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**LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL**
**RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.**

**Present:**

**Councillors:** S Pewsey (in the Chair)  
 J W Angold-Stephens                      K E Angold-Stephens                      R E Brookes  
 B Glassman                                      P Richardson                                      D Wixley

**Officers:** E K Walsh (Town Clerk)  
 S Haynes (Deputy Clerk)

**RG93 Apologies for absence**

None were received.

**RG94 Confirmation of Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2009 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**RG95 Public Representations**

None were received.

**RG96 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

**RG97 Matters for Report**

No matters to report.

**RG98 Financial Position**

The Committee's financial position for the end of year 2008/09 was NOTED. The Town Clerk clarified that the underspend on the Central Personnel budget was due to the delay in recruiting new staff to fill the posts of Deputy Town Clerk and Administrative Assistant/Planning Clerk.

Information was issued showing current bank balances.

**RG99 Annual Review of the Asset Register**

Copies of the Register of Assets and Properties as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009 were considered by the Committee. It was AGREED to maintain the existing practice of using the description "Community Asset" for the various items as listed as it was considered inappropriate to use a commercial value for such assets.

The following amendments were also AGREED:

Delete item 6 – Xmas lights TC Partnership, as these lights, currently described as "removed without permission by EFDC, whereabouts unknown, presumed destroyed" would in anycase be no longer in a safe condition to be re-used.

Amend item 33 – Drinking Fountain: the insurance value is to be shown in the register.

The Committee also NOTED the change at item 27, the Combo Van, which now used the current book price as the basis for the current valuation following a recommendation from the 2008 /09 External Auditor's report.

#### **RG100 Risk Assessment and Management**

The Committee considered the report. Whilst the document was considered satisfactory with the amendments as detailed in the agenda, as part of this review the Committee AGREED to make the following additions in response to recent world economic events:

Nature of risk	Hazard	Probability	Severity	Rating	Control measures
Finance	Poor security of investments	L	H	3	Investment policy Training Monitoring guidance from Audit Commission, CIPFA & FSA
	Low returns on investments	M-H In 2009/10	M	5	Budget preparation Investment policy Prudent reserves policy to ensure services maintained Continual review of investment placing and interest rates

With regard to risks concerning councillors and staff it was AGREED to make reference to the potential hazard of an outbreak of a contagious illness such as swine flu. However, the control measures already in place were considered adequate. It was noted that officers would continue to develop the Business Continuity Plan in this regard.

The Committee also asked the Strategy and Staff Group to undertake a more detailed analysis to identify measures to further reduce the severity of the impact of the risks listed in the document and review the Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery Plan.

#### **RG101 Accounts and Audit 2008/09**

The Annual Return, the document that forms the Council's statutory accounts for the year 2008/09 was considered.

The Committee APPROVED Section One, the statement of accounts; confirmed it was 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.

#### **RG102 Councillor Checks on Finances**

The Committee AGREED to continue with the practice of appointing a councillor to carry out period checks on the Council's financial transactions and Cllr J W Angold-Stephens accepted the responsibility for the financial year 2009/10.

**RG103 Financial Assistance**

The Town Clerk advised that £3,839 remained in the 2009/10 grants budget, and that this amount included the £250 from the Citizenship Award made to Mr John Davis who had chosen not to nominate a local charity on the occasion of his award in April this year.

The Committee RESOLVED to make a grant of £250 from the financial assistance scheme to Debden Park High School under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972. This sum would assist the school in funding a memorial garden bench to honour its former student, Marine George Sparks who was killed in action last year whilst serving in Afghanistan.

**RG104 Training Courses**

The Committee APPROVED the attendance of the following councillors at the Epping Forest District Council's training courses to be held in Epping:

1. Cllr Pewsey – Effective Member/Officer relations 6<sup>th</sup> July and Equalities and Diversity, 25<sup>th</sup> September
2. Cllr Owen – Dealing with difficult people and situations 17<sup>th</sup> July and Freedom of Information & Data Protection 30<sup>th</sup> November  
and Cllr Wixley on the Chairman's Day (1) run by the Essex Association of Local Councils on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2009 in Great Dunmow .

The Committee AGREED to pay travelling expenses to Cllrs Owen and Wixley. However, Cllr Pewsey reminded the Committee that he had renounced his right to claim all of the allowances to which councillors are entitled.

Town Councillors who were also District Council members attending district training courses in that role were invited to inform the Town Council office so that the details could be recorded for Quality Status purposes.

**RG105 Twinning**

The Committee NOTED the report and thanked Cllr Glassman for the information. Due to the pressing workload of the Council and the current economic climate, the Committee AGREED that the Council should not progress this further at this present time. However, should local residents wish to form a Twinning Association, the Council would be interested to follow their progress and be prepared to facilitate their meetings.

