
LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL POLICY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 29th June 2005 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: R E Pearce (in the Chair)
 K E Angold-Stephens L Daniel C P Pond
 M W Wardle J L Woods

Also in attendance:

Councillors: D J Wixley

Officers: L R Fuller (Town Clerk)
 E K Walsh (Deputy Town Clerk)

F64 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Baggarley.

F65 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 6th April 2005 amended at minute no. F56.2 and F58 from those circulated were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

F66 Public Representations

None were received.

F67 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

F68 Matters for Report

68.1 Councillor Finances Check

Councillor Baggarley's report on her financial check was noted.

68.2 Strategy and Staff Group

The Committee NOTED the report from Strategy and Staff Group and that the monthly digest would in future include details of any significant issues affecting the different wards in the town.

F69 Current Financial Position

The report on the financial position at the end of the financial year 2004/05 was noted. Information had been issued showing current bank balances.

F70 End of Year Accounts

70.1 2004/05

The Committee APPROVED the Accounts for 2004/05.

70.2 Asset Valuation

It was NOTED that, to comply with the audit requirements of Band 3 Accounting, a full valuation of the council's property assets will be undertaken, and that the fee will be in addition to budgeted expenditure.

F71 Freedom of Information Act 2000

Details of the amended Publication Scheme as approved by the Information Commissioner were noted.

F72 Annual Report

The Committee commended the Annual Report for 2004/05 and agreed that a similar format should be used for 2005/06. Suggestions were made for some improvements.

F73 Accounts for payment

The following accounts were APPROVED for payment:

Cheque no.	Payee	Purpose	VAT	Gross Amount
2573	Glenny	Buck Crt service charge	105.31	707.10
2574	Arwin Services	Cleaning at Buck Crt & K Hall	109.38	734.38
2575	Avoncrop Amenity Products	Cemetery supplies	2.54	17.04
2576	Epping Forest District Council	Rates; RVRec Ch Rms, K Hall, WRPF Ch Rms, Buck Crt		1,333.00
2577	Zurich Insurance Company	Insurance 05/06 additional premium re K Hall hirers' PL		351.37
2578	Mr H F J Hughes	Repurchase of burial plot		217.00
2579	AtoZ Supplies	Supplies and stationery	22.29	149.75
2580	Homebase Limited	Cemetery, K Hall and Park Warden supplies	6.76	45.33
2581	Hagemeyer UK Ltd	Park Warden supplies	12.82	86.10
2582	Essex County Council	WRPF summer pitch renovation	43.75	293.75
2583	Thames Water Utilities Ltd	K Hall		108.28
2584	British Gas Trading Ltd	Buck Crt	1.46	30.81
2585	Cash	Reimburse petty cash	4.85	54.81
Tfr	No 2 Account (Jun 05)	Reimburse imprest account		16,150.43

F74 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Committee RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the remainder of the meeting under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as the following items contain confidential information relating to staffing and to the council's property affairs.

F75 New Pay Agreement for Clerks

The Committee AGREED to accept the recommendations of the Strategy and Staff Group.

F76 Insurance review

The report was noted and the Committee AGREED to increase the level of public liability cover to £10 million and the legal expenses cover to £250,000 with immediate effect.

Signed.....
Date 28th September 2005

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL POLICY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 28th September 2005 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: R E Pearce (in the Chair)
 K E Angold-Stephens C E Baggarley L Daniel
 J L Woods C C Pond (as substitute for C P Pond)

Also in attendance:

Councillors: M R M A Chalk S M Harper (from Min. no. F86)
 S Pewsey (to Min. no. F91) C P Pond (from Min. no. F91)
 P S Sheen D J Wixley

Officers: L R Fuller (Town Clerk)
 E K Walsh (Deputy Town Clerk)

1 member of the press

F77 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs C P Pond and Wardle. Cllr Pearce reported that Cllr C C Pond had been nominated as Cllr C P Pond's substitute.

F78 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 29th June 2005 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

F79 Public Representations

None were received.

F80 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

F81 Matters for Report

81.1 Annual Communications Awards

It was noted that the Council's Annual Report had achieved fourth place in the Local Council Review Annual Communications Awards and that "Think Loughton" had been highly commended in the Essex Newsletter of the Year competition.

It was AGREED that Cllr Harper should represent the Council at the Essex Association of Local Councils' Annual General Meeting in Chelmsford on 28th September 2005 to collect the awards.

81.2 Strategy & Staff Group

The report of the meeting with Councillor John Knapman of Epping Forest District Council and other discussions was noted.

F82 Current Financial Position

The committee noted the current financial position. Information had been issued showing current bank balances.

