



Leigh-on-Sea Town Council

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Chairman: Cllr Pat Holden
Vice Chairman: Cllr Carole Mulrone
Town Clerk: Paul Beckerson



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD AT 8.00 PM ON TUESDAY 4th OCTOBER 2011 AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, 67 ELM ROAD, LEIGH-ON-SEA

Present: Cllrs Jerry Holden (Chairman), Alex Coulson, Donald Fraser, Richard Herbert, Pat Holden, Paul Lawrence and Carole Mulrone

Also in attendance: Paul Beckerson (Town Clerk)

The meeting opened at 8.00pm

63. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and due to the length of the agenda moved to the next item.

64. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs Mike Dolby, Caroline Parker and Patsy Ryan

65. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

None

66. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of 6th September 2011 were approved and signed as a correct record.

GENERAL PURPOSES

67. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDIT Working Party Report 1938/AWP (Appendix 1 to the agenda)

Members considered the report and the recommendations. Items C2 & C3 of the Risk Assessment were amended to state "a nominated councillor" in place of "Cllr Fraser".

- a) **RECOMMENDED:** That the risk assessment be adopted.
- b) **RESOLVED:** That Cllr Donald Fraser is the appointed Councillor for the internal audit for the testing of specific internal controls in the interim until another is appointed at the next meeting of the committee. Cllr Alex Coulson will shadow this role. A date for an audit inspection is to be arranged.
- c) **RESOLVED:** That the attendance of a member of staff to the Risk Assessment Training at a cost of £75 is approved.

- d) **RESOLVED:** That all key holders be entered in a register for that purpose. That out of office hour's use is recorded in the same register. That nominated key holders be appointed to respond in the case of emergency (The Town Clerk, Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council). A list of the appointed persons to be displayed in a prominent position. Additionally utility and alarm information should be listed and distributed to all users.

68. FARMER'S MARKET VENUE POST JULY 2012

With member's agreement this was taken together with the next item.

69. 'VISION FOR LEIGH' AND CORPORATE PLAN – Report 1943/TC (Appendix 2 to the agenda)

Motion: "A review and update of the 'Vision for Leigh' should be carried out prior to the Annual Town Meeting in 2012"

Proposed by Cllr Richard Herbert and seconded by Cllr Alex Coulson

Cllr Richard Herbert spoke to the motion (Statement attached as Appendix 1). Members debated as to how this should best be carried forward including the issues raised in Report 1943/TC. The deadline of April 2012 was thought to be unrealistic in terms of completion but that a review was achievable. In the light of this the movers withdrew the motion and the Committee agreed the following:

RECOMMENDED: That a Town Plan and Strategy Sub-Committee be formed with a membership of six members with powers to co-opt external representation as required. Draft terms of reference to be agreed at the next meeting would include:

- evaluating the impact of the Localism Bill;
- providing a framework for the development of discrete areas of activity, e.g. revision of the 'Vision for Leigh' and Neighbourhood Planning;
- progressing the initial review of Council priorities, e.g. compiling councillors' objectives and formulating questions for public consultation.

RESOLVED: That Southend Borough Council is asked to clarify their short and medium term plans for the Community Centre after July 2012 with particular reference to the Farmers' Market.

70. STATEMENT OF INTENT AS TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – Report 1934a/TC (Appendix 3 to the agenda)

The Committee made suggestions and the following amendments to the report.

- In provision of information include a sentence on website about informing and consulting.
- In 'Opportunities for Community Involvement' remove 'will make' to 'makes'. In second paragraph change 'have' to 'has'
- In 'Opportunities for Formal Representations to the Council' between '10' and 'days' insert 'working'

With these revisions the Statement is **RECOMMENDED** for adoption (attached as Appendix 2)

71. ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVE (SOUTHEND) TO EALC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

There were no nominations so this was referred to Council

72. EALC 'MAKING THE LINKS' and AGM 27th September 2011 – Report 1945/TC (Appendix 4 to the agenda)

The report was **noted**.

73. GENERAL PURPOSES BUDGET – Report 1942/FGP 28th September 2011 (Appendix 5 to the agenda)

The report was **noted**.

FINANCE

74. REFERENCES FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

Recommendation from Allotments Committee Meeting 28th September 2011 (Minute 57)

RESOLVED: That up to £500 is taken from reserves to finance the installation of posts to close off tracks during the winter months.

