



# Annual Report 2017

Since I was elected as Mayor last May, I have really enjoyed serving the community in Loughton. I've had the honour of being invited to attend many events for local groups and charities. I've cut ribbons and cakes, judged competitions, given out prizes, awarded certificates, presented cups and trophies, picked raffle tickets, watched very entertaining shows, performances and concerts. All in all, it's been wonderful to represent the Town Council wherever and whenever I was needed, on many joyful, as well as solemn and official occasions.

So far I've attended nearly 50 mayoral engagements! However, as space is limited, I think you may appreciate it if I don't mention them all to you in this report. Rather, I will just concentrate on three of the most notable, which were particularly memorable for me.

The first engagement was the annual Community Fun Day on our beautiful Jessel Green. Here I was charged with welcoming all the visitors and opening the proceedings. After an initial lovely Samba dance display by the pupils from Hereward and White Bridge Schools, the morning rain turned into a perfect sunny summer's day, and with all the stalls and amusements and a colourful display of amazing kites, it was a really wonderful family event.

Another memorable engagement was the opening of the Pylles Lane Community Garden and Picnic, where I was invited by the GROW Team to cut the ribbon. This is a great project because it is bringing a piece of overgrown allotment land back into use with the aim of helping to improve residents' physical and mental health and wellbeing. This initiative is a real asset for our local community.

I should mention that cutting the ribbon can be rather trickier than it sounds. What happens usually, as in this case, the cameraman misses the actual snipping shot, and you have to hold the ribbon back together and pretend to cut it all over again.....so Phillip remember that!

The final engagement I will mention was our recent Civic Celebration & Citizenship Awards Ceremony. As you may know this took place in Murray Hall and it was an honour to have the Deputy Lord Lieutenant Michael Chapman to present the awards.

The Chairman of Essex County Council as well as other mayors, deputy mayors, and chairman from our neighbouring towns were in attendance.

My theme for the Civic Celebration, which was echoed throughout, was "One person can make a difference and everyone should try". This was also well-reflected in my two chosen charities for the event - the Loughton Foodbank and Loughton Citizens Advice Bureau.

This year's very worthy award winners have, each in their own way, all made a very positive difference for local residents. Citizen of the Year went to Sue Taylor - the hugely energetic organizer of the Loughton Festival. The Services to the Community award went to Margaret Weston - a yoga teacher who for over 40 years helped improve our residents' health and well-being. A special Young Caring Citizens award went to the 16th Epping Forest Beavers for their fantastic contribution to the Save Loughton's Green Spaces campaign. They created a set of wonderful drawings, to show their strength of feeling about their greens being built on and lost.

This brings me finally to the issue that has concerned many of us - the District Council's Local Plan.

The Town Council has been very busy researching, collecting the opinions of residents and organising its own response to the plan. It was and still is a mammoth task. We are waiting for the District Council's conclusion to all the submitted responses they received. Should it be necessary, the town council has a war chest should we need to take legal advice on the outcome.

On a more positive note, it's a new beginning for Loughton Town Council. We are about to have a change of scene, with the planned move into Loughton Library imminent. This will mean a more central location and hopefully it will be easier for the local community to contact us when they need to.

And finally I would like to thank everyone who has helped me during my mayoral year - friends, colleagues, Enid our clerk, all her staff for their support and hard work and to everyone who has been so kind, encouraging and supporting as well. Thank you all.



## Loughton Town Council

1 Buckingham Court  
Rectory Lane  
Loughton  
Essex IG10 2QZ

Tel **020 8508 4200**

Fax **020 8508 4400**

**contact@loughton-tc.gov.uk**

Town Clerk **Enid K Walsh**

**Cllr Carol Davies**  
Town Mayor

# Planning & Licensing

## Cllr Jill Angold-Stephens

**W**e have actually seen slightly less applications this municipal year to date but only down from 360 to 344. The plans are still mainly for extensions to existing properties, as most people cannot afford to move within the town so when the family gets larger they increase their living space by extensions on their existing homes.

We do not always approve these extensions, as we need to take into consideration the effect on both neighbours and the street scene as a whole. Some people have unrealistic expectations of what is acceptable to others. There have been some 23 appeals on which we have commented, usually where we are opposing the development and wish to make sure that all the relevant issues are brought to the attention of the inspector who will not be familiar with the town. As usual, some appeals are allowed and some are dismissed.

We always hope that we have played our part in avoiding some of the worst excesses in planning applications. We do, however depend very largely on you, the residents of our town, to do your part in alerting us to any application that you feel is out of keeping or not appropriate in any way. Our meetings almost always run past the allotted time and we have some very late nights when there are a number of contentious applications to discuss and then word our objections.

In the past twenty meetings we have had presentations from the public at nineteen, only on 12 December was no-one present; maybe the date had something to do with it! When we have members of the public wishing to speak we always bring those applications forward in the meeting so that people do not have to listen to all our deliberations.