F83 Business Plan and Rolling Programme Working Group**83.1 Reserves Policy**

The committee AGREED to recommend the following Reserves Policy to the Council:

- 1 The amount of money held in General and Earmarked Reserves shall be identified at the end of each financial year and reported to Finance and General Policy Committee at the same time as the statutory Statements of Accounts. Where Earmarked Reserves include Capital Reserves and Unspent Loans, they will be specifically identified.
- 2 **Earmarked Reserves**
The council will keep such sums in earmarked reserves as shall be considered necessary to support future expenditure on specific projects or as funds built up towards significant future revenue expenditure or to meet anticipated liabilities.
- 3 **General Reserves**
 - 3.1 The council shall maintain a prudent level of general reserves sufficient to ensure it can meet its on-going commitments, respond to any need for emergency or unplanned expenditure, and overcome any cash flow difficulty which might arise.
 - 3.2 The council will normally aim to maintain general reserves at around 75%, within the range 70 to 80%, of net budgeted annual running costs, excluding growth items and items on which expenditure will be met by use of earmarked reserves.

“Net budgeted annual running costs” means the expenditure which each committee has estimated it will spend on its on-going services in the following year, less the income it expects to receive, after any adjustments to the budgets have been made by the Finance and General Policy Committee for any reason.

“Growth items” are additional discretionary items specifically identified by spending committees.

83.2 Rolling Spending Programmes

The Committee AGREED to adopt the proposed format for committees drawing up their five-year rolling spending programmes.

F84 Epping Forest District Council Agendas and Minutes

The Committee considered the proposed changes to transmission methods for the District Council’s agendas and minutes. It was AGREED to comment that paper copies should be retained especially in libraries and that e-mail alerts should refer to public addresses, not intranet.

F85 Periodic Electoral Reviews

In response to the Electoral Commission’s consultation on Periodic Electoral Reviews, the Committee AGREED the following comments:

1. It is particularly hard to identify community identity in large disparate second-tier authorities comprised of a number of small units each with their own identity.
2. Although there is no official weighting given currently to the criteria, it appears that electoral equality is favoured most strongly at present. The other factors should be given equal weight.

3. In determining the number of councillors to be elected to a local authority care should be taken to avoid gross over or under representation.

Cllr Harper joined the meeting.

F86 Town Future Group

The Committee AGREED that

1. plans should be developed to prepare a Town Design Statement in 2006/07 with a view to commencing work on a Town Plan in subsequent years.
2. a sum of £10,000 would be included in the Committee's Estimates for 2006/07 to assist in the preparation of the Town Design Statement although external sources of funding would be explored.
3. an early meeting with the Head of Planning Services at Epping Forest District Council should be set up to clarify the standing of a Town Design Statement in local planning policy.

F87 Budgets and Priorities for 2006/07

The Committee AGREED to include the provisional sum of £5,000 for the re-design and upgrading of the web-site.

F88 Accounts for payment

The following accounts were APPROVED for payment:

Cheque no.	Payee	Purpose	VAT	Gross Amount
DD	Compuserve	Subscription (August)		16.33
2685	Homebase Ltd	Cemetery supplies	3.36	22.51
2686	Essex County Council	WRPF football pitch maintenance	84.00	564.00
2687	Epping Forest District Council	Rates; RVRec Ch Rms, K Hall, WRPF Ch Rms, Buck Crt		1,333.00
TFR	No 2 Account (Sept 05)	Reimburse imprest account		16,799.08
2688	Thames Water Utilities Ltd	K Hall		83.07
2689	Lloyds TSB Commercial Finance Ltd	RVRec signs	12.29	82.49
2690	Glenny LLP	Buck Crt service charge	105.31	707.10
2691	Cash	Reimburse petty cash		39.35

F89 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Committee RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the remainder of the meeting under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as the following items contain confidential information relating to staffing and to the council's property affairs.

F90 Council staffing

The Committee noted the report.

Cllr Pewsey left the meeting and Cllr C P Pond joined the meeting.

F91 Council accommodation

The Committee discussed the report regarding the provision of additional office and storage space.

The Committee AGREED to suspend Standing Order number 1.4. and AGREED to conclude the meeting by 9.50 p.m.

Cllr C C Pond proposed the following motion, which was seconded by Cllr Baggarley, and requested a recorded vote:

“that the endorsement of the full council be sought to take no further interest in no. 2 Buckingham Court.”

Cllr Woods proposed an amendment to this motion, which was seconded by Cllr Angold-Stephens, to delete “endorsement” and replace it with “view”; delete “to take no further interest in” and replace with “on the possibility or not of acquiring”.

This amendment was put to a recorded vote.

For: 3 Cllrs Angold-Stephens, Pearce and Woods
Against: 3 Cllrs Baggarley, L Daniel and C C Pond

The Chairman made his casting vote in favour of the amendment which was then put to the vote as the substantive motion:

“that the view of the full Council be sought on the possibility or not of acquiring the property no. 2 Buckingham Court”

For: 3 Cllrs Angold-Stephens, Pearce and Woods
Against: 2 Cllrs Baggarley and L Daniel
Abstentions: 1 Cllr C C Pond

The motion was therefore carried.

F92 Sports facilities in Loughton
 The Committee noted the report.

