

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 11 February 2026 at 7.30 pm at Loughton Town Council, Council Chamber, 1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ.

Present

Councillors: M Owen (in the Chair)
I Allgood S Fontenelle
N MacKinnon S Murray
M Stubbings D Wixley

Officers: M Squire (Town Clerk)
C Carroll (Responsible Financial Officer (RFO))

10 Members of the public

The committee noted that a member would be recording this meeting.

RG193 Apologies for absence

Cllr Wixley had been nominated as a substitute for Cllr Brookes. Cllr McKinnon arrived at 19.35 (having previously informed the Town Clerk that he may be a little late).

RG194 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Wixley declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 7.1 for 3Food4U; Restore Community Grow; Wildways; Yes Partnership; South Loughton Cricket Club; Globetrotters Explorers Scouts and item 7.2 – Citizens Advice.

Cllr Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest for 3Food4U; Christian Drama Resource Centre; Epping Foodbank; Forest Creative Writers; Globetrotters Explorers Scout unit; Loughton Community First Responders; Loughton Methodist Church; Loughton Voluntary Care; Open Door Friendship Group; Restore Community Grow; Restore Oakwood Hill; Restore Noah's Ark; Roding Valley High School; Roding Valley Junior Park Run; Roding Valley Parkrun; South Loughton Cricket Club; Spark; St Mary's Church Loughton; St Mary's Church (Ignite); St Mary's Church (Living Hope); YES Partnership and item 7.2 – Citizens Advice.

Cllr Fontenelle declared a non-pecuniary interest for Restore Community Grow; Yes Partnership; 3Food4U; Chicken soup run.

RG195 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2026 were CONFIRMED as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RG196 Public Representations

Representatives from Forest Creative Writers, Made with Love Chicken Soup Run, Loughton Community First Responders, St Mary's Church Loughton and Globetrotters Explorers Scout Unit addressed the committee outlining the work their organisations do within the Loughton Community and the intended use of grant allocations.

The Chairman brought forward agenda item 7, Financial Assistance Applications 2026/27

RG197 Financial Assistance Applications 2026/27

197.1 The Chairman presented the recommendations of the Financial Assistance Working Group for the approval of the Resources and General Services Committee. He reported that the Committee would not hold back ten per cent of grant funding for emergencies and that unused funds would be returned to General Reserves.

The Town Clerk also reported that the Working Group had requested that the Globetrotters Explorers Scout Unit would be encouraged to share the new camping equipment with other scout groups. He also reiterated that there was no legal restriction on grant funding to schools. Members agreed to review going forward together with the overall grant funding process at a future Resources and General Services meeting.

Members AGREED the financial grants awards for 2026/27 as presented on the agenda.

197.2 Citizens Advice (CA) – Epping Forest

A member questioned whether this item needed to be on the agenda as the amount allocated had already been agreed at the full Council Budget meeting of 28 January 2026. This would be taken into account for the following year. Members AGREED the CA grant for £8,000.

RG198 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report

Members were reminded that the deadline for setting up their gov.uk email address is 28 February 2026. There is a requirement under the AGAR and Assertion 10 for Councillors and staff to be using a gov.uk email address for all council related business.

RG199 Annual Town Meeting

Members NOTED the date and the time of the Annual Town Meeting.

RG200 Financial Limits

Members AGREED the level of financial limits as provided.

RG201 Payment Procedures

Members NOTED the direct debit payments currently made by the Council.

RG202 Finance

202.1 Current Financial Position

The current financial position as at 31 January 2026 along with available funds in earmarked reserves as at 31 January 2026 was NOTED.

202.2 Accounts Paid

The Committee NOTED payments totalling £194,503.08 as detailed on payment schedules nos. 425-428 have been made since the report to the

meeting on 14 January 2026 and that schedules and accompanying invoices are available at the Council offices for inspection.

RG203 Strategy & Staff Group (SSG) Meeting

The Town Clerk confirmed that the SSG meeting had been held on Monday 9 February 2026, principally to discuss a way forward following his notice of intention to retire on 12 June 2026. The working group had agreed a panel of five members to conduct interviews and confirmed that the position would be widely advertised through the appropriate channels.