75. OFFICE RENT REVIEW

It was hoped to have the independent valuation advice by the end of the week.

76. OFFICE AND COMMITTEE BUDGETS

- Office Budget Report 1941/FGP 28th September 2011 (Appendix 6 to the agenda)
Members raised concern over the potential overspend in the photocopying budget, the Town Clerk agreed to monitor usage and allocate specific print runs to the appropriate events budgets.
- Committee Income and Expenditure Report 1940/FGP 28th September 2011 (Appendix 7 to the agenda)

Members **noted** the report

77. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE – Report 1944/I&E (Appendix 8 to the agenda)

The Committee **noted** the report.

78. BUDGET FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES for 2012/13 (attached as Appendix 3)

Members considered the budgets and made the following amendments:

Sheet 6 – Remove the following budget heads Crime Prevention, Schools and Donations.

Sheet 7 - Remove Rent Reviews Arrears £8,400, increase Gas to £1250, Electricity to £750 and Office Tools to £150

79. BANK ACCOUNT BALANCES as at 28th September 2011

HSBC BMM A/c	£ 148,972.73
HSBC Current A/c	£ 32,345.73
HSBC Payroll A/c	£ 2,054.42
HSBC Imprest A/c	£ 6,589.99

The meeting closed at 10.33pm

Review of vision for Leigh

- On joining the council I asked for a copy of the, strategic plan, as suggested in the “Good Councillor's Guide”, and after much searching a single copy of “Vision for Leigh” was unearthed. It was published in 2003.
- Presumably since then much of what the council set out to achieve in the short to medium term has been achieved.
- We need a plan to know what we are doing and why we are doing it. To monitor our performance and to react to changes. A plan needs to be regularly reviewed and updated to react to external changes.
- Team work and all pulling together depends on a plan
- Rome wasn't built in a day but it was built to a plan
- With localism we will have to draw up a ‘Neighbourhood Plan’, and to do that we must know what we want, an up-to-date and current “Vision for Leigh”, on which we all agree so that we are all working together

What should we do?

- Our plan requires all councillors, public participation by all means possible and as wide a consultation as possible. A questionnaire in the town guide, while a good idea, just isn't enough. It needs to be an immediate and then an on going process.
- It need not be complicated. I could envision a layered approach,
 - 1) All Councillors say what they would like to see the council do/achieve.
 - 2) Full public consultation by all means possible
 - 3) Fill in the details.
- I have my personal aims and “vision”. The existing “Vision for Leigh” is an excellent piece of work and should be our starting point. We can each present say 3 “visions” we would like to add or change and three “visions” we would like to retain. Then build from there and fill in the detail.

I can say right now that one vision is that LTC acquires and runs a community centre and Cllr David Stanley and myself have made an outline start on this project. I am announcing it now because it is a major project and there is a window of opportunity with funds available from the Rectory Grove development and I am also aware that other parties have their eyes on these funds. We shall be very strongly bringing this proposal forward in the consideration of “Vision for Leigh” and using due process, working within the Town Council, and involving all councillors, explore this exciting proposition.

Conclusion

- Others may have a quite different vision, different objectives or like things just the way they are. These are all equally valued view points which are why there are 16 of us.
- Whatever our views and whatever we are doing an up-to-date plan to refer to is a big help. Things change.



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Report 1934b/TC

DRAFT STATEMENT OF INTENT AS TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

(WITH REFERENCE TO THE POWER OF WELL-BEING)

MAIN STATEMENT OF INTENT

Aims and Objectives

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council is an open and transparent Council, which values the opinions of the community, which it serves. It has in the past, and will continue to do so in the future, listen to the needs and concerns of that community, and will do everything within its power and financial constraints, to make Leigh-on-Sea a better place to live, and work.

Defining the Community

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council is keen to reach all groups and individuals who work, or live in the area. It has historical links with local Church Groups, educational establishments and the many voluntary groups working for the good of the Town, to ensure that as wide a cross section as possible of the community can have access to the Council, its Members, and its staff.

Provision of Information to the Community

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council has many avenues through which it communicates with its community. These include:

A web site that gives Councillor details and a statement about the Council's 'Freedom of Information' scheme, as well as going beyond the work of the Town Council, and provides links to many other useful services, including the principal authority. An Annual Report is published on the website and in hard copy. Publishing of agendas, outside the Town Council Office plus four other noticeboards around the town and on the web site for all Council and committee meetings. Publishing of minutes, on the Council web site, for all Council and Committee meetings. The Towns involvement in the Annual Town Meeting, with its public question time. The Town Council will use the website and other forms of communication to consult with its electorate.