Signed.....
 Date 23rd November 2005

F101 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Committee RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the following item of the meeting under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as it contained confidential information relating to staffing.

F102 Council Staffing

The Chairman reported that the Community Centre Working Party had identified a number of tasks related to the setting up and operation of the Community Centre and considered that an additional part-time temporary member of staff was required immediately. He proposed the council should employ at the earliest opportunity a part-time administrative assistant on Scale 3 (Spinal Column Points 14-17) for two to three days a week for a temporary period of one year, and this was AGREED.

The Committee also AGREED

- i. To employ an additional member of office staff on Scale 6 (Spinal Column Points 26-28) with effect from 1st April 2006 subject to budgetary consideration.
- ii. To employ an additional Handyperson on Spinal Column Point 10 with effect from 1st April 2006 subject to budgetary consideration.

Cllr C P Pond wished her dissent to motions i and ii to be recorded.

The Chairman re-opened the meeting to the press and public.

F103 Essex County Council Community Initiatives Fund

The Committee noted the report. It had no projects for which it wished to apply for funds and agreed to consider the projects put forward by the other committees at its next meeting.

F104 Priorities**104.1 Committee priorities**

The Committee reviewed its priorities and AGREED on the list shown below:

Current Priority	Main Function	Greater Detail/ Current Position
On-going activities		
High	Running the Committee	
High	Admin. for whole council	
High	Council and committee agendas and minutes	
High	All council finances, end of year accounts, audit, risk assessment and management etc	
High	Management of Buckingham Court	
High	Personnel matters, staff management	
High	IT and office equipment	
High	Publicity, website, annual report	
High	Civic matters	
High	New legislative requirements	

High	Responding to consultations	
Appropriate to the matter	Any other matters within the committee's terms of reference	
Current activities	Main Function	Greater Detail/ Current Position
1	New accounts package	
1	Council Structure Review Working Group	Partially completed
1	Data Protection/Freedom of Information Acts	FOI Publication Scheme completed; Records and Information Management Policy and Complaints Procedure required. Data Protection no action
1	Purchase of new computers	Computers purchased. Systems not yet fully operational. Some additional equipment to be purchased
2	Staffing – employment and Health and Safety policies and procedures; employee handbook	H&S policy and some employment policies have been completed; handbook not commenced
2	Council Accommodation Working Party	
3	Spirit of Best Value	No specific work but general principles espoused
4	Investigate bank alternatives	Deposit account improved but no further action on current account
5	Town Future Working Group	

104.2 Council-wide priorities

The Committee reviewed the lists of priorities from the spending committees and AGREED that the Council-wide priority list should be as shown below:

Committee	Activity
Community	Community and Youth Centre
Environment, Heritage and Leisure	New cemetery (Lady Whitaker's Mead)
	Skateboarding facility
	Teen shelters

Cllr Brookes left the meeting.

F105 Estimates for 2006/07**105.1 Income**

The Committee AGREED to increase fees and charges for the hiring of Buckingham Court by 3%. Copying of information for members of the public is to remain at 55p per side of A4 paper.

105.2 Draft Budget 2006/07

The draft budget for 2006/07 was AGREED as below. The Committee also AGREED to the Rolling Programme.

	Income	Expenditure	Transfer from earmarked reserves
Salaries and on-costs		229,000	
Communications		12,000	
Office expenses		7,600	
Press and advertising		2,600	
Subscriptions		2,100	
Buckingham Court		54,600	4,000
Audit & Accounts		10,500	
Insurance		2,900	
Staff travel		1,000	
Members' expenses/allowances		3,000	
Training		2,000	
Legal		500	
Town Mayor's expenses		500	
Election expenses		4,500	
Town Design Statement		10,000	
10 th Anniversary activities		2,000	
Contingency		2,000	
Service Recharge to other ctees	TBC		
Total	0	346,800	4,000

F106 Town Meeting 2006

The Committee AGREED to continue with the same format as in previous years for the Annual Town Meeting scheduled for 28th March 2006 and requested that Andy Adams, Chief Superintendent Divisional Commander Harlow Division, with other representatives from Essex Police, be invited to attend as guest speaker.

The Committee AGREED to suspend Standing Order number 1.4. and AGREED to conclude the meeting by 9.50 p.m.

F107 Programme of Meetings

Following the introduction of substitutes being permitted to attend committee meetings, the Committee AGREED that the requirement, when scheduling the programme of meetings for the coming year, to avoid clashes with meetings of Epping Forest District Council's Area Plans Subcommittee A should be relaxed. However, clashes with the Council meeting should continue to be avoided if possible.

F108 Internal Audit

The report of the internal auditor was noted.

F109 Council Structure Review Working Party

The report of the Council Structure Review Working Party was received and the Committee AGREED to make the following recommendations to the Council:

- i) Delete existing SO 22.1 and replace with
22.1 The following committees shall be Standing Committees of the Council and shall be constituted as shown.