Councillor Glassman was asked to draft a short article on this topic for the next edition of Think Loughton.

**RG106 Accounts Paid**

It was NOTED that payments totalling £247,656.94 in accordance with payments nos. 31 to 33 had been made since the meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2009 and the schedules and accompanying invoices were available at the meeting for inspection.

**RG107 Future Work of the Committee**

The Committee suggested the following topic for future consideration:

- (1) Communication and local information management – Cllr Pewsey to prepare a report.

Signed.....

Date: 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009

## LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

### RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

**MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.**

**Present:**

**Councillors:** S Pewsey (in the Chair)  
 J W Angold-Stephens                      K E Angold-Stephens  
 R E Brookes (from Min no RG112)                      A Copland  
 P Richardson                                      D J Wixley

**Officers:** E K Walsh (Town Clerk)  
 S Haynes (Deputy Clerk)

**RG108 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Glassman and House.

**RG109 Confirmation of Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**RG110 Public Representations**

The Chairman reported that as there were 3 members of the public who wished to address the Committee regarding Agenda item 6.1, Financial Assistance 09/10, the public representations would be taken immediately before that item.

**RG111 Declarations of Interest**

Cllrs K Angold-Stephens and Copland declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6.2, Christmas Lights because of their association with the Broadway Town Centre Partnership, and Cllr Pewsey declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in the same item as the Town Council's representative at the High Road Town Centre Partnership.

Cllr Richardson declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6.2, Christmas Lights, as a member of Epping Forest District Council.

**RG112 Matters for Report**

**112.1 Strategy and Staff Group**

The Committee was updated on various topics discussed at the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2009, which included the increased use of information technology in the Council Offices, the reviewing of Council contracts, forward planning, a long-term strategy for the Roding Valley Recreation Ground, a display of photographs and citations for local war heroes, the Olympics 2012 and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

**112.2 External Audit 2008/09**

The Town Clerk reported that the Council had received an unqualified audit report for 2008/09 . A full report would be given at the next meeting.

Cllr Brookes joined the meeting during the next item.

**RG113 Applications for Financial Assistance 09/10**

Three members of the public addressed the Committee regarding their grant applications.

Cllr Wixley declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in the application for financial assistance from the Community Music Initiative, being a governor at White Bridge School, a school that had already benefited from this project.

**113.1 General applications**

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

Organisation	Amount granted £	Power
Community Music Initiative	500	LGA 1972 s145
Debden Allotment Society	1,000	LG (Misc Prov) A 1976 s19
Epping Forest Citizen's Advice Bureau	500	LGA 1972 s142

**113.2 Christmas lights**

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

Broadway Town Centre Partnership	4,000	LGA 1972 s145
High Road Town Centre Partnership	4,000	LGA 1972 s145

**RG114 Financial Position**

The Committee's financial position for the end of September was NOTED. Information was issued showing current bank balances.

**RG115 Councillor Checks on Finances**

The report was noted. The Committee thanked Cllr J Angold-Stephens for her work in this regard.

**RG116 Remembrance Service**

The Committee RESOLVED to make a grant of £100.00 to the Royal British Legion under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, in support of the poppy appeal and towards the cost of the wreath to be laid by the Town Mayor at the Remembrance service in November.

**RG117 Chip and Pin Banking Facility**

The Committee CONSIDERED the report and AGREED to introduce a Chip and Pin banking facility to provide an improved service to residents wishing to hire the council's facilities or purchase tickets for events. This service would be operated through the Council's bankers, NatWest by RBS WorldPay – Streamline, with net set up costs of £100 and a monthly terminal hire fee of £23.95.

It was further AGREED that no charge be made for the use of the service at its instigation, but Committees were asked to review this policy as part of the annual review of fees and charges. The transaction costs are as follows:

Debit card	21p per transaction
Consumer credit card	1.55% of value of transaction
Business credit card	1.65% of value of transaction
Refunds	42p per transaction
Minimum monthly service fee	£5.00

**RG118 Annual Civic Service and Citizenship Awards**

The Town Mayor advised that next year's Civic Service would take place at the Methodist Church, High Road, Loughton with the preferred date of Sunday 28 February 2010 at 3.00pm.

The Committee NOTED that, at this year's Debden Day, a framed Certificate of Recognition had been awarded by the Town Mayor to Sapper Jake Luton for his bravery during service in Afghanistan.

In recognition of their work, it was RESOLVED to make a presentation to the two volunteers who regularly carried out litter picking on the town's recreation areas. The cost of gift vouchers of £50 each would be met from the Town Mayor's Allowance. The presentation would take place with the Christmas card winners presentation to be made at this Committee's next meeting.

**RG119 The Data Protection Act 1998**

The report was CONSIDERED and it was RESOLVED that the Council should submit a notification to the Information Commissioner at annual fee of £35.00.

