



# Annual Report 2018

In May 2017, I was honoured as well as humbled to be elected as your Town Mayor. I feel privileged to have been given this opportunity to serve the community and I have been delighted to help raise valuable funds to support a number of local charities.

The Town Council has again been very busy and this past year was filled with discussions on how to deal with the Local Plan to save Loughton's green spaces. When the Plan was published in December 2017, the Town Council reacted swiftly to submit its official representation. The Town Council also sought professional advice from a specialist planning consultancy to ensure that our representations were presented making a clear planning case.

The Town Council also successfully completed its strategic move to Loughton Library from the offices at Buckingham Court in July 2017. This makes us more easily accessible to the public and helps secure the future of the library. The move went ahead smoothly and the Town Council is now well settled in its new home on the first floor of the Library.

I have had a wonderful year so far. In my official capacity as Mayor I have attended about 75 events. I received a warm welcome wherever I went. I was amazed by the number of people who came up to me or stopped me to have a selfie with me. In Chinese terms, I would like to call this year 'The year of the Selfie'.

My first official event was the Community Fun Day at our precious Jessel Green. Around 2,000 people gathered for this summer event. The day was blessed with glorious sunshine and it was a great day out for the whole family. The event was organised by Loughton Town Council in partnership with Epping Forest Community Church, Restore and the Red Balloon Family Foundation. The fun aspect of Jessel Green turned serious later in the year when Jessel Green was formally included in the Local Plan to build 154 homes. Jessel Green was the focus of everybody's mind throughout the year. It was wonderful how the community got together mainly through social media to take action to Save Jessel Green and Save Loughton's Greens. This battle continues.

The most solemn occasion during my term was the Remembrance Sunday Parade and Service with some of the war veterans and laying the wreath at the War Memorial. This is organised by the Loughton Branch of the Royal British Legion working with Churches Together in Loughton and the Town Council.

This year's Civic Celebration & Citizenship Awards Ceremony was held at the Murray Hall in February. My choice of theme for the celebration was "No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted".

The recipient of the 2018 Citizen of the Year Award was Janet Woods who had been volunteering with the Epping Forest Citizens Advice. Janet led this organisation with dedication as chairman of the Board of Trustees for many years.

The Special Award for Community Service went to Paula Fairlamb and the Loughton Parkrun team. Paula and her team work so hard and sacrifice such a lot to keep the event open even during the worst of the winter weather.

It was a pleasure to have in attendance the Deputy Lord Lieutenant, Lady Rosemary Ruggles-Brise, to present the awards. I was delighted that the Chairman of Essex County Council and Epping Forest District Council as well as several mayors and deputy mayors from our neighbouring towns were amongst the guests.

I have also enjoyed attending performances organised by the Loughton Amateur Dramatic Society, the Loughton Operatic Society and the National Jazz Archive.

The Fly a Flag for the Commonwealth, now in its fourth year, was also celebrated by the council, in order to commemorate friendship and co-operation with fellow Commonwealth citizens around the world. 'Towards a Common Future' was a fitting theme for this year's Commonwealth Day.

I would like to thank Deputy Mayor Cllr Stephen Murray for stepping in whenever I was not available, previous Mayor Cllr Carol Davis for her assistance and all my fellow councillors for their support during my term.

I end my report by expressing my sincere thanks to Town Clerk, Enid Walsh for her support at meetings, Pippa Bryce for diligently keeping my diary and all the other staff for the smooth operation of the council – a real quality gold service from a Quality Gold Council.



## Loughton Town Council

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Town Clerk **Enid K Walsh**

**Cllr Philip Abraham**

Town Mayor

## Planning & Licensing

### Cllr Jill Angold-Stephens

Once again the committee has had a very busy year with 23 meetings and over 400 applications considered of which 19 have been for amended plans. With some applicants actively seeking our comments we have managed to get applications amended so that they fit in better with their surroundings and the neighbouring properties. We have speakers at most of our meetings either for or against applications and sometimes both. We always bring these applications forward in the meeting so that speakers do not have to sit through the whole agenda.

There have also been 9 planning appeals on which we have commented. Some have been rejected and some upheld so we feel that our input has been worthwhile.

There have been 19 licensing applications, some for a change of opening hours and some for the sale of alcohol or extended hours for the sale of alcohol. There have also been two appeals at which a member of the committee attended to put our objections forward.

We take each application, be it planning or licensing, on its merits and if we object this means that the application is likely to be considered by the councillors of the District Council's Area Planning Sub-Committee South instead of being decided by council officers.