Committee	Number of Members
Resources and General Services	Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor, plus seven other members
Planning and Licensing	Seven members
Recreation	Nine members
Environment and Heritage	Nine members

- ii) In 24.2, second sentence, delete "shall not also be" and replace with "may not serve as".
- iii) In 27, second line, add "of a committee" after "special meeting"
Third line, replace "three" with "four"
- iv) In 28, bold section, replace "less" with "fewer"
- v) Delete Appendix A and replace with

APPENDIX A**TERMS OF REFERENCE OF COMMITTEES**

All committees have delegated power to act on behalf of the Council within their terms of reference, subject to standing orders 21.1(e), 21.2 and 30.

Resources and General Services Committee

The overall purpose of this committee is to ensure that the council's finances, staffing, and its statutory obligations are conducted in accordance with good practice, and to administer services which are not the responsibility of the other standing committees

- 1 To conduct effectively the Council's budgetary, financial and precepting responsibilities in accordance with statutory requirements, and to keep the smooth functioning of the Council's work under review.
- 2 To consider and keep under review:
 - (i) the main objectives of the Council.
 - (ii) all major or overall issues of policy affecting the town.
 - (iii) the development of existing, and introduction of new, services.
 - (iv) the order of priorities as between one service or project and another, and to advise other committees accordingly.
 - (v) relations with principal councils and neighbouring authorities

- 3 To consider the resources available to meet the Council's objectives in terms of land, finance and manpower and to advise other committees and the Council as required.
- 4 To consider the financial implications of the Council's plans and to recommend to the Council levels of expenditure in connection therewith.
- 5 To regulate and control the finance of the Council.
- 6 To consider estimates of this committee and of other committees of income and expenditure on continuing services and payments on capital account for the next and future financial years.
- 7 To review all charges and fees made or proposed by all committees.
- 8 To submit to the Council estimates of income and expenditure of the Council on continuing services and of payments on capital account for the next financial year and make a recommendation as to the precept to be demanded from the District Council.
- 9 To consider and approve as appropriate requests from other committees to incur expenditure greater than already approved by the Council, and also to consider any such requirement in respect of its own expenditure.
- 10 To have charge of the financial and accounting arrangements of the Council.
- 11 To receive reports from the internal and external auditors.
- 12 To approve the annual accounts.
- 13 To consider and decide upon recommendations from service committees for variations in staffing.
- 14 To hold overall responsibility for employment matters.
- 15 To review Standing Orders, terms of reference of committees, terms of delegation to officers and Financial Regulations and recommend amendments to the Council.
- 16 To be responsible to the Council for and review the effectiveness and efficiency of all services which do not fall within the province of any one committee.
- 17 To consider all matters arising in relation to the boundaries of the town, the number of Town Councillors and elections of any kind within the town and make recommendations to the Council.
- 18 To consider any matters affecting members, including members' allowances and the Council's Programme of Meetings.
- 19 To be responsible for the Council's assets, records and archives, and for those of its predecessors.
- 20 To be responsible for council properties such as Town Council Offices and other civic premises (save for council properties reserved to other committees according to their responsibilities).
- 21 To be responsible for publicity matters, including the Annual Report, and to produce a town newsletter.

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- 22 To be responsible to the Town Mayor for press and public relations and civic hospitality and ceremonies.
 - 23 To be responsible for the council's electronic government arrangements, including the council's website
 - 24 To liaise as necessary with the residents of the town by holding community forums.
 - 25 To consider applications for grants and to approve any such grants.
 - 26 To draw up, review and maintain a local emergency plan.
 - 27 To be responsible for expenditure within the limits previously approved by the Council.

Planning and Licensing Committee

The overall purpose of this committee is to ensure informed local knowledge is brought to bear on planning and licensing applications and to convey those views in a timely way to the appropriate authority; and to contribute to the formation of planning policies.

- 1 To consider all applications received for planning consent within the town, other than those emanating from the Town Council itself, and to submit comments to the District Council within appropriate time limits; also to consider any applications for planning consent in adjacent areas where such application would affect the well-being of the town and its residents.
- 2 To consider all appeals against planning refusal, non-determination or the imposition of conditions by the District Council within the town and to submit comments to the appropriate government department.
- 3 To consider any proposals relating to the regional, County or District plans and to submit comments to the appropriate body.
- 4 To consider key development and planning policies and issues and make recommendations to the relevant body or the Council.
- 5 To consider within the appropriate time limits whether to comment on behalf of interested parties to the Licensing Authority on applications for new or amended licences made under the Licensing Act 2003 or for any other licences.
- 6 To consider proposals for street naming and numbering.
- 7 To consider and submit to the Resources and General Services Committee estimates of income and expenditure on continuing services and on capital account for the following year.
- 8 To be responsible for expenditure within the limits previously approved by the Council.

Recreation Committee

The overall purpose of this committee is to discharge effectively and economically the Council's duties in the sphere of recreational and leisure activities and to develop policies in this area.

