



# Leigh-on-Sea Town Council

71-73 Elm Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 1SP - Tel: 01702 716288  
[council@leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:council@leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk) [www.leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk)

Chairman: Cllr Carole Mulronee  
Vice Chairman: Cllr Caroline Parker  
Town Clerk: Paul Beckerson



## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LEIGH-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT 7.30PM ON WEDNESDAY 13th FEBRUARY 2013 AT THE LEIGH COMMUNITY CENTRE, 71-73 ELM ROAD, LEIGH-ON-SEA

Present: Cllrs: Carole Mulronee (Chairman), Mark Bromfield, Margaret Cotgrove, Syrie Cox, Geoff Crawford, Donald Fraser, Richard Herbert, Pat Holden, Paul Lawrence, Caroline Parker and Cliff Passmore

Also in attendance: Paul Beckerson (Town Clerk),  
Prior to the meeting prayers were read by Major John Carmichael.

### ***The meeting opened at 7.30pm***

#### 96. OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman welcomed members and gave a résumé of events attended since the last meeting, including Holocaust Memorial Day at the Civic Centre with the Vice Chairman, a service at Chelmsford attended by the Princess Royal to commemorate the 1953 floods with Cllr Margaret Cotgrove and a flood memorial event on Canvey Island.

Members were asked if anyone was available to attend the High Sheriff's Award Ceremony and reminded about the Farmers' Market this coming Friday.

#### **E mails**

Recently there has been a large increase in email traffic and notes to members of staff from Councillors requesting information, research or actions to be taken. Often this generates a trail of emails with secondary requests. Obviously Councillors are fully entitled to seek information but members must bear in mind the other pulls on staff time in carrying out the work of the council and running the community centre. Councillors should be aware that staff cannot be expected, other than in an emergency, to respond to councillors' requests immediately especially if it is a councillor's own 'project'. It has always been the case that councillors carry out their own research for matters they may wish to raise at a future date.

That aside queries can take several hours to research and this inevitably breaks into other scheduled work staff are involved in. This is disruptive of staff schedules and the work of the Council. I would remind members that information on committee decisions etc. is available on the web site where members can access agenda and minutes. For those members who do not have access to the internet there is a computer in the foyer at the community centre where the website can be accessed or speak to another Councillor who may be able to assist.

It is not unreasonable that an email or written requests to staff are dealt with in the context of other staff priorities and that a reasonable period for response is within 48 hours of the request. Multiple requests should be avoided.

#### **Parking**

There are some issues relating to parking at the centre and this is to make sure all members are clear. The area at front of the buildings which includes 3 disabled bays is not part of our lease. I would

remind members that it is illegal to park in disabled bays for however short a period. If staff see anyone parked there without a blue badge they will leave a note on cars to advise people. Anyone who parks there runs the risk of getting a ticket.

The parking out the back provides 3 parking spaces for the CC – we intend to designate these. There are also designated spaces for the Connexions building which must not be used. The Centre Manager is speaking to Connexions to come to an arrangement with them about using the other parking spaces

Since agreeing to obtain parking permits from the Borough for the car park next door – no requests for these have been received from members. The permits themselves are still awaited from the Borough.

The Vice Chairman had attended the funeral of Cllr John Wren's wife; the Council had sent a card of condolence from all Councillors and staff.

97. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were none

98. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs: Alex Coulson, Jerry Holden, Patsy Ryan, David Stanley and John Wren.

99. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were none

100. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

There were none

101. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2013 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

102. COMMITTEES

- a) Planning Committee – The minutes of the meeting held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2013 were **noted**.
- b) Allotments Committee – The minutes of the meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2013 were **noted**.
- d) Leigh Community Centre Committee – The minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2013 were **noted**.
- e) Finance & General Purposes Committee – The minutes of the meeting held on the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2013 were **noted** with the exception of Minute 152, 153, 155 and 159.

Council considered the following recommendations:

Minute 152 – GENERAL DISPENSATIONS - That the following dispensations be granted for a period up to the next ordinary Town Council elections to permit Members to debate on a matter and to vote in the following circumstances notwithstanding that they may have a DPI, other pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest.

- (1) Where the matter relates to the allotment functions of the Council and the Member is a tenant of the Council (provided that the matter does not relate particularly to the Member's tenancy or lease);
- (2) An allowance, payment or indemnity given to members;
- (3) Any ceremonial honour given to members; and for the avoidance of doubt
- (4) Setting a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992

In the light of the Under Secretary of State's guidance letter members **RESOLVED** to amend the recommendation by removing all words from the semi colon in sub paragraph (3) to the end.

Council **RESOLVED** the following amended recommendation:

That the following dispensations be granted for a period up to the next ordinary Town Council elections to permit Members to debate on a matter and to vote in the following circumstances notwithstanding that they may have a DPI, other pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest.

- (1) Where the matter relates to the allotment functions of the Council and the Member is a tenant of the Council (provided that the matter does not relate particularly to the Member's tenancy or lease);
- (2) An allowance, payment or indemnity given to members;
- (3) Any ceremonial honour given to members

Min 153 – DISPENSATION PROCEDURES - Council **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation:

That a panel consisting of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council and Chairman of F&GPC be delegated by Council the power to grant dispensations. The power rests with the relevant authority under section 33(1) of the Localism Act 2011 and the basis is set out under section 33(2).

In the event that the panel members are unable to determine the grant of a dispensation for any reason, they should refer it to the full Council for determination.

Terms of Reference for the panel were to be considered by the Audit Working Party.

Min 155 – PROPOSAL FOR LTC TWITTER FEED – Council **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation:

That a trial be entered into and to assess and review it after a few months

***Cllr Mark Bromfield left the meeting***

Min 159 – DEVOLVING ALLOTMENTS MAINTENANCE – Council **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendations:

- **That all elements of allotments maintenance as detailed in the ASAs be devolved with payment being met from rents received.**
- **That an organisation with established expertise be contracted to carry out the hedge trimming.**
- **That Allotments Service Agreements be entered into with the Manchester Drive Allotment Society (MDAS), the Leigh Allotments Society (LOSALGA) and representatives from Marshall Close, the *Agencies*, to provide maintenance services on their respective allotment sites to commence on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013.**

and

- That Council enter into ASA agreements with the Societies and Marshall Close Tenants.

***Cllr Mark Bromfield re-joined the meeting***

The Council wished to minute its thanks to Cllr Jerry Holden for preparing the ASA agreements.

103. REPORT FROM SBC RATEPAYERS' FORUM

The chairman reported on the meeting and felt that the responses, though as expected, gave due deference to the Town Council.

Council **noted** the report.

104. FINANCIAL REPORT

**RESOLVED** that the Income and Expenditure Report 2162/I&E be approved – (Appendix 2 to the agenda)

***The meeting closed at 8.13pm***