

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 27th June 2007 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: J L Woods (in the Chair)
 K E Angold-Stephens C E Baggarley S M Harper
 B W Moore R E Pearce C P Pond
 P S Sheen

Also in attendance:

Councillors: D J Wixley

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

RG78 Apologies for absence

No apologies were received

RG79 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee held on Wednesday 18th April 2007 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG80 Public Representations

None were received.

RG81 Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Pearce, Wixley and Woods declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 7, an application for financial assistance from the Loughton Potato Ground because of their acquaintance with allotment tenants.

RG82 Matters for Report

82.1 Council Accommodation Working Group – Min. no. RG70.2

The Committee noted the response from Essex County Council and AGREED that:

- i) a report be made to Council not to proceed with the proposal for accommodation at the library.
- ii) a meeting of the Council Accommodation Working Group be convened within 8 weeks to consider the points raised in the County Council's response and other outstanding issues.

82.2 Insurance – increase to legal expenses cover – Min. no. RG77

The Committee AGREED to leave the level of legal expenses cover at its current level (£250,000).

RG83 Financial Position

The report on the financial position at the end of the financial year 2006/07 was NOTED. Information had been issued showing current bank balances.

RG84 Application for Financial Assistance

Cllr Harper declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest due to her acquaintance with allotment tenants.

The Committee AGREED to give a grant of £600 to the Loughton Potato Ground, under Miscellaneous Provisions, section 19 of the Local Government Act, 1976.

RG85 Accounts and Audit**85.1 End of year Accounts 2002/03, 2003/04, 2004/05, 2005/06**

The Committee NOTED that the formal receipt of the external auditor's certificates for the above years had been delayed until the accounts had been inspected by quality inspectors at the Audit Commission.

85.2 Internal Audit 2006/07

The Committee NOTED the report and requested that a quotation be sought for an increase to the level of fidelity cover.

85.3 Review of effectiveness of system of internal audit

The Committee considered the detailed report and reviewed the effectiveness of the system of internal audit, including the current system of internal audit, the independence and competence of the internal auditors, the scope of the internal audit and audit planning and reporting systems. A copy of the internal auditor's schedule would be made available to the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Cllr Baggarley for their consideration. It was AGREED that the system of internal audit was satisfactory.

It was noted that, in future, the review of the effectiveness of the system of internal audit will be carried out at the same time as the other major reviews i.e. the spring meeting of the Committee.

85.4 Review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control

The Committee considered the detailed report and reviewed the effectiveness of the system of internal control. It was AGREED that the system of internal control was satisfactory. The Clerk reported that Section 2 of the Annual Return (Annual Governance Statement) should satisfy the requirement for a Statement of Internal Control; if this proved insufficient for the external auditor then the draft Statement of Internal Control presented to the meeting was AGREED.

It was noted that, in future, the review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control will be carried out at the same time as the other major reviews i.e. the spring meeting of the Committee.

85.5 End of year Accounts 2006/07

The Annual Return, the document that forms the council's statutory accounts for the year 2006/07, was considered.

The Committee APPROVED Section One, the statement of accounts; confirmed it is able to answer "yes" to the questions posed in Section Two, the Annual Governance Statement; and noted Section Four, the report of the internal auditor, which had now been completed with "yes" in all the relevant boxes. The Committee also noted the additional information provided which gave a more detailed account of the council's finances.

The Town Clerk offered to provide training sessions for councillors on the accounts if required.

RG86 Strategy and Staff Group

The Committee AGREED that

- (1) The core membership of Strategy and Staff Group will be the Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor and the chairmen of all the standing committees.
- (2) Exceptionally, one or two additional members if specially required may be appointed by the Council if there is a special reason to include that person/those people. There must be a clear rationale stated for inclusion.

It was noted that it is always open to the group to invite a member to a particular meeting if special knowledge, etc. is required.

RG87 Council logo on signage – Min. no. RG74

The Committee AGREED in principle that all new Council property should, where possible, include the Council logo on appropriate signage but that consideration would be given at the time to the associated costs.

RG88 Quality Town and Parish Councils

The Committee considered the suggestion of the Regional Development Officer (Eastern Region) at the National Association of Local Councils to set up a networking group for quality councils. The Committee expressed a cautious interest but also concern about what this would achieve.

RG89 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

RG90 Accounts for payment

The following accounts were APPROVED for payment:

Cheque no.	Payee	Purpose	VAT	Gross Amount
3512	Buckingham Court Property Management Ltd	BCrt service charge	113.52	762.22
3513	East of England Regional Assembly	Subscription 07/08	22.75	152.75
3514	Epping Forest District Council	Rates BCrt, KHall, RV Rec, WRPf and MHall (July)		2,188.00
3515	Pinnacle Essex	WRPF maintenance	91.41	613.74
3516	Acumen Wages Service	Payroll (June)	5.10	34.20
3517	Citygate (London) Ltd	KHall supplies	5.44	36.54
TRF	No.2 account (June 07)	Reimburse imprest account		22,155.53
3518	H Fairhead Ltd	Shrubs for MHall	4.60	36.60
3519	Abbey Fire	BCrt service	8.84	59.34
3520	B & S Chains (Midlands) Ltd	Playgrounds' maintenance	2.47	16.57
3521	Arwin Services	Cleaning of BCrt, KHall & Broadway toilet	131.95	885.95
3522	Select Business Equipment	Stationery	13.13	88.13
3523	Panther Security Systems Ltd	MHall maintenance	21.88	146.88
3524	May Gurney Ltd	MHall fencing works	345.21	2,317.81
3525	Thames Water Utilities Ltd	KHall supply		223.46
TRF	Deposits account	Reimburse imprest account		1,298.54

3526	British Gas Business	BCrt supply	3.07	64.58
3527	Southern Electric	MHall supply	47.42	318.40
3528	Royal Mail	Postage		250.00

Signed.....

