (in the Chair)
R Brookes S Murray A Omer
M Stubbings S Pewsey (as substitute for Cllr Cohen)

Also in attendance:

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

Also present: Louisa Stirling, District Youth and Community Commissioner (West Epping Forest)

RC34 Apologies

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

RC35 Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were received.

RC36 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2016 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RC37 Public Representations

None were received.

The Committee AGREED to bring forward agenda item 6, as the guest speaker was present.

RC38 Loughton Youth Centre

The Chairman welcomed Louisa Stirling to the meeting.

Louisa addressed the Committee and provided an update on the current activities at the Centre. These were in the main, organised and run by partner organisations including Spark, North East London Foundation Trust, Accuro, the Childrens Society and Action for Family Carers. Essex County Council continued to run the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme sessions and a YC10 youth club offering two after school sessions a week.

The Centre was now operating from 9am – 9pm, Mondays to Thursdays and 9am – 5pm on Fridays and looking to extend this to include weekends. Although attendance numbers appeared low, this enabled intensive support to be provided to the young people. Staff were also providing an outreach service particularly on the Oakwood Hill Estate and at other known hotspots in the town.

With effect from April 2017, Essex County Council's new Pre-Birth to 19 Health, Wellbeing and Family Support Service will be delivered by Virgin Care under a seven-year contract.

Members took the opportunity to ask questions of the speaker and encouraged her to work with local groups particularly the Loughton Youth Project. Concern was also expressed about the ongoing problems in the town associated with the use of nitrous oxide canisters.

The Committee thanked the speaker for attending the meeting.

RC39 Matters for Report

39.1 Playgrounds – Min no RC30.1

The Committee NOTED that the RoSPA safety inspections of all the play areas, outdoor gyms and football pitches had been carried out on 26 January 2017 at a net cost of £536.85.

No major issues had arisen and the Services Manager was collating an order for some minor maintenance works.

39.1.1 Essex Playing Fields Association

The Town Clerk reported that as part of the 2016 EPFA award for the Traps Hill play area, a £500 voucher was offered by the Wicksteed play equipment company. Their regional representative has offered to install equipment to a higher value and in discussion with the Services Manager, it is planned to replace the seesaw previously removed from the Newmans Lane site with a new model. The suitability is to be confirmed with the Council's play area inspector.

The 2017 EPFA competitions have been announced with up to five entries costing £10.00.

The Committee NOTED that the Services Manager had volunteered to act as a judge for the competition.

39.2 Community Events – Min no RC30.2

39.2.1 Park Run

The Committee NOTED that this has proved a popular new event at the Roding Valley Recreation Ground with participant numbers settling to around 120 per week. Town Council officers continued to monitor the event. It had been necessary to cancel the run on only one weekend so far this year because of flooding.

The Committee welcomed the news that the Senior Health and Wellbeing Engagement Officer at the District Council was arranging for free First Aid and safeguarding courses for Park Run volunteers.

39.2.2 Town Mayor's Charity Fun Run

The Committee NOTED that this annual event was to be held on Sunday 14 May 2017 as part of the Loughton Festival. The charity to benefit would be the Essex Air Ambulance, one of the Festival charities.

Ticket pricing and arrangements would be as in previous years, with a bouncy castle and face painting for the children, and refreshments and first aid provided.

39.2.3 Jessel Green Family Fun Day

The Committee NOTED that a licence for this event, to be held on Sunday 16 July 2017, had been agreed by the District Council.

The Town and Community Development Officer was continuing her work with partners to provide a full programme of entertainment on the Green.

39.2.4 Tennis Coaching – Min no 21.2.1

The Committee NOTED that during the Easter school holidays, the Town Council would be providing coaching sessions at the Roding Valley Recreation Ground tennis courts at a total cost of £304.

The one-hour tennis sessions would be on the Wednesdays and Thursday, 5/6 and 12/13 April 2017. The age groups catered for would be 4 – 8 years of age at 10.00am and 9 – 16 year olds at 11.00am with a maximum of 25 participants in each session. Pre-booking was being encouraged with the fee for course set at £10 including VAT.

Members thanked Cllr Omer for his original enquiries into this new project.

The Committee AGREED to the proposal by the Health and Wellbeing Engagement Officers at the District Council to develop 'introduction to tennis' sessions for young children in conjunction with the Tennis Foundation. Sessions were to be held on Thursdays from 4.30pm to 5.30pm, commencing after the Easter holidays, then an afternoon session in the May half-term, and running through to the summer holidays on Thursdays after school. The proposed cost would be £3 per child per session.

39.2.5 Basketball

The Committee welcomed the proposal by the District Council to run a series of basketball 'drop-in' sessions on three days in June (half-term), July and August (summer holidays). The cost per session per child was to be £3 per child and there would be no cost to the Town Council.