**RG120 Pandemic Flu Policy and Guidance**

The report was NOTED and the Strategy and Staff Group thanked for its work in this regard. The Committee RESOLVED to adopt this as a Council policy with immediate effect.

**RG121 Essex Association of Local Councils – Communication Awards**

The Committee was pleased to NOTE that at the Annual General Meeting of the Essex Association held in Heybridge on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2009 and attended by the Town Clerk, the Town Council had received the following awards in the County Communication and Community Engagement Competitions:

- Newsletter Award for Think Loughton
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the website competition

The officers were thanked for their work on these items.

**RG122 Accounts Paid**

It was NOTED that payments totalling £182,412.26 in accordance with payments nos. 31 to 33 had been made since the meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009 and the schedules and accompanying invoices were available at the meeting for inspection.

**RG123 Future Work of the Committee**

The Committee suggested the following topic for future consideration:

- (1) The Council's business and financial plan – Cllr Pewsey to prepare a report

**RG124 Annual Pay Award 2009**

The Committee NOTED that The National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) had reached agreement with the Local Government Employers and trade unions on the terms of the 2009 pay settlement and that a 1% increase back dated to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 would be applied to all staff salaries as per the contractual requirements.

It was also NOTED that under this settlement there would be an increase from 20 to 21 days in the minimum annual leave for employees with less than five years' service also effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009.

**RG125 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.

**RG126 Annual Staffing Review**

The Committee confirmed all staffing related actions undertaken by the Town Clerk as detailed in the confidential agenda report and RESOLVED to introduce a new part-time post of Assistant to the Services Manager (SCP 14-17/18) for 20 hours per week with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010.

Signed.....  
Date: 25<sup>th</sup> November 2009

**LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL**

**RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 25th November 2009 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.**

**Present:**

**Councillors:** S Pewsey (in the Chair)  
 J W Angold-Stephens                      K E Angold-Stephens                      R E Brookes  
 A Copland                                      B Glassman                                      P House  
 P Richardson                                      D J Wixley

**Officers:** E K Walsh (Town Clerk)  
 S Haynes (Deputy Town Clerk)

3 members of the public

**RG127 Apologies for absence**

None were received.

**RG128 Confirmation of Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee held on Wednesday 30th September 2009 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**RG129 Public Representations**

The Chairman reported that as there were 2 members of the public who wished to address the Committee regarding Agenda item 6, Financial Assistance 09/10; the public representations would be taken immediately before that item.

**RG130 Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Glassman declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6, the Financial Assistant application for the Citizens Advice Bureau, as he was acquainted with a member of that organisation.

**RG131 Financial Assistance applications 2009/10**

Two members of the public addressed the Committee regarding their grant applications.

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

Organisation	Amount granted £	Power
Epping Forest Citizens Advice Bureau	1,000	LGA 1972 s142
Loughton Youth Project	500	LGA 1972 s145

**RG132 Matters for Report**

**132.1 Councillor Checks on Finances – Min no RG115**

Cllr J Angold-Stephens gave a verbal report on her financial checks carried out on 23rd November 2009 during which she had examined the records of

the Council's expenditure. There were no matters to be reported to the Committee and she described the records as a good set of accounts.

**132.2 Annual Staffing Review – Min no RG126**

The Committee congratulated the Deputy Town Clerk on receiving the CiLCA qualification and NOTED that she will receive an incremental award on her salary with effect from 1st December 2009.

**RG133 Financial Regulations**

Further to the introduction of the Chip and Pin Banking Facility, the Committee AGREED to amend Section 5.2 of the Financial Regulations to read as follows:

**5 Banking Arrangements**

5.2 *The Council shall operate such bank or other accounts as it considers necessary and appropriate for the efficient conduct of its business. A current account shall be used for the payment of the council's bills, and cheques and other orders drawn on this account will require the signature of two members from a pool to be determined by the RGS Committee.*

5.2.1 *Additionally, with regard to the Chip and Pin Banking Facility operated on this account, the Town Clerk and in her absence the Deputy Town Clerk shall be authorised to complete the end of day reconciliations and make refunds on credit and debit card payments where required.*

5.2.2 *Access to the Internet Banking facility for this account shall be restricted to the Town Clerk or in her absence the Deputy Town Clerk.*

With regard to 5.2.2, the Committee AUTHORISED the existing current account signatories to complete the Internet Banking application.

**RG134 Accounts and Audit**

**134.1 External audit 2008/09**

The external audit certificate for 2008/09 was NOTED.

**134.2 Fidelity Guarantee Insurance Cover**

The Committee considered the Auditor's guidance and the current level of cash balances, which included the second instalment of the precept for 2009/10.