Date 3rd October 2007

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 3rd October 2007 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: J L Woods (in the Chair) C E Baggarley (from Min. no. RG93)
 K E Angold-Stephens S M Harper B W Moore
 L Daniel (to Min. no. RG104) C C Pond (as substitute for Cllr C P Pond)
 R E Pearce

Also in attendance:

Councillors: D J Wixley

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

RG91 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr C P Pond. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr C C Pond had been nominated as Cllr C P Pond's substitute.

RG92 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee held on Wednesday 27th June 2007 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Cllr Baggarley joined the meeting.

RG93 Public Representations

None were received.

RG94 Declarations of Interest

Cllr C C Pond declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 9 as he is a member of Essex County Council and Agenda item 12 as he is a trade union safety representative.

RG95 Matters for Report

95.1 Strategy & Staff Group

The report of the meeting held on 23rd July 2007 was NOTED.

95.2 Council Accommodation Working Group – Min. no. RG82

The report of the meeting held on 23rd July 2007 was NOTED.

95.3 Accounts and Audit – Min. no. RG85

95.3.1.1 Accounts audited in accordance with the requirements for "larger" councils as defined in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003

The Committee NOTED that the audit certificates for the financial years 2002/03, 2003/04 and 2004/05 had been received together with an annual audit letter covering all three years.

95.3.1.2 Return to former audit arrangements under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2006

The Committee NOTED that the external audit certificate for 2005/06 had been received.

95.3.2 Fidelity Guarantee – level of insurance cover – Min. no. RG85.2

The Committee AGREED to increase the level of fidelity guarantee cover to £500,000 with immediate effect.

95.3.3 Internal Audit 2006/07

The final internal audit report for 2006/07 was NOTED.

95.3.4 Internal Financial Check

The Committee NOTED that Cllr Baggarley had carried out a check of the income and expenditure for Murray Hall on 23rd August 2007 and found no matters to report.

RG96 Current Financial Position

The financial position as at 3rd September 2007 was NOTED. Information had been issued showing current bank balances.

RG97 Christmas Card Competition

The Committee confirmed the arrangements for the Christmas Card Competition.

RG98 Application for Financial Assistance

The Committee AGREED to give a grant of £900 to the Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership, towards the Christmas lights in the Broadway this year, under section 145 of the Local Government Act, 1972.

RG99 Draft Essex School Organisation Plan 2007/12

The Committee considered the draft plan and AGREED to express concern about the following issues:

Report page no:	Comment
5	The report refers to 3 main urban areas with populations around the 100,000 mark (Basildon, Chelmsford and Colchester), and then implies that the remainder of Essex's citizens live in the county's many relatively dispersed, rural communities. This description is not appropriate to towns like Loughton.
6	The map of the districts and major towns in Essex shows Chigwell, Epping and Waltham Abbey in the Epping Forest District. The Council considers that Loughton is a major town as it has a population of over 30,000, and therefore should be shown on the map.
124	The housing development data report for the Epping Forest College site needs to be updated to reflect that building work has already commenced on the 268-unit housing development.

RG100 National Honours Awards

It was AGREED that the council should get involved in nominating individuals for honours; the next meeting of the Committee would consider the process and report to the Council meeting in January 2008.

RG101 Think Loughton

The Clerk reported on negotiations for the design and printing of the newsletter; a further report with an opportunity to review the publication would be made to the next meeting.

RG102 Health and Safety Policy

The Committee reviewed the Health and Safety Policy agreed by the Council on 14th April 2004 but did not consider any changes necessary at this time. However, it was agreed to consider the status of associated matters in the review of priorities for 2008/09 at the next meeting.

RG103 Parish Basic Allowance

The Committee AGREED to recommend to the Council to increase the Parish Basic Allowance to £104 per annum with effect from 1st April 2008.

RG104 New Code of Conduct – Standing Orders

Following the adoption of the new Code of Conduct, the Committee RECOMMENDED to the council that the following amendments be made:

Standing Order 4.3

Renumber sub-clauses (c) and (d) as (b) and (c) respectively.

Renumber sub-clause (b) as (d).

Delete (former) 4.3.b.i; replace with:

To adjourn the meeting to permit members of the public, on request, to address the meeting in relation to any business to be transacted at that meeting, for a period not exceeding fifteen minutes (save in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting).

Standing Order 33

Amend date to 12th July 2007.

Standing Order 34

Delete the first paragraph of existing Standing Order 34.2 and replace with:

If a member who has declared a personal interest then considers the interest to be questions or give evidence relating to that business and immediately after must withdraw from the chamber for the remainder of the consideration of the item to which the interest relates, unless.....

