

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 16 January 2019 at 7pm at Loughton Library & Town Hall, Traps Hill, Loughton IG10 1HD.

Present:

Councillors: S Murray (in the chair)

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

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

Also present:

6 members of the public

203 Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received. Cllr Omer had emailed his apologies but these were received too late to be presented at the meeting.

204 Suspension of Standing Orders

The Council AGREED to suspend Standing Order 2 h(i)(iv) for this meeting, as the meeting was a special one with only three main agenda items.

205 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

206 Public Representations

None were received.

207 Local Plan Examination in Public

Members NOTED the report of the meeting of the Strategy and Staff Group with the barrister and planning consultant held on 3 January 2019. Cllr C C Pond confirmed that there had been communication with other interested parties regarding the representations to be made at the Examination in Public.

Cllr C C Pond declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item as a member of Essex County Council.

208 Street Lighting

The Council discussed the approach from Essex County Council made via the District Council, regarding the reinstatement of all night street lighting and noted the eighty-seven emailed template forms of support from residents.

Members expressed serious concerns about the timing of the proposal at this late stage in the budget process and deplored the lack of detail provided to support the costings.

Cllr Beales expressed doubts as to the bona-fide of some of the emails received regarding the street lights.

The Council ENDORSED the Town Clerk's response to the District Council and in particular the queries raised:

Loughton Town Council is interested in this idea, but will need to consider the matter thoroughly. We may not be in a position to make a speedy decision given that our budget preparations for 2019/20 are almost complete.

We have some initial queries on the initiative. Could you confirm whether:

- 1. the Town Council could elect to have lights on for Friday and Saturday nights only (days on which the Night Tube runs) at 2/7ths of the cost;*
- 2. if we could decide to start midway through the financial year on a pro-rata basis?*
- 3. a request for a detailed breakdown of the costs; and*
- 4. whether the commitment of parish and town councils to this proposal would delay the installation of LED street lighting in this district.*

Members also asked whether there could be flexibility with the choice of roads and/or alternate lights remaining on all night.

It was reported that the Acting Chief Executive of Epping Forest District Council would not be meeting with Cllr Bentley, the Cabinet Member at Essex County Council, to address the queries raised by local parish and town councils until the end of January 2019.

The Council CONFIRMED that in view of the lack of detailed information, it would be improper to make a decision at the present time. However, once the facts were clearer, it would reconsider the matter and consult with the residents.

209 Council Precept for 2019/20

Cllr Jennings, Acting Chairman of the Resources and General Services Committee, presented the recommendations of this Committee from its meeting on 9 January 2019.

It was NOTED that the tax base for 2019/20 had been confirmed as 12,580.6, a slight increase on that for 2018/19.

It was AGREED to use £25,000 from the forecast general reserves, which reduced them to £256,870 equivalent to 62.41 per cent of the budgeted net core running costs meeting the Council's Reserves Policy.

The Estimates for 2019/20 were AGREED as shown overleaf:

Committee	Income		Expenditure inc re-charges
	£	£	£
Resources & General Services	35,515		180,981
Recreation	127,778		682,000
Environment and Heritage	18,075		216,960
Planning and Licensing	0		80,200
	181,368	181,368	
Interest	6,000	6,000	
Use from earmarked reserves			
Resources & General Services	14,000		
Recreation	133,250		
Environment & Heritage	36,500		
Planning and Licensing	45,000		
	228,750	228,750	
Total income/expenditure		416,118	1,160,141
Less money from general reserves		25,000	
Net requirement		719,023	
Rounding		719,000	

The Council unanimously RESOLVED to set the precept for 2019/20 at £719,000.

This would give the Loughton proportion of the annual council tax for a band D property as £57.15.

Members thanked the Resources and General Services Committee and in particular the Chairman and Acting Chairman for their work in preparing this budget.

210 Town Mayor's closing remarks

Before closing the meeting the Town Mayor expressed his sincere appreciation for the service of the retiring Town Clerk, Enid Walsh, commenting that since her appointment in 2008, she had discharged her duties in an exemplary way. Other members also paid tribute to Enid for her commitment to the Council.

The Chairman wished her a long and happy retirement and made a presentation of an antique map of Essex and a book on the history of Epping Forest.

Enid responded that she had enjoyed her time as Town Clerk but recognised that the numerous achievements of the last eleven years had been a result of excellent partnership working by the councillors and staff. She trusted that local residents appreciated how hard the councillors worked for the benefit of the town.

The Town Mayor wished Enid a long and happy retirement and invited all present to join him in an informal reception.

Signed:

Date: 13 February 2019