The Committee reviewed the level of risk and AGREED to increase the level of fidelity guarantee insurance cover to £1,000,000 with immediate effect. This level of cover would be reviewed again as part of the annual insurance review in Spring 2010.

**134.3 Internal audit 2009/10**

The Town Clerk reported that the Council's Internal Auditor had made his inspection on 25th November 2009 and that no matters of concern had been raised. A written report from the auditor would be provided for the next meeting of the Committee.

**RG135 Financial Position**

The Committee's financial position as at 19th November 2009 was NOTED. Information was issued showing current bank balances

**RG136 Parish Basic Allowance 2010/11**

The Committee reviewed the level of Parish Basic Allowance and AGREED to recommend to the Council that there should be no increase to the current level of £108 per annum.

**RG137 Committee Priorities**

The Committee reviewed its priorities and AGREED on the list as follows:

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Main Function</b>	<b>Greater Detail/Current Position</b>
<b>On-going activities</b>		
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	Website to be upgraded
High	Civic matters	Civic Service and Citizenship Awards
High	Annual Report	Preparation and printing
High	Newsletter	Editorial, printing and distribution
High	Community Forum	Arrangements and admin
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
High	New legislative requirements	
High	Responding to consultations	Variable
High	Policy reviews	
High	Contract reviews	On-going
High	Any other matters within the committee's terms of reference	
<b>Current activities</b>		
High	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 under preparation
Medium	Investigate bank alternatives	Deposit account improved but no further action on current account
Low	Noticeboards	Maintenance and installation
High	Council accommodation	Review and research for opportunities to improve office location for public access

**Cont'd**

Low	Council structure	Continuing reviews
High	Seeking external funding sources	Targeted action
Medium	Honours Board	2009/10 project
Medium	Fairtrade	Churches together in Loughton to take forward

It was noted that a review of the impact of the Council's newly adopted Environment and Sustainability Policy on all the committees' work would be undertaken and a report made to the Committee. The link between the committees' priority lists and their rolling programmes would be strengthened.

### RG138 Estimates for 2010/11

#### 138.1 Fees and Charges

The Committee AGREED that

- i the hire fees for Buckingham Court should increase in-line with the RPI rate for September 2009, 1.3%, such that the standard charge would be £16.50 per hour with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010.
- ii the price per sheet of A4 for items on the Publication Scheme should remain at 60p.

The Committee AGREED to the Rolling Programme with one amendment to the entry for the Grant in support of the local Citizens Advice Bureau, where the amount of additional items (desired) was increased to £800 bringing the total amount of grant budget proposed for this item to £5,000.

138.2 The estimates for 2010/11 as presented in the Agenda with the one amendment recorded in RG138.1, were AGREED such that the net figures were as follows:

	£
Total budget expenditure	423,850
Income	0
Net expenditure	423,850
Less income from earmarked reserves*	0
<b>Total net expenditure</b>	<b>£423,850</b>

Members noted that the above net expenditure did not include the service recharge amounts, which would reduce the total significantly. The amount would be confirmed once all the committees' expenditure had been collated.

### RG139 Accounts Paid

It was NOTED that payments totalling £149,020.60 in accordance with payment schedule nos. 44 to 47 had been made and the payment schedules and the accompanying invoices were available for inspection at the meeting.

### RG140 Annual Town Meeting 2010

The Committee AGREED to continue with the usual format of the Annual Town Meeting and to invite local organisations, voluntary groups, schools and Epping Forest College to mount displays for the event to attract more public interest. It was also AGREED to invite the Interim Principal of Epping Forest College as the guest speaker.

**RG141 NALC Larger Local Councils Conference and Exhibition**

The Committee authorised the attendance of the Town Mayor at the NALC Larger Local Councils Conference and Exhibition on Wednesday 2nd December 2009 at the Royal National Hotel, London, and AGREED to pay his travel expenses.

**RG142 Future Work of the Committee**

The Committee suggested the following topic for future consideration:

- (1) HELP for HEROES – Cllr Pewsey to prepare a report

**Signed.....**  
**Date: 16<sup>th</sup> December 2009**

**LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL**

**RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 16th December 2009 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.**

**Present:**

**Councillors:** S Pewsey (in the Chair)  
 J W Angold-Stephens                      K E Angold-Stephens  
 R E Brookes (from Min no RG149)                      A Copland  
 B Glassman                                      P Richardson                      D J Wixley  
 C P Pond (as substitute for Cllr P House)

**Also in attendance:**

**Councillors:** T Frankland

**Officers:** E K Walsh (Town Clerk)  
 S Haynes (Deputy Town Clerk)

**RG143 Apologies for absence**

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

**RG144 Confirmation of Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee held on Wednesday 25th November 2009, amended from those circulated to include Cllrs Copland and House as attendees, were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**RG145 Public Representations**

None were received.