Appendix C

Delete section 2; replace with:

The meeting shall be adjourned to hear any such representations after the signing of the minutes, for a period not exceeding fifteen minutes (save in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting).

Cllr L Daniel left the meeting.

RG105 Payment of Accounts Procedure

The Committee agreed that the proposed new procedure for the payment of accounts should be adopted and RECOMMENDED to the Council that the following changes to the Financial Regulations be made:

1 New 5.4, re-number subsequently:

The operational parameters of any further accounts to be operated by the council shall be set by the RGS Committee. Accounts which are operated by the council and on which officers are signatories shall be operated on an imprest basis at a figure to be set and reviewed as necessary by the RGS Committee.

2 Amend (existing) 5.4:

Replace "(except the no. 2 account)" in line one with "(except any accounts on which officers are signatories)"; replace "the no. 2 account" in line two with "any accounts on which officers are signatories".

3 Delete 6.3 and replace with:

A schedule of accounts for payment will be drawn up on a regular basis. Cheques will be written and signed in accordance with the schedule.

4 In 6.5:

Delete "initial the cheque counterfoils" and replace with "sign the schedule".

5 New 6.6 and re-number subsequently:

A report of the total of payments made since the last meeting will be made to RGS Committee. The schedules of accounts for payment included in that total and information to support the payments will be available for inspection at the meeting.

6 (Existing) 6.6:

Delete all before first comma and insert "If an urgent payment is necessary"; delete "and shall report the payments to the next appropriate meeting".

The Committee also RECOMMENDED that the Council should be asked to suspend Standing Order no 18 to allow implementation of the new procedure without delay.

The Committee noted that it was not necessary for the two councillor signatories to attend at the same time.

RG106 Budgets and Priorities for 2008/09

The Committee requested that an entry for council accommodation be included in the budget preparation for 2008/09.

RG107 Future Work of the Committee

The Committee suggested the following topics for future consideration:

- i Green and ethical policies: Cllrs C C Pond, Wixley and Woods agreed to draft some thoughts for consideration by each of the committees.
- ii The relationship of the Town Council with the new Epping Forest District Youth Council; Cllr Woods would prepare a paper.

RG108 Accounts for payment

108.1 The Committee NOTED the following cheque, which had been signed between meetings as a matter of urgency.

Cheque no.	Payee	Purpose	VAT	Gross Amount
3636	Public Works Loans Account	Murray Hall loan repayment		18,295.62

108.2 The following accounts were APPROVED for payment:

Cheque no.	Payee	Purpose	VAT	Gross Amount
3637	A F Woodward & Sons	Building Maintenance at RVRec & WRPF changing rooms	80.50	540.50
3638	British Gas Business	BCrt supply	0.25	5.27
3639	Citygate (London) Ltd	Stationery & Cemetery supplies	4.12	27.65
3640	Deltagate Ltd	MHall electrical works	121.83	818.03

3641	EALC	Training		50.00
3642	Essex County Council	Personnel services		54.00
3643	EDF Energy 1 Ltd	BCrt supply	67.22	451.34
3644	Epping Forest District Council	Rates BCrt, KHall, RVRec, WRPF, & MHall (October)		2,188.00
3645	Hagemeyer (UK) Ltd	PAW equipment & supplies	7.46	50.04
3646	May Gurney Ltd	MHall fencing works	1,355.33	9,100.08
3647	Pinnacle Essex	Football works at WRPF	43.75	293.75
3648	Regional Waste Recycling (Commercial) Ltd	Refuse collection for KHall, Cemetery & MHall	46.68	313.28
3649	Royal Mail	Postage		250.00
3650	Safeplay Playground Maintenance Services Ltd	Maintenance at Colebrook Lane, Felstead Road, Hillyfields, Newmans Lane, Traps Hill and Westall Road playgrounds	1,027.49	6,898.79
3651	SMS Cleaning Services	Window cleaning at MHall		100.00
3652	Southern Electric	MHall supply	47.42	318.40
TFR	No 2 account (Sept 07)	Reimburse imprest account		21,860.85
DD	NatWest (credit card)	Diesel and MHall, BCrt & PAW supplies	14.46	108.11

Signed.....
Date 21st November 2007

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 21st November 2007 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: J L Woods (in the Chair)
 C E Baggarley L Daniel S M Harper
 R E Pearce C P Pond P S Sheen
 S Pewsey (as substitute for Cllr B W Moore)

Also in attendance:

Councillors: M R M A Chalk

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

RG109 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs K E Angold-Stephens and B W Moore. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Pewsey had been nominated as Cllr Moore's substitute.

RG110 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee held on Wednesday 3rd October 2007 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG111 Public Representations

None were received.

RG112 Declarations of Interest

Cllr C P Pond declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda items 5.1 and 11.2 as she is a member of Epping Forest District Council.

RG113 Matters for Report

113.1 Strategy & Staff Group

The report of the meeting held on 16th October 2007 was NOTED.

113.2 Council Accommodation Working Group – Min. no. RG82

The report of the visit to Croft House was NOTED.