Our really important work this year has been around the EFDC Local Plan and our response to this. It was finally published just before Christmas with responses having to be returned before the end of January. EFDC's formal submission of the Local Plan for Independent Examination, originally required by 31 March 2018, has been delayed by a judicial review to be held in late May 2018. When the Plan is eventually examined in public by a Planning Inspector, in order to ensure that we put the best possible case for the town we have sought legal advice. We propose to do this again in preparation for the hearing at which we expect to be represented. In order for the inspector to ask for changes to the plan we have to show that parts of it are not soundly based. This is really important as it will affect how the town develops up to 2033 and it could be of benefit or disadvantage to Loughton's residents. My committee has asked the council to provide extra funding for this work triggering a small increase in the community charge for Loughton Town Council.

Before I finish I should like to pay tribute to our new planning clerk, Debra Paris who has settled well into the position. She provides a presentation of all the applications for us to consider and patiently guides us through our work. I would also like to thank my vice-chairman, Cllr Carol Davies, Cllr Philip Abraham who despite his duties as town



mayor has managed to be present to carry out the projection of plans for our consideration and my fellow committee members for their carefully considered contributions to our meetings.

Finally, I would like to mention the Building Design Award that was considered following a number of applications. It was decided by the judges that as none of the applications totally fulfilled the criteria for the award this year we have instead issued certificates of commendation for two properties.

■ The cottage at 1 Kings Green, part of a terrace designed by Horace White in 1908, had undergone an unsympathetic modernisation in the 1960s. Its new owners have restored it to its 1908 appearance with authentic many-paned windows and a proper bay. The commendation is made in accordance with the 'improving conservation areas' part of the Award Scheme.

■ The Crate, part of the Oakwood Hill Industrial Estate, was recently opened by the Town Mayor and he was most impressed by the way shipping containers had been reused to house some 35 start-up shops and offices including a Costa Coffee to serve the estate. This is a pilot project and the way in which it has been developed providing some ninety employment opportunities is worthy of commendation.

## Resources & General Services

### Cllr Stephen Pewsey

The Resources & General Services Committee manages the Town Council's finances and also makes sure that the Town Council acts openly, transparently and ethically.

Loughton is a low-tax town – a place where it's easier to live and bring up our children, and a place that attracts new business and enterprise. This helps hard-pressed local families and businesses. However, the financial outlook for local government is becoming bleak, and inflation is taking its toll on all our services. Most importantly, Loughton faces the challenge of over-development and the threat to build on our green spaces. We do not want our open spaces concreted over. To defend the town from this threat over the coming months will cost money. So we are increasing the precept by around 5p a week for most households to £53.67 for a Band D property. For around a pound a week, Loughton Town Council continues to invest in a wide range of services which make our neighbourhood a better place; our playgrounds, our allotments, our family events, our community halls, our bus shelters, our street nameplates, our grit bins, to name but a few. Of all the towns in Epping Forest District, Loughton has by far the lowest precept.

While our tax is low, our standards are high. We are answerable to you for the money we spend and for the resources we use. Loughton Town Council sets the standards in audit and accountability. Our books are open and all our actions are in the public domain, and reported online, in our magazine Think Loughton and in the local press.

We believe in our town and the people in it. It is our privilege to work closely with local voluntary groups and charities to make life better for those who need a helping hand. We help fund their projects, ranging from equipment for scouts and guides to days out for the elderly housebound. We support community events such as Loughton Festival. We are proud to be partners of bodies like Citizens Advice Bureau and Loughton Youth Project which are making such a difference in our town. This year, our new apprenticeship scheme shows in a practical way how we invest in Loughton's young people.

We have a wonderful and hard-working team of officers and councillors, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all, especially our Town Clerk, Enid Walsh, and the Deputy Chairman of my committee, Jill Angold-Stephens.

# Environment & Heritage

Cllr Chris Pond



**Environment:** The Committee's views on air quality were progressed through the Essex Association of Local Councils, and endorsed by a large majority at the AGM in Dunmow in September 2017. This was followed by a motion at Essex County Council, whose Place Policy and Scrutiny Committee is currently considering the matter. Air quality has been the subject of numerous high-level reports nationally, and is now generally held to be a serious health and environmental problem, so the Committee is pleased to have set the ball rolling, if only in a small way.

■ **Heritage:** A blue plaque was installed on the former bus garage in Church Hill and one to the Oriole Hospital located in Staples Road was agreed. This brings the total of plaques in the town to 40.

No action ensued from the Committee having pressed EFDC to have the Local List revised, even though the Committee, in effect, offered to do the work. It was agreed to repaint some of the white-on-black Chigwell UDC street nameplates, but sanction for this from EFDC is awaited.

The Committee's CIF bid for illustrating the residence of Sir Jacob Epstein in Baldwins Hill was successful and is awaiting implementation. The Council will support the 2018 Heritage Open Days event in early September. Details of the local properties opening their doors will be publicised later in the summer and it is hoped to repeat the "classic car

rally" which proved so popular with residents.