**RG146 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

**RG147 Matters for Report**

**147.1 Internal Audit 2009/10 – Min No RG134.3**

The Committee NOTED the internal auditor's report.

**147.2 Appointment of External Auditor – Min No RG134.1**

The Committee NOTED the Audit Commission's proposal to transfer responsibility for the Council's external audit from Mr Alan Williams to Mr Wayne Wickard.

**RG148 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:

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Activity</b>
1	Environment & Heritage	Registration of Village Greens
2	Recreation	Skateboard facility
3	Environment & Heritage	War Memorial, Kings Green

4	Recreation	Playgrounds
5	Resources & General Services	Staffing – employment and Health & Safety policies and procedures; Fire Risk Assessments; employee handbook
6	Resources & General Services	Seeking external funding sources

It was further agreed to include the Town Mayor's annual charity event in the Civic matters entry in the Resources and General Services Committee priorities' list.

Cllr Brookes joined the meeting.

#### RG149 Estimates for 2010/11

A copy of the bank balances as at 16<sup>th</sup> December 2009 was circulated for information.

The Committee considered the agenda report and NOTED the amendment to the Recreation Committee's budget of £17,500, which reduced the expenditure under this heading to £141,500. The revisions to the rolling programmes made to clarify the core running costs, enhanced services and additional items and so better reflect the activities of the council were also NOTED.

The Committee AGREED that:

1. £98,945 would be taken from General Reserves to set against the net requirement and reduce the precept, leaving the General Reserves at 70.87 % of running costs.
2. A precept of £635,800 would be recommended to the Council on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2010.

Committee	Income	Expenditure inc recharges
	£	£
Resources and General Services	0	176,850
Environment and Heritage	16,345	161,260
Recreation	69,870	597,550
Planning and Licensing	0	41,800
Total	86,215	977,460
Interest	18,000	
Use from earmarked reserves		
Resource and General Services	6,000	
Environment & Heritage	19,500	
Recreation	98,000	
Planning and Licensing	15,000	
Use from general reserves	98,945	
Total	255,445	
	Total income	341,660
<b>Council Precept</b>		<b>£635,800</b>

**RG150 Councillor Training**

The Committee AGREED to pay travel expenses for the attendance of the Cllr C C Pond at the Commemorative Plaques Conference in London on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> February 2010.

**RG151 Future Work of the Committee**

The Committee suggested the following topic for future consideration:

- (1) Reserves Policy review – Cllr Glassman to prepare a report

**Signed.....**  
**Date: 17<sup>th</sup> February 2010**

## LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

### RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

**MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 17th February 2010 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.**

**Present:**

**Councillors:** S Pewsey (in the Chair)  
 J W Angold-Stephens                      K E Angold-Stephens      A Copland  
 B Glassman                                      P Richardson  
 D J Wixley                                        R Thomson (as substitute for Cllr R E Brookes)

**Officers:** E K Walsh (Town Clerk)  
 S Haynes (Deputy Town Clerk)

2 members of the public

**RG152 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Brookes. The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Thomson had been nominated as Cllr Brookes' substitute for this meeting.

**RG153 Confirmation of Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee held on Wednesday 16th December 2009 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Committee AGREED to defer agenda item 3, Public Representations, until immediately before agenda item 6 as a member of the public wished to address the Committee regarding their financial assistance application.

**RG154 Declarations of Interest**

Cllrs J Angold-Stephens, K Angold-Stephens, Pewsey, Thomson and Wixley declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6, the Financial Assistance application for the Kidz Club, as the applicant was a member of the Loughton Residents Association.

Cllr J Angold-Stephens also declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in the applications from the Loughton & District Citizens Advice Bureau, as she was acquainted with the member of the public who was to address the committee regarding this application, and the application for the Noah's Ark Toddler Group, as her daughter was a member of the congregation of Vineyard Church.

Cllr K Angold-Stephens also declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in the applications for the Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership as a member of Epping Forest District Council, the South Loughton Cricket Club as he was a life-member of this organisation and the Noah's Ark Toddler Group, as his daughter was a member of the congregation of Vineyard Church.

Cllr Copland declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6, the Financial Assistance application for Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership as he was a member of the organisation.

Cllr Glassman declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6, the Financial Assistance application for the Loughton & District Citizens Advice Bureau, as he was acquainted with an employee of this organisation.

Cllr Pewsey also declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6, the Loughton Potato Ground as he lived close to the site. In addition, he declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the Loughton Festival, being a member of the Festival Committee and advised that he would withdraw from the meeting when that application was discussed.

Cllr Richardson declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6, the Financial Assistance application for Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership as a member of Epping Forest District Council who had also attended meetings of the Partnership as its representative.