Licensing applications are fewer in number and we have only had 2 in the past year with 2 for street trading licenses as well.

Enforcement of planning regulations also forms part of our work. As we move about the town we keep our eyes open for anything that is not as it should be. This may be a building under construction for which we did not see an application, something being built not as the plans, or a shop

## Epping forest district planning our future LOCAL PLAN

sign for which no planning consent has been received.

This often results in the errant person being required to put the matter right with the appropriate retrospective planning application.

This year has seen the publication of both the draft District Local Plan and the neighbourhood plan for Chigwell. I am sure that you are aware of the inclusion in the former of several of the lovely green spaces in the Debden part of the town and we are planning for what we may need to do when the comments sent to EFDC are considered and the plan is published early next year. This will then be followed later in the year by the 'examination in public'. We are planning to fight any development to the detriment of our greens with all the tools at our disposal. We already have money set aside for this and more is earmarked from the small increase in our part of the council tax for the coming year. Although the Chigwell plan was rejected by EFDC, sight of it has provided useful information that we may be able to call on in the future.

Without the invaluable support that our planning clerk, Vivienne Messenger who works so hard in keeping on top of all the applications we would have a much harder time. Vivienne is leaving us very shortly to take up a new post as a Democratic Services Officer with EFDC and along with our thanks to her for all her hard work over her time in this role we extend our good wishes for her future in her new position; we will miss her great efficiency in all she does, and her calm and helpful manner.

I would also like to extend my thanks to Cllr Carol Davies, who as well as being town mayor this year has still been a valuable vice chairman; Cllr Phil Abrahams who carries out all the projection of the plans, not an easy task when we want to go back and forth through applications; and to all my fellow committee members for their carefully considered contributions to our meetings. The meetings are frequent and often require us to make site visits before the meeting after we have looked at the plans online at home.

# Recreation

## Cllr David Wixley

**I**'m pleased to report that for the second year running the Council has received awards from the Essex Playing Fields Association. The Roding Valley Recreation Ground and the Willingale Road Playing Field both received Gold awards while our playgrounds at Westall Road and Traps Hill also received recognition. The new Traps Hill playground gained an additional award as the overall winner resulting in the Council receiving a cheque for £500 as well as a voucher, worth in excess of £500, from Wicksteed, which can be used for a new piece of playground equipment. Our thanks go to the designer of the playground, Helen Sephton-Pike, (Area Sales Manager for SMP), and also to the Project Manager, Maria Cooke. It is disappointing that this playground has suffered from vandalism with repairs costing £1,750.

Further expense has been incurred as a result of travellers camping on the Hillyfields Open Space with re-possession legal and clean-up costs amounting to £3,942. Most of the Hillyfields Open Space is owned by the Town Council with a smaller section belonging to the City of London. Discussions between those two bodies have taken place on how to prevent further incursions and, following public consultation, it has been agreed to construct a ditch and a bund. Costs for this work will be shared with the cost to the Council estimated at £1,000. Given time, the scheme should blend in and not be detrimental to the appearance of the site.

Other responsibilities of the Committee include the Willingale Road Nature Reserve and Community Orchard where we are grateful for the work carried out by Epping Forest Countrycare and its volunteers. It was also the venue for a "Mad About Moths" evening with 26 species of moths captured, identified, and released unharmed, including the relatively rare Jersey Tiger moth which is widespread in the Mediterranean but is now being found in the London area.

### On the Roding Valley Recreation Ground:

- 5 noticeboards have been installed and we thank Cllr Tom Owen for providing the orientation maps.
- Park Run events on Saturday mornings are attracting an average of 120 participants.
- The Town Council's annual Charity Fun Run will be held on Sunday 14 May.
- Further hedgerow planting by Epping Forest Countrycare has taken place to screen walls and deter graffiti.
- Tennis coaching sessions, supported by a £400 grant from EFDC, will begin in April; and
- In the summer it is planned to hold basketball sessions.

The Committee has supported community events including skateboarding in conjunction with the Skate Loughton group, Countdown to Christmas held in The Broadway and the Jessel Green Family Fun Day which this year will be held on Sunday 16 July.

### Murray and Kingsley Halls:

- Income for both halls has increased slightly.
- Improvements to the Murray Hall include new furniture for the foyer, a new PA system and replacement flooring in the Gents WC.
- A £400 grant from Essex County Council to provide Wi-Fi for hirers has been secured.
- We continue to monitor activities at the Loughton Youth Centre, adjacent to the Murray Hall.
- Repairs to the Kingsley Hall roof have been undertaken and further improvement work planned.

Finally, I thank my fellow Committee members and members of the Community Centre Working Party as well as the Town Clerk and officers, for their hard work and contributions throughout the year.