113.3 Christmas Card Competition – Min. no. RG97

It was NOTED that the prizes would be presented prior to the next meeting of the committee on 12th December 2007.

113.4 Draft Essex School Organisation Plan 2007/12 – Min. no. RG99

The Committee NOTED that Essex County Council had adjusted the plan in the light of the council's comments.

113.5 Financial Assistance

The Committee AGREED to re-absorb the award of £750 from the 2007/08 grants budget to the Royal British Legion Loughton into the available funds for any further applications received in 2007/08.

RG114 Current Financial Position

The financial position as at 31st October 2007 was NOTED. Information had been issued showing current bank balances.

RG115 National Honours Awards – Min. no. RG100

The Committee considered the process for nominating individuals for honours and AGREED the following:

- i to invite councillors to put forward names and reasons before the next meeting on 13th February 2008.
- ii if nominations were received, the Committee would set up a working party to consider them and make its recommendations to the meeting on 9th April 2008.

RG116 Think Loughton**116.1 Future costs – Mon. no. RG101**

The report was NOTED and the costs agreed. It was AGREED to defer the review of the publication to the meeting on 13th February 2008.

116.2 Newsletter of the Year Award

The Committee AGREED to use the prize money from the award by making the following grants:

- i To make an award of £50 for the youth prize in the Loughton Festival 2008.
- ii To provide £300 in support to Essex County Council Youth Services to mount an event for young people in the Murray Hall.

RG117 LINKs Consultation

The consultation on Local Involvement Networks for Health and Social Care was considered but the Committee did not wish to comment at this time.

RG118 Health Consultation

The Committee AGREED that the proposals for the combination of the Walk-in Centre and the Accident and Emergency Department were a good idea. However, concern was expressed that whilst there was currently ample parking for the walk-in centre at its present location, it was not clear whether the additional parking required by the merger would be managed on the already congested hospital site.

The Committee would welcome a walk-in centre for Loughton sited at health centre buildings in Old Station Road or Rectory Lane.

RG119 References from Council**119.1 Local Strategic Partnership**

The Committee discussed the possible involvement of the council in the partnership action groups and decided to take no action at present. As individuals can attend action groups, any councillors doing so were requested to inform the council.

119.2 Town Centre Enhancement

The Committee discussed the motion referred from council and the views expressed by the Environment and Heritage Committee. It was AGREED that this council expresses extreme concern over the current uncertainty surrounding the Loughton High Road Enhancement Scheme and the apparent lack of a comprehensive forward plan by Epping Forest District Council indicating when the final stages will be progressed.

It also expresses dismay over the apparent lack of progress and coordination in respect of the Broadway Town Centre Enhancement Scheme.

It authorises the Town Clerk to write to the Leader and Chief Executive of Epping Forest Council to convey this message and to request that the Town Council be informed of the current position in respect of both of these incomplete projects.

Additionally the Clerk is to communicate to Epping Forest District Council and Essex County Council that, if there is to be no short term completion of the Loughton High Road Enhancement Scheme, the Town Council would like to see a joint approach between it, Epping Forest District Council and Essex County Council to improve this part of the town by (a) renewing the pavements between The Drive and the vehicular side entrance to the Methodist Church, and (b) removing the Brooklyn Parade phase from the traffic signals at the High Road's junction with Brooklyn Avenue.

Epping Forest Council is to be informed that the council fully supports the enhancement of the Broadway, but wishes to request that the Town Council be represented by two town councillors at the highest possible level on any District Council group looking at the amended proposals.

RG120 Christmas Closure

The Committee AGREED that council services should cease for the whole of Monday 24th December 2007 and that the staff be given the whole day as special leave.

RG121 Annual Town Meeting 2008

The Committee considered the format of the Annual Town Meeting to be held on 19th March 2008 and AGREED to invite representatives from Essex Police in the form of Chief Superintendent Tim Stokes, Western Divisional Commander and Chief Inspector Ivor Harvey, Epping Forest District Commander, and to request them to speak on the future policing of Loughton, taking on board a report of the action taken to deal with the high level of street disorder experienced in the town during 2007. The meeting would be held at the Murray Hall.

RG122 Society of Local Council Clerks

The Committee AGREED to pay for the Town Clerk's membership of the Institute of Local Council Management, a new initiative set up by the Society of Local Council Clerks and to consider the Deputy Town Clerk's membership of the society at the next meeting.

RG123 Committee Priorities

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

Revised 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 etc	
High		Management of Buckingham Court	
High		Personnel matters, staff management	
High		IT and office equipment	
High		Publicity and website	
High		Civic matters	
High		Annual Report	Preparation and printing
High		Newsletter	Editorial, printing and distribution
High		Annual Town Meeting	Arrangements and admin
High		Christmas card competition	Arrangements and admin
High		Emergency Plan	Amendments and circulation (carried out through digest)
High		Grants	Admin and finance
Medium		Noticeboards	Maintenance
High		New legislative requirements	
High		Responding to consultations	Variable
High		Any other matters within the committee's terms of reference	
Current activities			
High	1	Staffing – employment and Health and Safety policies and procedures; Fire Risk Assessments; employee handbook	H&S policy and some employment policies have been completed; handbook not commenced
High	2	Seeking external funding sources	Limited action
High	3	Data Protection/Freedom of Information Acts	FOI Publication Scheme completed; Records and Information Management Policy and Complaints Procedure required. Data Protection: no action
High	4	Council accommodation	Review and research
Medium		Investigate bank alternatives	Deposit account improved but no further action on current account
Medium		Honours proposals	
Low		Noticeboards	Installation

RG124 Estimates 2008/09**124.1 Fees and Charges**

The Committee AGREED that

- i the hire fees for Buckingham Court should increase in line with the rate of inflation.
- ii the price per sheet of A4 for items on the Publication Scheme should increase to 60p.