- 1 To consider and to implement, as appropriate, proposals for the promotion and development of sports, playing fields, recreation grounds, open spaces, and youth facilities.
- 2 To encourage and sponsor arts, recreational, social and cultural activities throughout the town.
- 3 To ensure the proper management of the recreation and amenity facilities provided by the Council insofar as there is no agreement in being for their management by another body.
- 4 To be responsible for matters relating to public and community halls, including those operated by the Council.
- 5 To consider and decide upon matters relating to safety, including home, water and community safety.
- 6 To consider any other general matters relating to the community and welfare of the town, e.g. youth services, health, crime and disorder.
- 7 To maintain liaison with the District and County Councils and other local and regional bodies established for the promotion and/or management of any facilities or activities which fall within the committee's terms of reference.
- 8 To consider and submit to the Resources and General Services Committee estimates of income and expenditure on continuing services and on capital account for the following year.
- 9 To be responsible for expenditure within the limits previously approved by the Council.

Environment and Heritage Committee

The overall purpose of this committee is to discharge effectively and economically the Council's duties in relation to the environment of Loughton and its heritage, and to develop policies in this sphere.

- 1 To consider matters relating to the local environment in general, and to take any action as appropriate
- 2 To keep under review the historical facilities of the town and the need for further development of such activities.
- 3 To consider the amenities of the town generally, and to make recommendations for change as appropriate.
- 4 To liaise as necessary with other bodies on tourism, traffic, and transport, including public transport and road safety, and to make proposals as necessary.
- 5 To consider heritage issues, matters relating to conservation areas and the listing of buildings (except insofar as such matters fall under the remit of the Planning and Licensing Committee) and museums, and to make proposals as appropriate; to administer the Council's heritage plaque scheme.
- 6 To be responsible for the provision and maintenance of public seats, bus shelters and litter bins, and other street furniture as may be decided.

- 7 To be responsible for the operation of Loughton Cemetery and any other cemetery which is the responsibility of the Council.
- 8 To ensure the proper management of the allotment sites provided by the Council insofar as there is no agreement in being for their management by another body and to appoint or remove managers under the Allotments Acts 1908 to 1950.
- 9 To maintain liaison with the District and County Councils and other local and regional bodies established for the promotion and/or management of any facilities or activities which fall within the committee's terms of reference.
- 10 To consider environmental policies and issues and make recommendations to the relevant body or the Council.
- 11 To consider and submit to the Resources and General Services Committee estimates of income and expenditure on continuing services and on capital account for the following year.
- 12 To be responsible for expenditure within the limits previously approved by the Council.

General matters delegated to all committees

- 1 Approval of requests from a member for leave of absence.
- 2 Approval of duties carried out by members, for the purposes of paying allowances.
- 3 Responses to consultations on subjects within their terms of reference.
- 4 Approval of accounts for payment.
- vi) Appendix B
Replace title with
"Right of members of the public to address the Planning and Licensing Committee"
No. 1: First line, delete "Planning"; second line, add "or licensing" after "planning"
No. 4: delete "planning"
- vii) Appendix C
Replace title with
"Right of members of the public to address meetings of standing committees of the Council other than the Planning and Licensing Committee"
No. 1, second line, add "and Licensing" after "Planning"

F110 Accounts for payment

F110.1 The following accounts were APPROVED for payment:

Cheque no.	Payee	Purpose	VAT	Gross Amount
2753	Avoncrop Amenity Products Ltd	Cemetery supplies, Parks & Amenities Warden equipment	16.43	110.27
2754	Acumen Wages Service	Payroll (November)	3.55	23.80
2755	East of England Regional Assembly	Training fees	27.56	185.06
2756	TurfTrax Ground Management Systems Ltd	Report on WRPF pitches	462.88	3,107.88

2757	British Telecommunications Plc	Buck Crt	52.45	352.19
2758	Essex County Council	Occupational Health fees		69.60
2759	Public Works Loans Account	Community Centre		17,849.90
2760	WPP Architects	Community Centre fees	349.65	2,347.65
2761	Printing Supplies	Stationery	1.96	13.16
TFR	No 2 Account (Nov 05)	Reimburse imprest account		16,655.59
2762	Newbury Internet Services	Subscription & domain name renewal	127.75	857.75
2763	Arwin Services	Cleaning at Broadway toilet	14.70	98.70
DD	Compuserve	Subscription (October)		16.48
2764	Browns of Loughton Ltd	Van maintenance	43.33	290.93
2765	Thames Water Utilities Ltd	WRPF/Cemetery/Buck Crt		127.16
2766	British Telecommunications Plc	Cemetery	7.41	49.80
2767	AtoZ Supplies	Cemetery & KHall supplies and stationery	16.35	109.80
2768	Whizzywig Ltd	Newsletter design & printing	205.19	1377.69
DD	Natwest credit card	Diesel	12.37	83.00
2769	B P H Fencing	Tennis court fencing		4,680.00
2770	G Vinning	Christmas lights at Kings Green		250.00