# Environment & Heritage

## Cllr Chris Pond

The Committee has continued to deal as fully as possible with issues in its remit, and the following should be particularly noted:

■ **Allotments** – a very high standard in the best allotment competition this year with the winners presented with their prizes at a ceremony at Willingale Road in the autumn. The Pyrles Lane and Roding Road sites had fencing repairs carried out, and the Grow project progressed very well on the Pyrles Lane site where individual plots had become impossible to let some years back.

■ **Bus Services** – the Committee expressed grave concern regarding Transport for London's proposal to curtail bus route 167. We responded vigorously to the consultation, but along with the many hundred other objectors, were ignored with the service to Debden withdrawn in early March. We agreed to progress the installation of a new bus shelter in Traps Hill opposite the Library.

■ **Waste** – we objected to the proposals by Essex County Council to make changes at recycling centres, whereby DIY waste was to be prohibited. These proposals affected both the Chigwell and Waltham Abbey centres, leading to a 25 mile round trip for Loughton residents to the Harlow centre. We thought the changes might also result in an increase in fly-tipping.

■ **Banners in the High Road** – we investigated the possible reuse of the brackets originally installed in 2012 to house the Olympics lamp

column banners in both the High Road and The Broadway, but the company responsible for them wanted to charge far too much for their reuse.

■ **Local Highway Panel projects** – we suggested that Public Bridleway no 14 from Forest Way to Woodbury Hill be surfaced with hoggin or similar to City of London requirements, to facilitate pedestrian and equestrian access, and install posts to prevent vehicle encroachment and avoid obstruction. A salt and grit bin is due to be installed at Shaftesbury.

■ **War Memorial** – the Remembrance Day ceremony passed off well, with excellent organisation. The WWII memorial from St Mary's Church has been given to the Town Council for safekeeping. This joined the WWI memorials from Lincoln Hall and St Mary's already in storage. Consideration would be given to displaying these in Loughton Library.

■ **Environmental Issues** – we have a new standing agenda item that provides an opportunity to discuss concerns and improve the ambience of the town by tackling adverse factors and promoting positive ones. If you know of an eyesore or site that needs attention let us know.

■ **Air Pollution** – there are growing worries about air quality on and around Loughton's busy roads. In line with the Council's existing Environmental Policy we propose to:

- Replace our diesel vehicle with a petrol, electric, or hybrid alternative;
- Exert pressure on EFDC to monitor and publicise vehicle pollution levels in the District; and on Essex County Council to include a requirement in their bus contracts for companies to incorporate anti-pollution measures on their vehicles;
- Cease (after a reasonable period) to pay mileage to councillors and if possible council staff for any diesel vehicle journeys;
- Require as a contractual condition our contractors to install particulate filters on any equipment they use (e.g. in grass cutting, site maintenance, etc)
- Where relevant, request similar conditions in planning consents;
- Join with relevant bodies such as the Conservators and local GPs to reduce the levels of pollution;
- Lobby relevant committees; and
- Encourage residents, when changing their vehicles, to choose the smallest and least polluting non-diesel cars.
- Encourage the provision of charging points for electric vehicles in Loughton.
- Promote these concerns at the forthcoming meeting of the Epping Forest Branch of the ALC and with the EALCs and NALC.

We continue to thank our officers for their encouragement and hard work.



# Resources & General Services

## Cllr Stephen Pewsey

This committee looks after the finances of the Town Council, and monitors our standards and the quality of our public service.

We are committed to the lowest possible precept – that part of the council tax which is allocated to Loughton Town Council – and the highest standards of openness and integrity.

In terms of transparency, the Annual Town Meeting itself is part of the accountability process: the Town Council's magazine Think Loughton goes through the letterbox of all 14,000 homes in Loughton; the Town Council's website has been completely redesigned and relaunched to make it fit for the social media age, the digital generation; and this year the Town Council will be moving to Loughton Library, where it will be more accessible, and fit better with a range of other services as part of a community hub.

In terms of the precept, we have kept it at the same level for the past eight years, at £49.18 per year for a Band D property. Times have been hard for many, and we've made sure that every penny we spend is efficiently used to provide an effective high quality service for the people of Loughton.

In 2017 however, our town faces an unprecedented challenge. The

District Council's draft Local Plan threatens to build houses on our green spaces and on our car parks. A very large public meeting last year and a following Town Council meeting agreed unanimously that we do not want our village greens to be concreted over. We are committed to defending our town by all means necessary, and that costs money. In order to build up a war-chest to fight the plan, we need to increase the precept.

For 2017-18 we have increased the precept to £51.63 per year for a Band D property; an increase of less than 5p a week. Loughton remains a low-tax town, by far the lowest tax town in the district.