■ **Allotments:** The Committee noted with approval the success of the GROW project, a community allotment on the Pyrles Lane site managed by volunteer, Anne Redelinghuys on behalf of Restore (part of the Above and Beyond Charity). Lettings on the Willingale Road allotment site have increased thanks in part to the work of Allotment Officer, Pippa Bryce.

To celebrate the improvements in local allotment sites, in addition to the annual Best Allotment awards, a Loughton Horticultural Show is to be held in the Murray Hall on 1 September 2018.

■ **Loughton Cemetery:** A memorial safety testing programme will take place later this year. We appreciate that this is a highly sensitive issue for the public but, following a number of fatal accidents in other parts of the country, the Council needs to assess and manage the risks from the memorials.

■ **Street furniture:** The flower baskets in the High Road and Broadway were much appreciated this year, a riot of colour thanks in part to the cooler weather. Christmas lighting displays were again low-key, but with the contract coming up for review, it is hoped to provide more impact in 2018. Without business sponsorship, our limited budget means that lighting displays in Loughton will never manage to compete with those in nearby London boroughs.



I close my report by thanking my fellow committee members and the council staff for their dedication this year.

## Recreation

Cllr David Wixley

**T**he Committee has met 5 times in this council year and I'm pleased to start my report with details of the community events that we have supported: The Town Mayor's Annual Charity Fun Run; The Jessel Green Family Fun Day; Teens Unite Charity Fun Run; and Countdown to Christmas

Over £4,000 has been collected at these events for the benefit of the following charities:

Essex & Herts Air Ambulance; Redbridge Samaritans; St Clare Hospice; Teens Unite; Chigwell Riding Trust and Breast Cancer Now

### Health & Safety

The Council has a proactive approach to health and safety and our 8 playgrounds and 2 outdoor gyms receive regular inspections by both staff and external qualified inspectors. We have also employed specialists to provide an inventory of the Council's tree stock and to advise on any resulting safety issues. Concern for the wellbeing of our staff has led to the introduction of the lone worker Skyguard system.

I am pleased to report that plans for 4 defibrillators to be installed at various locations in the town are progressing well.

### Essex Playing Fields Association Awards

The Council has again been successful in winning awards for the high standards of our play areas and recreation grounds. The Roding Valley Recreation Ground was the Class 1 winner with the Willingale Road Playing Field receiving a Certificate of Merit. Traps Hill playground was the Class 3 runner-up and both Westall Road and Newmans Lane playgrounds received Certificates of Merit. In achieving these awards we are grateful to Paul Hoy, the Services Manager and his team, and the EFDC Grounds Maintenance staff for their excellent work.

### Roding Valley Recreation Ground

We have continued to promote children's tennis coaching sessions and the Saturday morning Parkrun has proved popular. The introduction of a junior parkrun on Sunday mornings is under consideration. A new activity is walking football also on Saturday mornings. A major issue to be tackled

in the coming months is the refurbishment of the football changing rooms and surrounding car parking area.

### Willingale Road Nature Reserve and Community Orchard

A volunteer day was organised by the EFDC Countrycare team in September with a crop of apples being donated to the Loughton Food Bank.

### Jessel Green

Despite concerns about the future of the Green the annual Jessel Green Family Fun Day will be held on Sunday 15 July 2018. The Green, like the Roding Valley Recreation Ground, will also host the Play in the Park events.

### Memorial Rose Garden, Roding Road

Diseased Box hedging has had to be removed and replaced with Hedge Germander as recommended by the Royal Horticultural Society. We are grateful to those local residents who generously contributed to the cost of this work.

### Kingsley and Murray Halls

Bookings at these popular venues have remained buoyant but it has been decided not to renew the wedding licence for the Murray Hall.

The Committee enjoyed a presentation from EFDC's Community Health & Wellbeing Officers who gave details of the wide range of activities available to all age groups across the district. They plan to meet with local GPs to promote these activities.

I regret to report on two serious cases of vandalism to play equipment; one damaged item has been removed and will not be replaced, while the other one will be replaced with a different, but less vulnerable, piece of equipment.

On a more positive note, I am grateful for the work of four volunteer litter pickers who help keep the Roding Valley Recreation Ground, the Hillyfields Open Space and the Willingale Road Playing Field tidy.

Finally, I thank my fellow committee members and members of our Community Centres Working Party and the Town Clerk and her staff for all their hard work during the last year.