The Committee also AGREED to the revised Rolling Programme distributed at the meeting.

124.2 The estimates for 2008/09 were AGREED as follows:

Cost centre		2007/08			2008/09	
		Annual Budget	Forecast / Committed	Transfer from Earmarked Reserves	Estimate 2008/09	Transfer from Earmarked Reserves
Communication	Expenditure	15,500	15,703		18,500	
Office expenses	Expenditure	9,400	8,921		10,500	
Audit & accounts	Expenditure	2,700	2,959		3,550	
Central personnel	Expenditure	223,450	204,560		238,000	
Council expenses	Expenditure	10,950	10,839		12,750	
Other services	Expenditure	21,500	21,500		36,500	15,000
Members' expenses	Expenditure	3,000	1,455		3,000	
Buckingham Court	Expenditure	52,500	51,462		53,500	
	Income	0	33			
Grants	Expenditure	11,300	11,300		11,500	
Recharge to Murray Hall	Expenditure		-16,000		-17,000	
Service re-charge	Expenditure	-193,500	-193,500		TBC	
Expenditure		156,800	119,199	0	370,800	15,000
Income			33	0		
Net Expenditure over Income		156,800	119,166		370,800	15,000
Net Expenditure over Income*		156,800	119,166		355,800	

*Including transfers from Earmarked Reserves

RG125 Future Work of the Committee

The Committee AGREED to consider at the meeting of the committee to be held on 13th February 2008:

- i the installation of a Chairmen's board; Cllr C P Pond to provide a paper.
- ii a chain of office for the Town Mayor; Cllr Harper to provide a paper.

RG126 Accounts Paid

It was NOTED that payments totalling £9,456.79 in accordance with payment schedule no. 1 had been made since the new accounts for payment procedure was introduced following the council meeting on 17th October 2007, and that the payment schedules and the accompanying invoices were available for inspection at the meeting.

RG127 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 item contained confidential information relating to employment matters.

RG128 Annual Staffing Review**128.1 Overall Review**

The Committee AGREED to the following:

- i that a consultant should be engaged to carry out a review of the council's staffing.
- ii that the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee with the Town Clerk should (a) prepare the review's terms of reference for agreement at the next committee meeting to be held on 12th December 2007 and (b) research for potential consultants with recommendations to be agreed by a special Resources and General Services Committee meeting to be held prior to full Council on 9th January 2008.

128.2 Interim regradings

The Committee AGREED to implement the recommendation for interim regradings, separate from the overall staffing review, to apply from 1st April 2008.

Signed.....

Date 12th December 2007

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 12th December 2007 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

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

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

RG129 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs K E Angold-Stephens, C E Baggarley, L Daniel, B W Moore and C P Pond. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Wixley had been nominated as Cllr Pond's substitute.

RG130 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee held on Wednesday 21st November 2007 amended at Min. no. 119.2 from those circulated were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG131 Public Representations

None were received.

RG132 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

RG133 Council-wide Priorities

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

Ranking	Committee	Activity
1	Recreation	RV Rec Ground legal status
2	Resources & General Services	Staffing – employment and Health & Safety policies and procedures; Fire Risk Assessments; employee handbook
3	Resources & General Services	Seeking external funding sources
4	Recreation	Skateboard facility
5	Environment & Heritage	New cemetery (Lady Whitaker's Mead)

The Chairman of the Recreation Committee requested that should the lease for the Roding Valley Recreation Ground be completed the Committee be allowed the opportunity to review its priorities.

RG134 Estimates for 2008/09

The Committee considered the agenda report and it was AGREED that:

1. £89,960 would be taken from General Reserves to set against the net requirement and reduce the precept, leaving the General Reserves at 77.55% of running costs.

2. A precept of £613,000 would be recommended to the Council on 9th January 2008.

Each committee's estimate would be as follows:

Resources and General Services		Estimate 2008/09	Transfer from Earmarked Reserves
Communication	Expenditure	18,500	
Office expenses	Expenditure	10,500	
Audit & accounts	Expenditure	3,550	
Central personnel	Expenditure	238,000	
Council expenses	Expenditure	12,750	
Other services	Expenditure	36,500	15,000
Members' expenses	Expenditure	3,000	
Buckingham Court	Expenditure	53,500	
Grants	Expenditure	11,500	
Recharge to Murray Hall	Expenditure	-17,000	
Service re-charge	Expenditure	-196,600	
Expenditure		174,200	15,000
Income			
Net Expenditure over Income		174,200	15,000
Net Expenditure over Income (Including transfers from Earmarked Reserves)		159,200	

