

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 22 February 2017 at 7.45pm at 1 Buckingham Court

Present:

Councillors: C Davies (in the chair)

P Abraham	J Angold-Stephens	P Beales
R Brookes	T Cochrane	B Cohen
M Dalton	T Downing	L Girling
J Jennings	K Latchford	J Mahoney
S Murphy	S Murray	T Owen
S Pewsey	C C Pond	C P Pond
M Stubbings	D Wixley	

Officers: E K Walsh (Town Clerk)
P Bryce (Administrative Assistant)

54 Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

55 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

56 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 14 December 2016 and 25 January 2017 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

57 Public Representations

None were received.

58 Questions Without Discussion

To answer any questions which have been submitted in accordance with Standing Order no 8.

59 Town Mayor's Engagements and Announcements

The Town Mayor, Cllr Carol Davies, reported that since the Council meeting on 14 December 2016 she had attended the following events:

Forest Creative Writers Christmas Party at the Loughton Club, Celebration of Christmas by Candlelight at the Abbey Church, Waltham Abbey, Lighting of the Menorah for the Chanukah celebrations on Standard Green, the official opening of the Sensory Area at Loughton Library, the YES Partnership Conference at the Marriott Hotel, the LADS production of "The Thrill of Love" at Lopping Hall, Sleeping Beauty Pantomime at Lopping Hall organised by the Red Balloon Family, Waltham Abbey Town Council Civic Service at the Waltham Abbey Church and presented awards to the Young Artists at the Loughton Arts Centre.

Cllr Abraham reported that, on behalf of the Town Mayor, he had attended the Christmas Service at St John the Baptist Church and given a reading.

60 Matters for Report

There were no matters for report at this meeting.

61 Reports from Members on Outside Organisations

61.1 Written reports on the following meetings were NOTED.

- i. Epping Forest Citizens Advice – 2 February 2017 – Cllr Angold-Stephens
- ii. Epping Forest Branch of the Association of Local Councils – 8 February 2017 – Cllr Pewsey and the Town Clerk
- iii. Lopping Endowment – Cllr Pewsey
- iv. Essex Police Local Community Meeting – 25 January 2017 – Town and Community Development Officer

62 Reports from Committees

62.1 Planning and Licensing

The reports from the meetings held on 12 December 2016, 9 and 23 January 2017 and 6 February 2017 were NOTED.

62.2 Recreation

The report from the meeting held on 11 January 2017 was NOTED.

62.3 Environment and Heritage

The report from the meeting held on 25 January 2017 was NOTED.

62.4 Resources and General Services

The reports from the meetings held on 11 January and 15 February 2017 were NOTED.

63 Financial Regulations

Further to the detailed review carried out by the Resources and General Services Committee at its meeting on 15 February 2017, the Council CONFIRMED that the Financial Regulations as adopted on 17 February 2016 still met its requirements.

64 Governance and Accountability

64.1 Internal Audit

64.1.1 Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Audit

Members considered the detailed report and reviewed the effectiveness of the system of internal audit, including the current system of internal audit, the independence and competence of the internal auditors, the scope of the internal audit and audit planning and reporting systems.

The Council AGREED that the system of internal audit, which had been in place during 2016-17, was satisfactory.

64.1.2 Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Control

Members considered the detailed report and reviewed the effectiveness of the system of internal control.

The Council AGREED the following statement:

STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL

1 Scope and Responsibility

Loughton Town Council (hereafter called “the Council”) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and

that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

2 Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk at a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risks of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them effectively and economically.

The system of internal control has been in place at the Council for the year ended 31 March 2017.

3 The Internal Control Environment

The system of internal control is based on a framework consisting of the Code of Conduct, internal regulations (including but not limited to financial regulations) and administrative procedures. It is further enhanced by the regular provision of management and financial information as appropriate to fit the Council's policy of delegation and responsibility. The system is constantly monitored by members as well as officers within the Council. In particular, the system incorporates:

- comprehensive budgeting systems, project evaluation and management appraisal
- regular reports of service delivery and project performance
- preparation and dissemination of regular financial reports measuring actual expenditure against forecasts for both revenue and capital projects
- regular review of such reports by officers, and by members in committee and full Council.

4 Review of Effectiveness

The authority has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of:

- the Council and its committees, especially the Resources and General Services Committee
- the Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer and other staff
- the internal auditor
- the external auditor
- any other review agencies and inspectorates in their reports.

64.2 Risk Assessment and Management

The Council carried out the annual review of its Risk Assessment and Management document.

No amendments to the document agreed at the meeting on 17 February 2016 were considered necessary at this time.

65 Highways

65.1 New Parking Restrictions

The Council supported Essex County Council's proposal to introduce new parking restrictions near Loughton Station to prevent commuter parking on the central reservation. However, members asked for the "no waiting at any time" scheme to be extended southwards to include the area around the entrance to the TfL staff car park. The Town Council will expect strict enforcement of these new restrictions and those provided by the existing bus lane.

66 Complaints Panel

The Council nominated Cllrs Angold-Stephens, Jennings and C C Pond to form the Complaints Panel to address an ongoing cemetery complaint.

67 Office Accommodation

The Town Clerk provided a brief update on the forthcoming move to the library.

67.1 Lease – Min no 33

The Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor executed the lease relating to part of the First Floor, Loughton Library, Traps Hill, between Essex County Council and Loughton Town Council.

67.2 Building Works

The Council NOTED that once the Lease had been completed by Essex County Council, the contract for the minor building works would be awarded to Tarbrook Design and Build, with a value of £15,554 net of VAT.

Signed.....

Date: **3 May 2017**