The RGS Committee also awards grants to help good causes, and it's been a privilege to partner with the charities and the voluntary sector to help improve town life. These are the people who give up their time and lend a helping hand. These are our friends and neighbours who have made a difference, and we cannot thank them enough.

Finally, on your behalf, I would like to thank my fellow committee members, my Deputy Chair Jill Angold-Stephens, and the Town Council officers, especially the Town Clerk, Enid Walsh, and particularly this year our Deputy Town Clerk, Shirley Haynes for all their work and support throughout the past year.

## Attendance at meetings during the municipal year 2016/17

Committee/ Councillor	Council 8 meetings	Planning & Licensing 24 meetings	Recreation 5 meetings	Environment & Heritage 5 meetings	Resources & General Services 6 meetings
P Abraham	8	17*			
J Angold-Stephens	6	15*			5*
P Beales	8		3	4*	3
R Brookes	6		5*		1
T Cochrane	7	19*		4*	
B Cohen	7	6	2*		
M Dalton	6				6*
C Davies	8	15*	1	4*	
T Downing	6	10*	1		
L Girling	6		2*		
J Jennings	7	1		1	5*
K Latchford	7	17*			
J Mahoney	5				5*
S Murphy	7	16*			
S Murray	8		5*		5*
A Omer	6		3*		3*
T Owen	7			5*	
S Pewsey	7	1	5	4*	6*
C C Pond	8			5*	1
C P Pond	8	1		5*	1
M Stubbings	8		5*		1
D Wixley	8	2	5*	5	6

\* a member of that committee

## Financial Report

£	2015/16	2016/17**
<b>Band D precept figure per household</b>	<b>49.18</b>	<b>49.18</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Precept	586,599	594,600
Local Council Tax Support grant	49,529	40,525
Interest	6,961	5,954
Operating income	143,612	175,922
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>786,701</b>	<b>817,001</b>
<b>Running Costs</b>		
Resources & General Services	179,042	211,367
Environment & Heritage	160,423	158,093
Recreation	496,833	552,994
Planning & Licensing	27,121	30,068
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>863,419</b>	<b>952,522</b>
<b>Summary</b>		
Balance c/forward	386,338	346,555
Add receipts	786,701	817,001
Less payments	863,419	952,522
Transfer to reserves	36,925	98,714
Balance c/forward	<b>346,555</b>	<b>309,748</b>
<b>Total net assets represented by:</b>		
General fund	346,555	309,748
Earmarked reserves	500,841	402,127
Overall balances	<b>847,396</b>	<b>711,875</b>

\*\*Unaudited. For a detailed copy of the accounts please contact the council.

## Members' Allowances 2016/17

The Parish Basic Allowance for 2016/17 is £108 p.a.			
Councillor	Parish Basic Allowance	Travel & Subsistence	Total
	£	£	£
P Abraham	108.00		108.00
J Angold-Stephens	108.00		108.00
P Beales	108.00		108.00
R Brookes	96.76		96.76
T Cochrane	96.76		96.76
B Cohen	0.00		0.00
M Dalton	96.76		96.76
C Davies	108.00	98.82	206.82
T Downing	108.00		108.00
L Girling	108.00		108.00
J Jennings	108.00		108.00
K Latchford	96.76		96.76
J Mahoney	108.00		108.00
A Omer	96.76		96.76
T Owen	96.76		96.76
C C Pond	108.00		108.00
C P Pond	108.00		108.00
M Stubbings	96.76		96.76
D Wixley	108.00	121.05	229.05
J Bostock*	11.24		11.24
M Chalk*	11.24		11.24
H Mann*	11.24		11.24
T Owen*	11.24		11.24
T Thomas*	11.24		11.24
S Weston*	11.24		11.24

\* Term of Office ended on 8 May 2016

The following councillors have renounced their right to claim the allowance: S Pewsey, S Murphy and S Murray

### Councillors list, by ward, during the year 2016/17

#### Alderton Ward

Cllr Philip Abraham  
Cllr Adam Omer  
Cllr Michael Stubbings

#### Roding Ward

Cllr Rose Brookes  
Cllr Mark Dalton  
Cllr Stephen Murray  
Cllr David Wixley

#### Broadway Ward

Cllr Leon Girling  
Cllr John Mahoney  
Cllr Stella Murphy

#### St John's Ward

Cllr Stephen Pewsey  
Cllr Caroline Pond  
Cllr Chris Pond

#### Fairmead Ward

Cllr Carol Davies  
Cllr Kevin Latchford  
Cllr Tom Owen

#### St Mary's Ward

Cllr Philip Beales  
Cllr Barbara Cohen  
Cllr Judy Jennings

#### Forest Ward

Cllr Jill Angold-Stephens  
Cllr Tessa Cochrane  
Cllr Trevor Downing

Contact details for the councillors may be viewed at [www.loughton-tc.gov.uk](http://www.loughton-tc.gov.uk)