Cllr Wixley declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6, the Financial Assistance applications for the Loughton Festival and Loughton Potato Ground, as he was acquainted with members of these organisations. In addition, he declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in the application from Epping Forest Youth for Christ as this organisation had carried out projects with The White Bridge County Junior School, where he was a school governor.

The Committee AGREED to bring forward the following item, as members of the public were interested in the applications.

#### **RG155 Public Representations**

The meeting was adjourned to hear an address from a member of the public regarding the application for Financial Assistance from the Loughton & District Citizens Advice Bureau.

#### **RG156 Financial Assistance**

The Committee agreed to consider the application from the Citizens Advice Bureau prior to the general applications.

##### **156.1 Citizens Advice Bureau**

The Committee RESOLVED to grant £5,000 to the Loughton & District Citizens Advice Bureau under the Local Government Act 1972 s142.

##### **156.2 General applications**

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

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Amount granted</b>	<b>Power</b>
	<b>£</b>	
Epping Forest Youth For Christ	500.00	LGA 1972 s145
Home-Start Epping Forest	500.00	LGA 1972 s145
Ignite	425.00	LG(Misc Prov)A 1976 s19
Kidz Club	1,400.00	LGA 1972 s145
Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership*	1,050.00	<b>LGA 1972 s137</b>
Loughton Festival**	500.00	LGA 1972 s145
Loughton Potato Ground	907.50	LG (Misc Prov)A 1976 s19
Loughton Youth Project	5,000.00	LGA 1972 s145
Noah's Ark Toddler Groups	500.00	LGA 1972 s145

Shiners (Youth) Football Club	200.00	LGA 1972 s145
South Loughton Cricket Club	200.00	LGA 1972 s145
Vitalise	498.00	LG (Misc Prov)A 1976 s19
	<b>£11,680.50</b>	

\* Cllrs Copland and Richardson abstained from voting for the Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership application.

\*\* Cllr Pewsey left the meeting during the discussions on the Loughton Festival application. Cllr J Angold-Stephens took the chair for this item.

## **RG157 Matters for Report**

### **157.1 Strategy & Staff Group – Min No RG112.1**

The Committee NOTED the report of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2010 during which topics including Data Protection, the Staff Handbook, a forthcoming review of Standing Orders and the NALC consultation on its Development Strategy and Business Plan 2010-2015 had been discussed.

## **RG158 Financial Position**

The financial position report as at 10<sup>th</sup> February 2010 was NOTED and information was issued showing current bank balances

## **RG159 Councillor Checks on Finances**

The Committee NOTED the report and thanked Cllr J Angold-Stephens for her work in this regard.

## **RG160 Election costs**

The Committee NOTED the final costs for the by-election held in the Broadway Ward on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2009 amounted to £3,740.03.

## **RG161 Meetings Schedule**

The Committee AGREED the schedule of meetings for 2010/11 as follows:

May	12	Wednesday	Annual Council
	19	Wednesday	Recreation
	24	Monday	Planning and Licensing
June	7	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	9	Wednesday	Environment and Heritage
	21	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	23	Wednesday	Resources and General Services
	30	Wednesday	Council
July	5	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	14	Wednesday	Recreation
	19	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	21	Wednesday	Environment and Heritage
August	2	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	23	Monday	Planning and Licensing
September	1	Wednesday	Resources and General Services
	6	Monday	Planning and Licensing

	15	Wednesday	Council
	20	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	29	Wednesday	Recreation
October	4	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	13	Wednesday	Environment and Heritage
	18	Monday	Planning and Licensing
November	1	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	3	Wednesday	Resources and General Services
	15	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	24	Wednesday	Resources and General Services (Budgets)
	29	Monday	Planning and Licensing
December	13	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	15	Wednesday	Council
<b>2011</b> January	10	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	19	Wednesday	Recreation
	24	Monday	Planning and Licensing
February	2	Wednesday	Environment and Heritage
	7	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	16	Wednesday	Resources and General Services
	21	Monday	Planning and Licensing
March	2	Wednesday	Council
	7	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	16	Wednesday	Recreation
	21	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	23	Wednesday	Annual Town Meeting, The Murray Hall, Borders Lane at 8 pm
	30	Wednesday	Environment and Heritage
April	4	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	13	Wednesday	Resources and General Services
	18	Monday	Planning and Licensing
	27	Wednesday	Council
May	3	Tuesday	Planning and Licensing
	11	Wednesday	Annual Council

All meetings would be held at 1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton at 7.45 pm unless shown otherwise.

**RG162 Christmas card competition 2009**

The Committee NOTED the report and AGREED to review the age group categories at a subsequent meeting.

**RG163 Olympics 2012 and Queen's Diamond Jubilee**

Following a recommendation from the Strategy and Staff Group, the Committee AGREED that a working party be set up to bring forward proposals for celebrating the Olympics 2012 and Queen's Diamond Jubilee in Loughton. The membership of the working party was confirmed as Cllrs K Angold-Stephens, Murray, Pewsey, Richardson and Wixley.