## Attendance at meetings during the municipal year 2017/18

| Committee/<br>Councillor | Council<br>6 meetings | Planning<br>& Licensing<br>23 meetings | Recreation<br>5 meetings | Environment<br>& Heritage<br>4 meetings | Resources<br>& General<br>Services<br>6 meetings |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|--|--------------------------|---|--|
| P Abraham                | 6                     | 19*                                    |                          |   | 1  |
| J Angold-Stephens        | 4                     | 16*                                    | 1                        |   | 4*   |
| P Beales                 | 4                     |  |                          | 3*                                      | 3  |
| R Brookes                | 6                     |  | 5*                       |   | 1  |
| T Cochrane               | 5                     | 21*                                    |                          | 4*                                      |  |
| B Cohen                  | 4                     | 4                                      | 3*                       |   |  |
| M Dalton                 | 6                     |  |                          |   | 5*   |
| C Davies                 | 4                     | 16*                                    |                          | 3*                                      |  |
| T Downing                | 4                     | 14*                                    | 1                        |   | 1  |
| L Girling                | 1                     |  | 1*                       |   |  |
| J Jennings               | 5                     | 2                                      |                          | 1                                       | 4*   |
| K Latchford              | 4                     | 18*                                    |                          |   |  |
| J Mahoney                | 3                     |  |                          |   | 4*   |
| S Murphy                 | 5                     | 18*                                    |                          |   |  |
| S Murray                 | 6                     |  | 5*                       |   | 2*   |
| A Omer                   | 5                     | 1                                      | 3*                       |   | 2*   |
| T Owen                   | 6                     |  |                          | 4*                                      |  |
| S Pewsey                 | 4                     | 2                                      | 1                        | 2*                                      | 5*   |
| C C Pond                 | 6                     |  |                          | 4*                                      |  |
| C P Pond                 | 6                     |  |                          | 4*                                      |  |
| M Stubbings              | 5                     | 8                                      | 5*                       |   | 1  |
| D Wixley                 | 6                     | 1                                      | 5*                       | 4                                       | 5  |

\* a member of that committee

## Financial Report

| £  | 2016/17        | 2017/18**      |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Band D precept figure per household</b> | <b>49.18</b>   | <b>51.63</b>   |
| <b>Income</b>                              |                |                |
| Precept                                    | 594,600        | 634,800        |
| Local Council Tax Support grant            | 40,525         | 27,016         |
| Interest                                   | 5,954          | 2,627          |
| Operating income                           | 175,922        | 153,442        |
| <b>Total receipts</b>                      | <b>817,001</b> | <b>817,885</b> |
| <b>Running Costs</b>                       |                |                |
| Resources & General Services               | 211,367        | 144,340        |
| Environment & Heritage                     | 158,093        | 161,572        |
| Recreation                                 | 552,994        | 483,058        |
| Planning & Licensing                       | 30,068         | 32,821         |
| <b>Total payments</b>                      | <b>952,522</b> | <b>821,791</b> |
| <b>Summary</b>                             |                |                |
| Balance c/forward                          | 847,396        | 711,875        |
| Add receipts                               | 817,001        | 817,885        |
| Less payments                              | -952,522       | -821,791       |
| Balance c/forward                          | <b>711,875</b> | <b>707,969</b> |
| <b>Total net assets represented by:</b>    |                |                |
| General fund                               | 309,747        | 320,242        |
| Earmarked reserves                         | 402,128        | 387,727        |
| Overall balances                           | <b>711,875</b> | <b>707,969</b> |

\*\*Unapproved & unaudited. For a detailed copy of the accounts please contact the council.

## Members' Allowances 2017/18

| The Parish Basic Allowance for 2017/18 is £108 p.a. |                        |                      |        |
|---|------------------------|----------------------|--------|
| Councillor  | Parish Basic Allowance | Travel & Subsistence | Total  |
|   | £                      | £                    | £      |
| P Abraham   | 108.00                 | 37.80                | 145.80 |
| J Angold-Stephens                                   | 108.00                 |                      | 108.00 |
| P Beales  | 108.00                 |                      | 108.00 |
| R Brookes   | 108.00                 |                      | 108.00 |
| T Cochrane  | 108.00                 |                      | 108.00 |
| B Cohen   | 108.00                 |                      | 108.00 |
| M Dalton  | 108.00                 |                      | 108.00 |
| C Davies  | 108.00                 | 13.32                | 121.32 |
| T Downing   | 108.00                 |                      | 108.00 |
| L Girling*  | 91.12                  |                      | 91.12  |
| J Jennings  | 108.00                 |                      | 108.00 |
| K Latchford   | 108.00                 |                      | 108.00 |
| J Mahoney   | 108.00                 |                      | 108.00 |
| A Omer  | 108.00                 |                      | 108.00 |
| T Owen  | 108.00                 |                      | 108.00 |
| C C Pond  | 108.00                 |                      | 108.00 |
| C P Pond  | 108.00                 |                      | 108.00 |
| M Stubbings   | 108.00                 |                      | 108.00 |
| D Wixley  | 108.00                 | 162.90               | 270.90 |

\* Resigned 1st March 2018

Cllrs S Pewsey, S Murphy and S Murray have renounced their right to claim the allowance.

### Councillors list, by ward, during the year 2017/18

#### 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 (until 1/03/18)  
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)