RG204 Training

204.1 Members NOTED the training offered for the new Assertion 10 requirements and the Town Clerk confirmed members had been booked on available training.

204.2 The Town Clerk provided further background information on the CouncilWise training.

Members AGREED not to proceed with the annual subscription of £500 at this time, but to continue to book courses on an ad-hoc basis and to ensure training provision for the new Clerk is in place. Budget allocations would need to be reviewed going forward, and also reconsidered following the election of the new Town Council in 2028.

204.3 Members NOTED the report.

RG205 Domain Name Ownership and Security – Govt UK e-mail addresses

The Town Clerk confirmed that all members of staff and councillors would now have gov.uk email addresses.

RG206 NatWest Branch Closure

Members NOTED the Loughton Branch of NatWest will be closing.

RG207 Internal Auditor – Interim Internal Audit Report

The Committee NOTED the report.

RG208 Policies Review

208.1 IT Acceptable Use Policy

Members AGREED the policy.

208.2 Lap Top Policy

Members AGREED the policy but that the stipulation, ‘Laptop issued by Loughton Town Council (LTC) are to be used purely for LTC business proposes’ would be looked at again at a future Resources and General Services (RGS) Committee meeting but would remain extant for now.

208.3 Data Privacy Notice

Members AGREED the notice.

208.4 Data Protection Policy

Members AGREED The policy.

208.5 Website Accessibility Statement

Members AGREED the statement.

RG209 Governance and Accountability

209.1 Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Audit

209.1.1 Internal Audit

Members reviewed the report and NOTED that this report forms part of the preparation work for the completion of Section 1 of the Annual Return, the Annual Governance Statement, (which will be considered at the meeting of the Council in May 2026) (not May 2025 as reported in the agenda) with cross reference to the appropriate wording from the 'Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - A Practitioners Guide (England 2025)'.

209.1.2 The Effectiveness of the System of Internal Audit

Members reviewed the report, paragraph by paragraph, line by line and AGREED each section, line by line, noting that the report was for this current financial year 2025/26 and AGREED the Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Audit.

209.2 Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Control – last approved April 2025

Members reviewed the report, paragraph by paragraph, line by line and AGREED each section, including Statement of Internal Control

- 1 Scope and Responsibility
- 2 Purpose of the System of Internal Control
- 3 The Internal Control Environment

noting that the report was for this current financial year 2025/26 and AGREED the Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Control.

RG210 Risk Assessment and Management

Members reviewed all sections, individually of the Risk Assessment and Management Schedule with a note to include a risk assessment covering Climate and Environmental matters. The additional item would be taken to the next Resources and General Services Committee meeting for review.

Members AGREED the Risk Assessment and Management Schedule for this current Town Council year 2025/2026.

RG211 Insurance – Annual Review

Members NOTED the report, that the policy was up to date and that the insurance policy and premium would be added on to the next RGS Agenda once the policy renewal had been received.

RG212 Fixed Asset Register

The Committee NOTED the Register of Assets as of 31 January 2026.

The Committee AGREED to suspend Standing Order 3ff and AGREED to conclude the meeting by 21.40.

RG213 Citizens Awards

The Town Clerk provided a brief update on the panel meeting to consider the applications received for the Citizens Award. It was NOTED that the Town Mayor Cllr Wixley, was not present for any discussion due to his declared conflict of interests.

RG214 Establishing a Town Partnership

The Town Clerk provided a summary on the recent meeting of the Town Partnership. The meeting held on 5 February 2026 was attended by 32 attendees including 11 local businesses/community groups. Notes of the meeting to follow. The next meeting will take place on 28 February 2026 at Loughton Library.

RG215 Lamp Light of Peace in Remembrance

Members AGREED not to proceed with the Lamp Light of Peace purchases as it could deflect from the meaning of the remembrance service, held in its current form.

The meeting concluded at 21:40.

Signed:

Date: 11 February 2026