Environment and Heritage		Estimate 2008/09	Transfer from Earmarked Reserves
Christmas BDW competitions	Expenditure	450	
Cemetery-Church Lane	Expenditure	48,600	
	Income*	15,000	4,000
Street furniture	Expenditure	18,820	2,000
Allotments	Expenditure	1,000	
	Income	90	
Lady Whitakers Mead/new cemetery	Expenditure	7,500	
Other services	Expenditure	3,000	500
Service Re-charge (EH)	Expenditure	69,100	
Expenditure		148,470	
Income		15,090	6,500
Net Expenditure over Income		133,380	
Net Expenditure over Income (Including transfers from Earmarked Reserves)		126,880	

Recreation Committee		Estimate 2008/09	Transfer from Earmarked Reserves
Kingsley Hall	Expenditure	26,000	
	Income	14,000	
The Murray Hall	Expenditure	151,600	
	Income	45,000	
Other Services (Rec)	Expenditure	2,300	
Service Re-charge (Rec)	Expenditure	107,500	
Roding Valley Rec Ground	Expenditure	152,000	
	Income	5,620	
Open Spaces	Expenditure	17,000	
Playgrounds	Expenditure	27,000	
Skateboard Facility	Expenditure	39,000	
	Income		36,000
Will. Rd. Playing Field	Expenditure	18,900	
	Income	800	
Van replacement fund	Expenditure	2,000	
Expenditure		543,300	0
Income		65,420	36,000
Net Expenditure over Income		477,880	
Net Expenditure over Income (Including transfers from Earmarked Reserves)		441,880	

Planning and Licensing		Estimate 2008/09	Transfer from Earmarked Reserves
Town Design Statement	Expenditure	15,000	
	Income		10,000
Service Re-charge (PL)	Expenditure	20,000	
Expenditure		35,000	10,000
Net Expenditure over Income		25,000	

Summarised:

Running costs	2008/09	£590,710
Forecast reserves	31 st March 2008	£548,082

Committee	Income	Expenditure
	£	£
Resources and General Services	0	174,200
Environment and Heritage	15,090	148,470
Recreation	65,420	543,300
Planning and Licensing	0	35,000
Total		900,970
		80,510
Interest	50,000	
Use from earmarked reserves		
Resources and General Services	15,000	
Environment & Heritage	6,500	
Recreation	36,000	
Planning and Licensing	10,000	
Use from general reserves	89,960	
		207,460
Council Precept		613,000

RG135 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 item contained confidential information relating to employment matters.

RG136 Staffing Review

The Committee AGREED to the following:

- i the terms of reference for the review.
- ii the appointment of Richard Walden Associates to carry out the review.
- iii the timetable for the review.

Signed.....

Date 13th February 2008

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 13th February 2008 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: J L Woods (in the Chair)
 K E Angold-Stephens C E Baggarley S M Harper
 B M Moore R E Pearce P S Sheen
 D J Wixley (as substitute for C P Pond)

Officers: L R Fuller (Town Clerk)
 J Innis (Committee Clerk)

3 members of the public

RG137 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs L Daniel and C P Pond. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Wixley had been nominated as Cllr C P Pond's substitute.

RG138 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee held on Wednesday 12th December 2007 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG139 Public Representations

The meeting was adjourned to hear addresses by two members of the public regarding applications for financial assistance from Action in Mental Health (AIM) and Ignite.

RG140 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Moore declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda item 12, the application for financial assistance for Epping Forest Youth for Christ because of his links with the organisation.

Cllrs Harper, Pearce, Wixley and Woods declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 12, the application for Loughton Potato Ground as they knew some of the users of the facility.

Cllrs Harper and Moore declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 12, the application for financial assistance for the Loughton Stroke Club as they knew some of the volunteers involved with the Club.

Cllr Harper declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 12, the application for St. Mary's Church as a user of the parish centre.

Cllr Woods declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 12, the application for financial assistance for Loughton and District Citizens' Advice Bureau as the council's representative on the Management Committee.

RG141 Matters for Report

141.1 Strategy and Staff Group

The Committee noted the report of the Strategy and Staff Group.

141.2 Christmas Card Competition 2007

The Committee noted the report and it was agreed that when councillor volunteers were sought to distribute application forms, they could suggest some further organisations.

141.3 Annual Town Meeting – Min. no. RG121

The Committee noted the report and it was agreed to invite Caroline Wiggins, the Epping Forest Safer Communities Co-ordinator, who had expressed an interest in attending.

141.4 Society of Local Council Clerks – Min. no. RG122

The Committee AGREED to pay for the Deputy Town Clerk's membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks, and the professional body, Institute of Local Council Management.

RG142 Current Financial Position

The financial position as at 31st January 2008 was circulated at the meeting and was NOTED. The version published in the Agenda had been incorrect. Information had been issued showing current bank balances.

RG143 Internal Audit

The Committee noted the report.

RG144 Chain of Office

The Clerk reported on the progress of her investigations into prices and styles. The Committee voted in principle to purchase a chain of office subject to more information and requested the Clerk to obtain more figures.

RG145 Perpetual Calendar for Christmas Service Closure Arrangements

The Committee noted the report and it was AGREED to adopt the perpetual calendar.