F110.2 The Committee NOTED that the following payment was made between meetings as a matter of urgency:

328	SLCC	Training fees		38.00
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Signed.....
Date 7th December 2005

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL POLICY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 7th December 2005 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: R E Pearce (in the Chair)
 K E Angold-Stephens C E Baggarley L Daniel
 C P Pond J L Woods
 S M Harper (as substitute for Cllr Wardle)

Also in attendance:

Councillors: M R M A Chalk S Pewsey D J Wixley

Officers: L R Fuller (Town Clerk)
 A L Harriss (Administrative Assistant)

2 members of the public

F111 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Wardle. It was reported that Cllr Harper had been nominated as Cllr Wardle's substitute.

F112 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 23rd November 2005 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

F113 Public Representations

None were received.

F114 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

F115 Community Initiatives Fund

Cllr Pearce reported on a meeting of the Epping Forest group set up to consider applications. The Committee considered the proposals from the spending committees. In view of the timescale for submitting applications and the information available to make the application, it was decided that an application would be submitted for £15,000 for equipment for the Community Centre. The Epping Forest group would be informed that this was a "reserve" application in line with their discussions and should not count against an application from the Town Council in future years. Cllr Woods and Harper were nominated to assist the Town Clerk in completing the form.

F116 Estimates for 2006/07

The Committee considered the agenda report, the paper "Alternative Scenarios" which had been made available, and a further paper tabled by the Chairman.

The Chairman reported that the council's tax base for 2006/07 will be 12,701.4. After considerable discussion, it was agreed

1. That the reductions in growth items identified in the agenda would be implemented.

2. For the purpose of establishing the running costs, the cost of new staff would not be included.
3. The budget for the Town Design Statement would be reduced to £5,000.
4. The additional half-post of Handyperson would not proceed.
5. The proposal for a Senior Admin Officer would be reduced by half.
6. £89,228 would be taken from General Reserves to set against the net requirement and reduce the precept, leaving the General Reserves at 71% of running costs.
7. A precept of £570,722 would be recommended to the Council on 11th January 2006.

Concerns were expressed about the long-term viability of continuing to utilise General Reserves towards the running costs of the council.

Cllr Baggarley wished her dissent with items 1, 4, 5, 6 and 7 to be recorded; she abstained from voting on item 3.

Each committee's estimate would be as follows:

Democratic Services Planning	Service charge TBC Service charge TBC			
Finance and General Policy	Income	Expenditure	Transfer from earmarked reserves	
Salaries and on-costs		205,950		
Communications		7,000		
Office expenses		7,600		
Press and advertising		2,600		
Subscriptions		2,100		
Buckingham Court		54,600	4,000	
Audit & Accounts		10,500		
Insurance		2,900		
Staff travel		1,000		
Members' expenses/allowances		3,000		
Training		2,000		
Legal		500		
Town Mayor's expenses		500		
Election expenses		4,500		
Town Design Statement		5,000		
10 th Anniversary activities		1,000		
Contingency		2,000		
Service Recharge to other ctees	TBC	0		
Total	0	312,750	4,000	
Environment, Heritage & Leisure	Income	Expenditure	Transfer from earmarked reserves	
Street furniture & lighting		9,600	3,000	
Allotments	80	1,000		
Roding Valley Rec. Gd.	6,620	109,500		
Playgrounds		20,000		
Open Spaces		13,500		
Cemetery	16,000	46,500	3,000	
Skateboarding facility - Capital costs		33,000	33,000	

Skateboarding facility - Revenue costs		1,000	
Willingale Road Playing Field	2,900	39,100	
Lady Whitaker's Mead/new cemetery		0	
Vehicle/replacement		1,000	
General		500	
Contingencies		2,000	
Service Charge		TBC	
Total	25,600	276,700	39,000

Community	Income	Expenditure	Transfer from earmarked reserves
Forum		200	
Newsletter		7,500	
Millennium Remembrance Grove		600	
Christmas competitions		600	
Christmas lights		3,150	
Noticeboards		1,000	
Kingsley Hall	13,500	18,450	
Comm Centre Capital		50,000	
Comm Centre loan repayments		72,300	
Comm Centre Revenue	15,000	47,000	
Grants		5,500	
CAB grant		4,000	
General Expenses		300	
Contingency		2,000	
Service Charge		TBC	
Total	28,500	212,600	0

Summarised:

Running costs	2006/07	£559,333
Forecast reserves	31 st March 2006	£486,354

Committee	Income	Expenditure
Democratic Services		Service charge TBC
Planning		Service charge TBC
Finance & General Policy		312,750
Environment, Heritage & Leisure	25,600	276,700
Community	28,500	212,600
Use from earmarked reserves:		
Finance & General Policy	4,000	
Environment, Heritage & Leisure	39,000	
Interest	45,000	
Net requirement		659,950
Use from general reserves	89,228	
Precept		570,722

F117 Accounts for payment

F117.1 The Committee AGREED the attendance of Cllrs Harper and Pearce at RCCE training courses on 1st December and 28th November respectively, for the purpose of paying expenses.