**RG164 Register of Members' Interests**

The Committee discussed the recommendation from the Strategy and Staff Group that councillors' entries in the Register of Members' Interests should be displayed on the town council's website. It was AGREED that this matter be referred to the full Council so that all councillors could be consulted.

**RG165 Website**

The Committee AGREED that the webmaster's honorarium be increased to £1,200 p.a. with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 in recognition of the quality of service received.

**RG166 Essex Pension Fund**

The Committee NOTED that a copy of the Essex Pension Fund Report and Accounts for 2008/09 had been received together with the draft revision of the Statement of Investment Principles.

**RG167 Accounts Paid**

It was NOTED that payments totalling £215,383.67 in accordance with payments schedules nos. 48 to 52 had been made since the meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2009 and the schedules and accompanying invoices were available at the meeting for inspection.

**RG168 Future Work of the Committee**

No items were raised.

**RG169 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

The Committee RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from Agenda item no.19 under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as the report contains confidential information relating to the council's property affairs.

The Committee AGREED to suspend Standing Order number 1.4 and AGREED to conclude the meeting by 9.40 p.m.

**RG170 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 all risks items where cover was to be increased with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010:

	£
Town Mayor's Badge of Office	217
Silver Gilt Chain of Office and case	1,426

It was AGREED that the level of Fidelity Guarantee cover would be reviewed once the end of year balances were confirmed.

The Committee asked the Environment and Heritage Committee to consider the appropriateness of insurance for the war memorial.

**Signed**.....  
**Date:** 14<sup>th</sup> April 2010

*THESE MINUTES NOT YET CONFIRMED*

**LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL**

**RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 14th April 2010 at 7.45 p.m. at 1 Buckingham Court.**

**Present:**

**Councillors:** S Pewsey (in the Chair)  
 J W Angold-Stephens  
 R E Brookes (from Min no RG173)  
 B Glassman (from Min no RG173)  
 P Richardson (from Min no RG173)

K E Angold-Stephens  
 A Copland (from Min no RG173)  
 P House  
 D J Wixley

**Officers:** E K Walsh (Town Clerk)  
 S Haynes (Deputy Town Clerk)

**RG171 Apologies for absence**

None were received.

**RG172 Confirmation of Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources and General Services Committee held on Wednesday 17th February 2010 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Cllrs Brookes, Copland, Glassman and Richards joined the meeting.

**RG173 Public Representations**

None were received.

**RG174 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

**RG175 Matters for Report**

**175.1 Annual Civic Service and Citizenship Awards**

The Committee RESOLVED to make the Citizenship Award charity payment of £250 to the Acorn Ward (Children's Ward) of Whipps Cross University Hospital under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

**175.2 Strategy & Staff Group**

Following receipt of the new publication from the National Association of Local Councils, "Standing Orders for Local Councils", the Committee AGREED that the Strategy and Staff Group should undertake a detailed review of the Council's Standing Orders and report back to a future meeting of this committee.

**175.3 Register of Members' Interests**

The Committee NOTED that a number of councillors had not responded to an invitation to confirm whether they wished to have their entries in the Register of Members' Interests displayed on the town council's website. It was AGREED that a final letter be sent setting a deadline for responses after which it would be assumed that any remaining councillors had no objection to the posting on the website.

**RG176 Financial Position**

The financial position report as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 was NOTED and information was issued showing current bank balances

**RG177 Financial Regulations Annual Review****177.1 Financial Regulations**

The Financial Regulations were reviewed and the Committee confirmed that they met the Council's requirements.

**177.2 Financial Limits**

The Committee AGREED to increase:

- i. the limit of imprest on the no. 2 account to £35,000 to cover monthly salary and associated on costs.
- ii. the limit of officers signing cheques on the no. 2 account for the payment of small bills or those requiring payment prior to invoice, or for urgent payments, to £150.

The remaining financial limits were reviewed and considered adequate at that time. The limits for 2010/11 were to be as follows:

Topic	Amount	Last reviewed	Last changed
Limit of imprest on no. 2 a/c	35,000	April 2010	April 2010
Limit of officers signing cheques on no. 2 a/c	150	April 2010	April 2010
Limit of imprest on Security Deposits a/c	3,000	April 2010	April 2006
Limit of cheques on Security Deposits a/c	none	April 2010	April 2006
Petty cash imprest	150	April 2010	
Urgent repair work etc without budgetary provision (FR 3.4)	5,000	April 2010	April 2008
Additional audit work of external auditor (FR 12.1)	750	April 2010	May 2004
Tenders to be obtained (FR 12.3, 12.6 & 12.8)	over 50,000	April 2010	May 2004
3 quotes to be obtained (FR 12.8)	10,000 to 50,000	April 2010	May 2004
3 estimates to be obtained (FR 12.8)	2,000 to 10,000	April 2010	May 2004
Bad debts may be written off by RFO	100	April 2010	Oct 1998
Credit card:			
No. 1 Town Clerk	1,000	April 2010	Nov 2004
No. 2 Service Manager	500	April 2010	Feb 2005

**RG178 Internal Audit – Report and Annual Review****178.1 Internal Audit 2009/10**

The Committee considered the report of the second interim visit by the internal auditor, which took place on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2010 and noted that no issues had arisen to warrant formal comment or recommendation for improvement.