RG146 Meetings Schedule

The Committee AGREED the programme of meetings as shown on the agenda.

RG147 Consultation on Orders and Regulations relating to the Conduct of Local Authority Members in England

The Committee noted the report but had no comments to make on the consultation.

RG148 Requests for Financial Assistance**148.1 General Applications**

Cllr Moore withdrew from the meeting during discussions on the amount of financial assistance for Epping Forest Youth for Christ.

148.2 It was noted that £1,900 of the budget for 2007/08 remained available; up to this amount would be utilised for the 2008/09 applications.

The Committee RESOLVED to make the following contributions from the scheme by granting financial assistance to:

Organisation	Amount granted £	Power
Action in Mental Health (AIM)	500	LGA 1972 s145
Epping Forest Youth for Christ	1,000	LGA 1972 s145
Home-Start Epping Forest	1,000	LGA 1972 s137
Ignite	1,000	LGA 1972 s145
Kidz Club	600	LGA 1972 s145
Loughton Potato Ground	400	LG(Misc Prov)A 1976 s19
Loughton Stroke Club	250	LGA 1972 s137

Vitalise	180	LG(Misc Prov)A 1976 s19
Workers' Educational Association Loughton & Epping Branch	140	LGA 1972 s145
St Clare Hospice	400	LGA 1972 s137

The applications from Christian Drama Resource Centre and St. Mary's Church Job and Computer Club were unsuccessful in receiving a grant.

The Committee AGREED to suspend Standing Order number 1.4. and AGREED to conclude the meeting by 10.00 p.m.

148.3 Loughton and District Citizens' Advice Bureau

Councillor Woods offered some information about the work and finances of the Citizens' Advice Bureau and then withdrew from the meeting.

The Committee AGREED to grant £4,000 to the Loughton & District Citizens' Advice Bureau and to consider increasing the amount when drawing up the budgets for 2009/10.

Councillor Woods rejoined the meeting.

RG149 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

RG150 Accounts Paid

It was NOTED that payments totalling £238,682.17 in accordance with payment schedules nos. 2 to 6 had been made and that the payment schedules and the accompanying invoices were available for inspection at the meeting.

RG151 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 contained confidential information relating to staffing and ceremonial matters.

RG152 Annual Pay Award

The Committee noted the report.

RG153 Local Government Pension Scheme

The Committee noted the report and approved the contributions policy.

RG154 Nomination for Honours – Min. no. RG115

The Committee did not wish to make any nominations at this time.

Signed.....
Date 9th April 2008

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Special Meeting held on Wednesday 5th March 2008 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: J L Woods (in the Chair)
 C Baggarley R Barratt (as substitute for K E Angold Stephens)
 L Daniel S M Harper B W Moore
 R E Pearce C C Pond (as substitute for C P Pond)

Also in Attendance

Councillors: K E Angold-Stephens (during Min. No. 160) R E Brookes
 M R M A Chalk J Davis S Pewsey
 D J Wixley

Officers: L R Fuller (Town Clerk) (to Min. no. 159)

RG155 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs K E Angold-Stephens and C P Pond. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr R Barratt had been nominated as Cllr K E Angold-Stephens' substitute and Cllr CC Pond had been nominated as Cllr C P Pond's substitute.

RG156 Public Representations

None were received.

RG157 Declarations of Interest

Cllr C C Pond declared a personal but non prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6 as a member of Essex County Council, the administering authority of the pension scheme.

RG158 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 item contained confidential information relating to staffing matters.

RG159 Staffing Review

The Committee considered the report of Richard Walden Associates and the supplementary report of the Chairman following the informal meeting held on 4th March 2008. The Chairman's report was agreed with some amendments, and this would be put to the Special Meeting of the Council on 12th March 2008.

Cllr K Angold-Stephens joined the meeting towards the end of this item.

Signed.....
Date 9th April 2008

THESE MINUTES NOT YET CONFIRMED

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 9th April 2008 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.

Present:

Councillors: J L Woods (in the Chair)
 K E Angold Stephens C E Baggarley S M Harper
 B W Moore R E Pearce C P Pond
 P S Sheen

Also in Attendance

Councillors: D J Wixley

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

1 member of the public

RG160 Apologies for absence

No apologies for absence were received.

RG161 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee held on Wednesday 13th February and Wednesday 5th March 2008 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG162 Public Representations

A member of the public with an interest in a financial assistance application addressed the Committee.

RG163 Declarations of Interest

None were received.

RG164 Matters for Report

164.1 Remuneration Scheme – Min no. F240

The Committee NOTED that Epping Forest District Council's Remunerations Panel had supported the recent change in Parish Basic Allowance agreed by the town council.

164.2 Schedule of Meetings – Min. no. RG146

The report was noted.

164.3 Internal Audit – Interim Report 2007/08

The report was noted.

RG165 Financial Assistance

165.1 Financial Assistance 2007/08

The Committee AGREED to pay the award to the Loughton Branch of the Royal British Legion from the remaining 2007/08 budget and the £350 balance from the 2008/09 budget.

165.2 Home-Start Epping Forest Branch

The Committee NOTED the report.

