LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES of the Meeting held on Wednesday 22 April 2026 at 7.30pm at 1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ

Present Councillors: D Wixley (in the chair)

R Brookes	W Dodd	S Fontenelle (during Min No 172)
A Fricker	S Harriman	L House
K-W Lee	N MacKinnon	S Murphy
S Murray	J Obaseki (during Min No 172)	M Owen
C Pond	J Riley	M Stubbings
R Sylvan	C Ubah	

Officers: M Squire (Town Clerk)
P Bryce (Deputy Town Clerk)

Also Present: 2 members of the public

167 Apologies for Absence
Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Davies, and Valentine.

168 Declarations of Interest
Cllr Pond declared a non-pecuniary interest in any items on the agenda related to Epping Forest District council (EFDC) and Essex County Council (ECC) as he is a member.

Cllr Wixley declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 13.2, as he had been approached by a member of the public via email. The individual, who described himself as an entrepreneur, had enquired about the vacant Lloyds Bank building on the Broadway, expressing an interest in establishing a community-focused business. Additionally that he would offer free coaching to shopkeepers on raising the profile of their businesses. Cllr Wixley advised the enquirer to contact EFDC.

169 Confirmation of Minutes
The minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2026 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

170 Public Representations
None were received.

171 Questions Without Discussion
None were received

172 Town Mayors / Town Clerk's Report
Nothing to report.

Cllrs Fontenelle and Obaseki joined during the next item.

The Chairman reported during the next item, that the meeting was now being audio recorded. Prior to the next item, the Town Mayor wished to express the Town Councils' thanks to former Cllr Ian Allgood for his service to the Council during his time in office. The Town Clerk was asked to write to him accordingly.

173 Casual Vacancy – Co-option – St Johns Ward

Cllr Pond declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item, as his son would be applying for the post. Cllr Fontenelle also declared a non-pecuniary interest, as his brother would be applying too.

After discussion, Members agreed to include a question on the application form to read: "Please describe how you have contributed to Loughton over the last five years." It was also agreed that questions would be asked of candidates at the application interview on 12 May 2026, limited to three minutes per candidate.

The Town Clerk reported that the co-option/casual vacancy would be advertised through the usual channels, including the website, social media, and noticeboards, during the week.

174 New Town Clerk

The Town Council welcomed Liz Petyt-Start, the current Clerk of Buckhurst Hill Parish Council who will join Loughton Town Council on 1 June 2026, taking over the role officially on Monday 15 June 2026.

Members wished Liz every success in her new role. Members agreed it would be a good idea that Cllr Valentine be appointed as Liz's mentor for her first six months.

175 Recording Council Meetings

After much debate and discussion, members agreed not to pursue this, as the cost of £6,000 could be better spent within the Council.

Cllr Fontenelle asked whether the Council would consider audio recording meetings. Voice recordings could help resolve any disputes, ensure the accuracy of meeting records, and assist people with disabilities.

The Town Clerk stated that minutes are always distributed in draft form so that any discrepancies can be rectified before they are signed at the next meeting. The Town Clerk suggested that Cllr Fontenelle raise the matter of audio recording at the next Resources and General Services (RGS) Committee meeting for consideration.

176 Town Council's 30th Anniversary

Members NOTED that the Town Council is pleased to be celebrating its 30th Anniversary this year. At the Annual Council Meeting on 20 May 2026, long serving members (10 years, 15 years and 20 years plus) will be presented with a commemorative certificate, a commemorative badge will follow.

An article to celebrate the occasion, will also be featured in the next edition of the LTC newsletter 'Think Loughton'.

177 Town Mayor's Engagements and Announcements

The Town Mayor reported that he had attended the following events since the last Council meeting. Essex County Council Chairman's Civic Service, Youth Makes Music at West Hatch High School, organised by the Rotary Club of Roding, the National Jazz Archive performance by Lily Dior, Sarah Vaughan Story, YES Partnership – Year 9 Motivation Conference, EFDC Civic Awards and Dinner, EFDC

Museum new exhibition 'Town and Country: Life in Roman Durolitum', Anna Fiorentini Theatre & Film School 25th Anniversary at Hackney Empire, Loughton Town Council's Annual Town Meeting, held at Murray Hall, Diane Tong's funeral at Forest Park Crematorium, Loughton Amateur Dramatic Society Production of "The Herd" at Lopping Hall, Celebrating local resident Louisa's 106th Birthday with afternoon tea at Abbeyfield, Ryder House and Roding Valley Cricket Club – opening of a new pitch.

Cllr Wixley also reported that the two Qualis street cleaners who were awarded certificates of recognition, did not attend the Annual Town Meeting to collect them. Subsequently they were awarded the certificates in person outside Loughton Leisure Centre and Library.

Cllr Murray reported that the Annual Town Meeting had an excellent feel this year and thanked all staff for their work. He said that it was extremely well attended and was good to see how many groups and organisations were there to receive their financial services certificates.

178 Reports from Committees

178.1 Planning and Licensing

Held on 2, 16 and 30 March and 13 April 2026 were NOTED.
Members thanked the Planning Committee for their valuable comments on Min No PL424 and Min No. PL425.2.

178.2 Environment & Heritage (E & H)

Held on 25 March 2026 was NOTED. Regarding Min No. EH193 the Chairman confirmed that any proposed changes to the heritage plaques criteria would be reviewed during the next E&H Committee meeting.

178.3 Recreation

Held on 11 March 2026 was NOTED.
Members noted that RC217 Infrastructure funding is very much a live issue and will continue to monitor.

178.4 Resources and General Services

Held on 8 April 2026 was NOTED. Members AGREED the following under RG230 Policies Review.

230.1 Code of Conduct
230.2 Safeguarding Policy
230.3 Information Security Policy (Chip and Pin)
230.4 Lone Working Policy
230.5 Social Media Policy
230.6 Recruitment Policy

179 Reports from Members on Outside Organisations

Written reports on the following meetings were NOTED.

179.1 Roding Valley Nature Reserve Stakeholders – Cllr Fricker – 11 March 2026.

179.2 Broadway Town Centre Partnership (BTCP) – Cllr Murray – 9 April 2026.
Cllr Murray reiterated his serious concerns regarding the continuation of this partnership, the fact that the secretary had resigned, and that a meeting had not been called for some time. He wanted to know what was happening, is the partnership being wound down? Also what will happen with the small

amount of revenue in the account. Cllr Fontenelle, interim Chairman of BTCP refused to respond.

179.3 Loughton Voluntary Care Annual General Meeting – Cllr Murray – 9 April 2026.

179.4 Local Councils' Liaison Committee meeting 19.3.26 – Cllr Wixley.

179.5 Tree Wardens' Meeting 24.3.26 – Cllr Wixley.

Signed ……
20 May 2026