The Town Council publishes a newsletter once a quarter 'Leigh Matters' to inform residents of issues and events within the town. The annual External Audit offers the opportunity for questions to be asked about the latest Statement of Accounts. A synopsis of the financial accounts is published within the Annual report.

Opportunities for Community Involvement

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council makes every opportunity available to the electorate to ensure excellent community involvement. These will include the following methods:

The Town Council has a public question session at every Council meeting, where the electorate can raise issues “in relation to the business on the agenda or request matters to be discussed at a subsequent meeting”.

Once a month on the first Saturday Leigh Town Councillors conduct an open surgery to enable residents to put concerns and questions to the Council.

At all Committee meetings the public are permitted to ask questions and provide input at the discretion of the Chairman.

The website will contain a feedback form to enable residents to input into current issues and raise concerns.

Opportunities for Formal Representations to the Council

Issues received in writing, providing they are received before the deadline for closure of the agenda, are considered for inclusion as a stated item on the next agenda.

It is a target that correspondence received from a member of the public is at least acknowledged, wherever possible, within two working days and actioned within 10 working days.

Involvement in Partnerships

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council has representation on various partnerships, and committees. Representatives are elected at the Annual Council Meeting. The Town Council encourages and supports public meetings organised by the Police, Health Authority, and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council where they feel information should be made available to the residents of Leigh-on-Sea.

Role of Council members and Officers

As an open and transparent Town Council, both Members and officers seek to offer a high quality professional service to all whom they serve. Both Members and Officers are keen to maintain relevant Codes of Conduct in their business, and see the community as “customers” rather than an electorate.

Specific Areas for Community Involvement

Where there is a specific issue, or a new project, that the Town Council wish to consider, it is of value to the Town Council to seek the views of the community who will be most affected. The residents of the Town can have confidence that their “voice” will be heard, and that the Council will work with the community to reach a common goal.

Sheet 6

Finance & G.P. 2nd draft budget F & G.P. 04-10-11

Heading	Income	Expenditure
Community Affairs*	0	3,000
Premises	0	500
Elections	0	5,000
Legal Costs	0	500
Annual Town Meeting	0	500
Publicity	0	3,000
Civic	0	0
Renewals Fund**	0	12,500
Totals	0	25,000
Net cost		25,000

* Grant Aid Budget subject to advertising and application

** New Rolling Renewals Programme

Sheet 7

Second Provisional Office Budget for 2012-13

For information
Office budget and expenditure

Budget	Heading	2012/13
2011/12		
	Premises	
10,500	Rent	13,000
5,000.00	Insurance	4,500
5,400.00	General Rates	5,600
280	Water Rates	300
960	Gas	1,250
650	Electricity	750
2,300	Office Cleaning	2,300
300	Premises Repairs & Services*	0
300	Office Tools*	150
100	Contingencies	300
25,790		28,150
	Administration	
1,450	Stationery Cost	800
50	Library	50
1,750	Communication	1,750
830	Photocopying	2,400
1,600	Subscriptions	1,600
1,900	Postage	1,700
50	Entertaining	50
100	Licences	100
400	Expenses/Travel Costs - Cllrs**	400
300	Miscellaneous	500
1,200	Audit	2,000
2,600	IT	1,000
600	Training - Staff	1,000
1,000	Training - Cllrs	1,000
400	Mileage & Expenses - Staff	450
14,230		14,800
40,020	Total	42,950

	Budget	Expenditure	% spent
1997/8	14,515	13,122	90
1998/9	17,260	14,401	83
1999/2000	14,075	10,850	77
2000/1	12,505	11,467	92
2001/2	12,865	11,130	87
2002/3	14,690	12,229	83
2003/4	13,925	15,560	112
2004/5	16,000	15,418	96
2005/6	21,000	20,766	99
2006/7	29,110	29,003	100
2007/8	28,360	29,164	103
2008/9	32,060	31,867	99
2009/10	33,570	32,998	98
2010/11	36,460	36,606	100
2011/12	40,020		

* Included in Renewals Fund General Purposes Budget

** Now including LTC area