39.3 Community Halls – Min no RC30.3

The Committee NOTED that the Community Halls Working Party had met on 21 February 2017 and the topics discussed included staffing, the use of the Youth Centre, promotion, income and expenditure for 2016/17, hall bookings and how to encourage greater recycling by hirers.

The Committee also NOTED that a grant of £400 had been secured from Essex County Council towards the cost of providing Wi-Fi at the Murray Hall.

The following recommendations by the Working Party were AGREED:

- i. To encourage the use of the Murray Hall as a wedding/civil partnership venue, a new fee would be introduced to cover the use of the hall for the ceremony only. For 2017/18 this would be £249.73 + VAT for Loughton residents and £268.77 for non-residents.
- ii. A refund of £140 was to be made by way of a donation to the Langdon charity as suggested by the hirer whose event had been marred by problems with the heating at the Murray Hall. This amount was equivalent to fifty per cent of the total hire fee.

39.4 Community Safety – Min no RC195

The Chairman reported that a Senior Safety Day was to be held on Wednesday 22 March 2017 at the Loughton Club; The Murray Hall being unavailable. This event had been arranged by Epping Forest District Council in partnership with Essex Police and the Safer Communities Partnership.

39.5 Roding Valley Recreation Ground – Min no RC21.2.3

The Services Manager reported on his discussions with Countrycare to create wild flower areas on the Recreation Ground. The Committee suggested that the bank of the mound area could be suitable for managed wild flower beds.

39.6 Open Spaces – Min no RC30.4

39.6.1 Hillyfields Open Space

The Committee NOTED that the Town Clerk had met the Head Forest Keeper from the City of London to finalise the details of the works to create a ditch and bund around the lower boundary of this site.

39.7 Community Initiatives Fund – Min no RC30.5

Following the award of £3,000 from the Community Initiatives Fund the Committee CONFIRMED that an order for the supply and installation of two concrete table tennis tables and safety matting at a cost of £3,900 plus VAT was to be placed.

Exact locations for the installation on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground and the Willingale Road Playing Field would be further considered by officers to find relatively wind sheltered areas that were close to existing facilities but not susceptible to drainage problems.

39.8 Essex Police – Min no RC30.6

The Committee NOTED that the next Local Community Meeting for the Epping and Brentwood District was to be held in Buckhurst Hill on 22 March 2017 between 6pm - 7pm at the Roding Valley Hall, Station Way, Buckhurst Hill, IG9 6LN. Officers would contact the Council's representatives to ensure a presence at that meeting.

A copy of the Essex Police Performance Summary to January 2017 had been circulated to members.

39.9 Council Vehicle – Min no RC30.7

The Committee NOTED that following a minor incident, the van had been away for body repairs for over two weeks and so it had not been possible to progress research into the options and costs for replacing the current van and leasing a petrol or electric vehicle. A £100 excess charge had also been incurred.

39.10 Defibrillators – Min no RC30.8

The Committee AGREED that:

1. officers would continue to work with the Rotary Club to progress plans to purchase and install a Community Automated External Defibrillator outside Morrisons in the High Road, Loughton.
2. The Broadway and High Road Town Centre Partnerships would be assisted by officers to secure grant funding for a CAED in the Broadway and outside St Mary's Church in the High Road.
3. once funding was available, a CAED was to be purchased and installed on the outside of the wall of the Town Council's building at the Roding Road Recreation Ground facing the car park with appropriate signposting in the area.
4. the Town Council would apply to Awards for All for grant funding to complete the project to install a minimum of four CAEDs, as detailed above, in partnership with the Rotary Club and Town Centre Partnerships.

The Committee thanked Shirley Haynes for her report and work on this project.

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

39.11 Staffing

The Committee NOTED the report on personal safety equipment to help reduce the risks particularly to external staff working in remote locations on their own.

It was AGREED to take advantage of a month's free trial and, subject to a satisfactory outcome, take out a five-year contract with Skyguard at £972 per annum to provide nine fobs with an additional 'man down' service. The cost of this equipment was to be split between the relevant budget cost centres.

39.12 Tree Safety Inspections

The Committee NOTED that the Services Manager had arranged for a full inventory of the Council's tree stock and a detailed report with health and safety recommendations, to be undertaken at all the main Town Council sites. The work would be carried by Place Services, a traded service of Essex County Council.

The cost of the site survey, mapping and report writing amounted to £2,580 net of VAT. This expenditure would be met from within existing budgets and split across the relevant cost centres, including that for the Loughton Cemetery, which came under the responsibility of the Environment and Heritage Committee.

RC40 Financial Position

The Committee NOTED the report.

RC41 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

Signed:
Date: 14 June 2017