**178.2 Annual 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. It was AGREED that the system of internal audit was satisfactory.

**178.3 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.

The Committee AGREED the following **Statement of Internal Control**:

### **STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL**

**1 Scope and Responsibility**

Loughton Town Council (hereafter called the Council) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

**2 Purpose of the System of Internal Control**

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk at a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risks of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them effectively and economically.

The system of internal control has been in place at the Council for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.

**3 The Internal Control Environment**

The system of internal control is based on a framework consisting of the Code of Conduct, internal regulations (including but not limited to financial regulations) and administrative procedures. It is further enhanced by the regular provision of management and financial information as appropriate to fit the Council's policy of delegation and responsibility. The system is constantly monitored by members as well as officers within the Council. In particular, the system incorporates:

- comprehensive budgeting systems, project evaluation and management appraisal
- regular reports of service delivery and project performance
- preparation and dissemination of regular financial reports measuring actual expenditure against forecasts for both revenue and capital projects
- regular review of such reports by officers, and by members in committee and full council.

**4 Review of Effectiveness**

The authority has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of

- the Council and its committees, especially Resources and General Services Committee
- the Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer and other staff
- the internal auditor

- the external auditor
- any other review agencies and inspectorates in their reports.

#### **178.4 Appointment of Internal Auditor for 2010/11**

The Committee AGREED to appoint of Auditing Solutions as the Council's internal auditors for 2010/11 at a cost of £370 per visit. This will include 2 interim visits during the year with a final end of year visit to inspect the annual accounts.

#### **178.5 Five Year Strategic Plan for Internal Audit**

The Committee considered the draft internal audit outline programme covering the next five years. It was AGREED that the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Town Clerk should meet to formulate recommendations and report back to the next meeting of this Committee.

### **RG179 Risk Assessment and Management**

The Committee considered the document and approved the risk assessment and management arrangements as presented with the following amendments:

- Two references to pandemic flu were deleted.
- 2009/10 was deleted from the hazard section entitled 'low returns on investments'.

### **RG180 Account Paid**

It was NOTED that payments totalling £98,068.56 in accordance with payments schedules nos. 53 to 56 had been made since the meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2010 and the schedules and accompanying invoices were available at the meeting for inspection.

### **RG181 Future Work of the Committee**

No items were raised.

### **RG182 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

The Committee RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from Agenda items no.13 and 14 under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as the reports contained confidential information relating to the council's property affairs and staffing matters.

### **RG183 Insurance Renewal**

#### **183.1 Annual Review**

The Committee NOTED the total net annual insurance premium for 2010/11 of £11,084.12 and the revised sums insured for contents, business interruption and loss of revenue.

#### **183.2 War Memorial**

The Committee AGREED to arrange insurance cover for the war memorial on Kings Green with immediate effect, to provide cover of £125,000 at a cost of £250 for 2010/11.

### **RG184 Staffing Matters**

#### **184.1 Assistant Park Warden/ Caretaker**

The Committee noted the report and AGREED the following:

- 1) The existing post of Assistant Park Warden/ Caretaker be split so as to separate the caretaking work from the warden duties.

- 2) The caretaking hours from this post be reduced from the current weekly allocation of 10 hours to 5 hours per week (20 hours per month) at the pay scale of SCP 11, with overtime if required by the level of hirings.
- 3) An Assistant Park Warden be appointed for 25 hours per week under a 5 month fixed-term contract at the pay scale of SCP 11, with the expectation that at least 4 hours will be worked at weekends and paid at time and a half and double time on Sundays.

Cllr Copland asked for his objection to decision 3) to be recorded as he had concerns for employees' safety when lone working.

#### **184.2 Parks and Amenities Warden Post**

The Committee noted the report and AGREED that with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 the Terms and Conditions for the post of Parks and Amenities Warden (full time) be amended to read *"the employee will be required to work an average 36 hours per week, on a flexible basis, to include occasional weekend and evening work. When required to work at weekends this will be paid at time and a half for Saturdays and double time for Sundays. The hours worked each week to be arranged with the Town Council."*

**Signed**.....  
**Date:** 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2010