F117.2 The following accounts were APPROVED for payment:

Cheque no.	Payee	Purpose	VAT	Gross Amount
2771	EALC	Training fees		86.00
2772	Thames Water Utilities Ltd	RVRec changing rooms		66.81
2773	Arwin Services	Buck Crt & K Hall	109.38	734.38
2774	Homebase Ltd	Lights for cemetery	1.78	11.98
2775	Essex County Council	Community Centre Quality Inspectors' fee	183.65	1233.05
2776	Orion Media Marketing Ltd	Stationery	6.76	45.38
2777	Royal Mail Group plc	Newsletter delivery		902.86
2778	EFDC	Rates; RVRec Ch Rms, K Hall, WRPf Ch Rms, Buck Crt		1,345.81
2779	Cash	Reimburse petty cash		53.43
2780	Repro@96	Christmas cards	12.85	86.25

Signed.....
Date 22nd February 2006

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL POLICY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 22nd February 2006 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: R E Pearce (in the Chair)
 K E Angold-Stephens C E Baggarley L Daniel
 C P Pond M W Wardle J L Woods

Also in attendance:

Councillors: D J Wixley

Officers: L R Fuller (Town Clerk)
 E K Walsh (Deputy Town Clerk)

F118 Apologies for absence

No apologies for absence were received.

F119 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 7th December 2005 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

F120 Public Representations

None were received.

F121 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

F122 Matters for Report

122.1 Town Meeting 2006

It was noted that the Chief Constable of Essex Police together with the Harlow Divisional Commander and the Loughton Inspector had accepted the invitation to attend and address the Town Meeting on 28th March 2006.

122.2 Strategy and Staff group

The Committee NOTED the report from Strategy and Staff Group.

F123 Current Financial Position

The committee noted the current financial position. Information had been issued showing current bank balances.

F124 Programme of Meetings 2006/07

The Committee AGREED the programme of meetings as shown on the Agenda with the amendments to the meetings shown for the 19th and 21st June 2006 that they would be held on a Monday and Wednesday respectively. It was also noted that a date for the Town Meeting 2007 was still to be confirmed.

F125 Accounts for Payment

The following accounts were APPROVED for payment:

Cheque no.	Payee	Purpose	VAT	Gross Amount
2850	WPP Architects	Community Centre fees	349.65	2,347.65
2851	Dax Products Ltd	Cemetery supplies	11.92	80.01
2852	Acumen Wages Service	Payroll (February)	3.86	25.86
2853	Whizzywig Ltd	Newsletter design & production	93.63	628.63
2854	SLCC	Conference fees		305.00
2855	Pinnacle Essex	WRPF grounds maintenance	193.33	1,298.04
2856	Westcoast Ltd t/a Orion Media Marketing	Stationery	5.92	39.77
2857	Homebase Ltd	Equipment for Parks & Amenities Warden, Cemetery & Buck Crt	8.33	55.94
2858	A & E Russell Ltd	Equipment for Parks & Amenities Warden & Cemetery	14.98	100.59
2859	Greenside Landscapes	Works at RVRec & Kings Green	77.87	522.87
2860	AtoZ Supplies	Stationery & graffiti remover	11.19	75.13
TFR	No 2 Account (Feb 06)	Reimburse imprest account		16,506.75
2861	British Telecommunications plc	Cemetery	7.69	51.68
2862	Neil Hickinson	Accounts assistance		577.50
2863	Hugh Pearl (Land Drainage) Ltd	Drainage of WRPF ditches	465.38	3,124.72
2864	Thames Water Utilities Ltd	Re-issued of chq no 2796 Buck Crt, RVRec & WRPF changing rooms		118,29
2865	Loughton Town Council	Transfer of funds to Abbey Business Reserve Account		135,000.00

F126 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Committee RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the following item under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as it contained confidential information relating to staffing.

F127 Salary awards 2006

The report was NOTED.

Signed.....
Date 19th April 2006

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL POLICY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 19th April 2006 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: R E Pearce (in the Chair)
 C P Pond J L Woods
 S M Harper (as substitute for Cllr Wardle)

Also in attendance:

Councillors: M R M A Chalk D J Wixley

Officers: L R Fuller (Town Clerk)
 E K Walsh (Deputy Town Clerk)

F128 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Baggarley and Wardle. The Chairman reported that Cllr Harper had been nominated as Cllr Wardle's substitute.

F129 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 22nd February 2006 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

F130 Public Representations

None were received.

F131 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

F132 Matters for Report

132.1 Strategy and Staff group

The Committee NOTED the report from Strategy and Staff Group.

132.2 Councillor Financial Check

Councillor Baggarley's report on her financial check was NOTED.