165.3 Requests for Financial Assistance 2008/09

It was noted that £1,580 of the budget for 2008/09 remained available. The Committee RESOLVED to make the following contributions from the scheme by granting financial assistance to:

Organisation	Amount requested £	Power
Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership	600	LGA 1972 s145
Together: Working for Wellbeing	500	LGA 1972 s137

The application from Harrison's Memorial Fund was unsuccessful in receiving a grant.

RG166 Current Financial Position

The financial position as at 31st March 2008 was noted and that it was not the final end of year position. Information had been issued showing current bank balances.

RG167 Standing Orders

Following the introduction of the new procedure for payment of accounts, the Committee RECOMMENDED to the council that the following amendment be made:

Appendix A
Terms of Reference of Committees

General matters delegated to all committees
No. 4 "Approval of accounts for payment" be deleted, and that to achieve this with immediate effect, Standing Order 18 should be suspended for that item only.

RG168 Risk Assessment

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

RG169 Financial Regulations**169.1 Review**

The Council's Financial Regulations were reviewed and the Committee considered that no amendments were necessary at this time.

169.2 Financial limits

The Committee considered the financial limits and AGREED that they were still adequate with the exception of the item regarding urgent repair work, etc., that could be undertaken without budgetary provision which it increased to £5,000.

RG170 Chain of Office

The Committee considered the report and AGREED to refurbish the existing jewel and brooch bar and purchase a sterling silver chain of office with a polished silver finish together with a case and ribbon as detailed in quote no. 1. The total cost of £1,220.46 was to be paid from the 2008/09 contingency budget.

Cllr Baggaley was not in agreement with this purchase.

RG171 Accounts Annual Return 2006/07

The report was noted and the Committee AGREED to amend the 2006 figures in box 3 to £543,076 and in box 6 to £723,078.

RG172 Citizen of the Year Award

The Committee AGREED in principle that an award should be set up and referred the matter to the Strategy & Staff Group for consideration of a scheme. When drawn up the scheme would be presented to this committee, a priority would be set and budgetary provision made for 2009/10.

RG173 Future Work of the Committee

No items were raised.

RG174 Accounts Paid

It was NOTED that payments totalling £95,735.39 in accordance with payment schedules nos. 7 to 10 had been made and that the payment schedules and the accompanying invoices were available for inspection at the meeting.

RG175 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 contained confidential information relating to staffing and property matters.

RG176 Supplementary Estimate**176.1 Pension Fund**

The Committee AGREED to meet the anticipated strain on the pension fund by monthly instalments.

176.2 Appointments Panel

Cllr Harper reported on the meeting of the Panel held on Monday, 7th April 2008. The Committee AGREED to include the additional costs of up to £5,000 for possible relocation allowance, and £750 for reasonable interview expenses, in the supplementary budget; that the salary for the job would be £48,436 - £54,241 including LWA (inner fringe), and the post would be a permanent contract. The report on the timetable, job description, application packs, advertising, terms & conditions and selection methods was noted.

176.3 Supplementary Budget for 2008/09

The Committee considered the agenda report and AGREED the following:

- i. £131,760 be taken from General Reserves to set against the amended net requirement, leaving the forecast General Reserves at 70.48% of running costs and resulting in no increase to the precept.
- ii. Supplementary budget as follows:

Resources & General Services Committee Estimate				
Cost centre		Estimate 2008/09	Revised Estimate 2008/09	Transfer from Earmarked Reserves (revised)
Communication	Expenditure	18,500	18,500	
Office expenses	Expenditure	10,500	14,500	
Audit & accounts	Expenditure	3,550	3,550	

Central personnel	Expenditure	238,000	275,250	5,000
Council expenses	Expenditure	12,750	15,750	
Other services	Expenditure	36,500	39,050	15,000
Members' expenses	Expenditure	3,000	3,000	
Buckingham Court	Expenditure	53,500	53,500	
Grants	Expenditure	11,500	11,500	
Recharge to Murray Hall	Expenditure	-17,000	-17,000	
Service re-charge	Expenditure	-196,600	-196,600	
Expenditure		174,200	221,000	20,000
Income				
Net Expenditure over Income		174,200	221,000	20,000
Net Expenditure over Income*		159,200	201,000	

*Including transfers from Earmarked Reserves

The summary of the committees' revised estimates and use of reserves was as follows:

Committee	Income	Expenditure
	£	£
Resources and General Services	0	221,000
Environment and Heritage	15,090	148,470
Recreation	65,420	543,300
Planning and Licensing	0	35,000
Total		947,770
Interest	50,000	
Use from earmarked reserves		
Resources and General Services	20,000	
Environment & Heritage	6,500	
Recreation	36,000	
Planning and Licensing	10,000	
Use from general reserves	131,760	
		254,260
Council Precept		613,000

RG177 Insurance – Annual Review

The Committee CONFIRMED the adequacy of the Council's insurance cover as laid out in the report with the exception of the following items where cover was to be increased as shown below:

Business interruption cover

- | | |
|--|---------|
| a) Buckingham Court additional expenditure | £12,500 |
| b) Loss of revenue cover: | |
| Kingsley Hall | £16,000 |
| The Murray Hall | £40,000 |

Signed.....
Date 25th June 2008