132.3 Internal Audit

The report of the internal auditor was NOTED.

F133 Current Financial Position

The Committee NOTED the current financial position. Information had been issued showing current bank balances.

F134 Insurance – reference from Council

The Committee discussed the provision of members' indemnity relating to the Code of Conduct and AGREED to review the matter in six months to allow more research to be undertaken.

F135 Bank Accounts

135.1 Community Centre

The Committee AGREED to set up an additional bank account with NatWest solely for repayments of security deposits in connection with the hire of the new Community Centre with operating restrictions as follows:

- i The Security Deposits account would be operated as an imprest account with a limit of £3,000.
- ii It would be topped up monthly by transfers from the no. 1 account to cover payments made, similarly to the way the no. 2 account is operated.
- iii The account signatories would be two officers from a pool of four. There would be no limit on the payments made, within the limits of the deposits themselves.

135.2 No. 2 Current Account

The Committee AGREED to increase the limit up to which officers may sign cheques for urgent non-payroll items on the No. 2 Account to £100.

F136 Accounts and Audit

136.1 External Audit 2002/03 and 2003/04

The Committee AGREED to

- a) make the necessary technical adjustments to the figures as requested by the auditors
- b) accept the qualification in respect of the comparatives and, if necessary, the Statement of Internal Control of the accounts as the auditors had proposed.

It was noted that the revised accounts will have to be formally agreed by the Committee at a future meeting.

136.2 External Audit 2005/06

Following the increase in the income or expenditure limits for SORP accounts to £1 million, the Committee AGREED to revert to the simpler band 2 accounts for 2005/06 onwards.

F137 Risk Assessment

The Council's Risk Assessment and Management document was reviewed and the Committee considered that no amendments were necessary at this time.

F138 Financial Regulations

138.1 Financial Regulations

The Committee reviewed the Financial Regulations and found them to be satisfactory. It was noted that the names of the committees would be amended after the Annual Council meeting to reflect the new committee structure.

138.2 Financial Limits

In addition to the amendment agreed in F135.2, the Committee AGREED to increase the level of imprest for the No. 2 Account to £25,000.

F139 Accounts for Payment

The following accounts were APPROVED for payment:

Cheque no.	Payee	Purpose	VAT	Gross Amount
2906	Hutton Construction Ltd	Community Centre construction	39,586.15	265,792.64
2907	Essex County Council	Community Centre Quality Inspectors' fee (March)	216.52	1,453.80
2908	EALC	Training fees		250.00
2909	TBS Hygiene	Bin emptying WRPF	10.23	68.73
2910	Signs of the Times Ltd	Heritage plaque	35.53	238.53
2911	Essex County Council	Occupational Health fees		31.00
2912	Arwin Services	Cleaning at Broadway toilet, Buck Crt & KHall	131.08	882.08

2913	Britelec Network Services Ltd	Office equipment maintenance	88.16	591.91
2914	RBS Software Solutions	Accounting software training	51.62	346.62
2915	Newsquest (London) Ltd	Annual town meeting advert	42.35	284.35
2916	EDF Energy 1 Ltd	RVRec changing rooms	29.61	621.81
2917	EALC	Annual subscription 06/07		1,492.75
2918	ICCM	Annual subscription 06/07		55.00
2919	Post Office Ltd	Van road tax		165.00
2920	Broadway Town Centre Partnership	Grants 06/07		550.00
2921	Epping Forest Community Church Youth Group	Grants 06/07		550.00
2922	Epping Forest Explorer Scouts	Grants 06/07		550.00
2923	Epping Forest Youth for Christ	Grants 06/07		550.00
2924	Family Care Counselling Service	Grants 06/07		150.00
2925	Home-Start Epping Forest	Grants 06/07		500.00
2926	Loughton Fencing Club	Grants 06/07		200.00
2927	Loughton FC	Grants 06/07		550.00
2928	2 nd Loughton (St John's) Guides	Grants 06/07		250.00
2929	3 rd Loughton Guides	Grants 06/07		550.00
2930	The Samaritans of Redbridge	Grants 06/07		300.00
2931	Vitalise	Grants 06/07		250.00
2932	Alzheimer's Society	Grants 06/07		200.00
2933	Christian Drama Resource Centre	Grants 06/07		100.00
2934	Loughton & District Citizens Advice Bureau	Grants 06/07		4,000.00
TFR	No 2 Account (Apr 06)	Reimburse imprest account		17,461.72
2935	EDF Energy 1 Ltd	Buck Crt, KHall & WRPF	71.92	682.74

F140 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Committee RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the following items under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as they contained confidential information relating to the Council's property affairs.

F141 Insurance – Annual Review

The Committee CONFIRMED the adequacy of the Council's insurance cover as laid out in the report.

F142 Council Accommodation Working Group

The report of the Accommodation Working Group was noted and the Committee AGREED that discussions with the preferred bidders for the Loughton Hall site should continue.

Signed.....
Date 28th June 2006