



Leigh-on-Sea Town Council

71-73 Elm Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 1SP | Tel: 01702 716288

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Chair: Councillor Bernard Arscott | **Vice Chair:** Councillor Sandra McCurdy

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting.

The Council met at 7.05pm on Tuesday 17th September 2024 in the lower hall, Leigh Community Centre, 71-73 Elm Road, Leigh-On-Sea, Essex, SS9 1SP.

Chair: Cllr B Arscott

Vice Chair: Cllr S McCurdy

Members: Cllrs Dr D Bowry, J Garston, P Gilson, A Hart, J Suttling and P Wexham.

In Attendance: the Town Clerk, Clare Milligan, Southend City Cllrs S Allen, and R Longstaff and fifty-three members of the public.

218/24 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and agreed for Cllrs C Mulroney, J Lloyd, and R Arscott.

Proposed by Cllr B Arscott, seconded by Cllr J Garston and agreed unanimously.

Cllrs C Lambert and C Watts did not attend the meeting.

219/24 Declarations of Members' Interests

Cllr J Garston declared that a relative was a Southend City Councillor and he owned a business in Hadleigh. There were no other declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Pecuniary Interests or Registrable Non-Pecuniary Interests.

220/24 Public Participation

Various members of the public made representations regarding the Castle Point Borough Council Local Plan re the call for development sites which included the areas owned by the Salvation Army. There was complete opposition to any of the Salvation Army areas being used. This included concern about losing green belt land to building development, the lack of utilities for the area, possible flooding, lack of infrastructure and losing the natural boundary between Hadleigh and Leigh-on-Sea. Questions were asked as to whether the Council would be in agreement with the opposition. Whether the plans included Morrisons car park. It was confirmed the car park was included. The Council was also asked if they would seek to hold a meeting with Castle Point Borough Council.

Members of the public also made comments suggesting deferring the membership of committees until the elections took place. Changing the internal auditor was not a good idea and could the whole internal audit report be given to Council.

Councillor B Arscott thanked the public for their questions and comments and proposed to bring point 17, Castle Point Borough Council Local Plan Consultation, forward once the previous Full Council minutes had been agreed. Proposed by Cllr B Arscott, seconded by Cllr P Gilson and agreed unanimously.

221/24 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 25th June 2024 and the Extra Ordinary meetings on 2nd July 2024 and 23rd July 2024 were agreed and signed as a true record.

222/24 Castle Point Borough Council Local Plan Consultation

The Council discussed the issue and concerns. Cllr P Gilson advised that he was very concerned about the proposal and that roads would not be able to cope with any increase in traffic. Residents would be trapped in the area, there was not enough infrastructure, a lack of fresh water etc. Cllr P Wexham felt a campaign was needed to lead against the plan and that the Council should write to say how strongly it objects. Cllr J Suttling could not comprehend how anyone would want to build on an amazing green belt area. Cllr Dr D Bowry read out a few of the comments from the community workshop that had taken place.

Cllr B Arscott read out the suggested reply to the consultation written by Cllr C Mulroney.

It was agreed to write to Castle Point Borough Council to express in no uncertain terms that the Council was opposed to the Salvation Army ground being used for development. That the points raised by Cllr C Mulroney would be used as a basis for the letter and the Clerk would construct the letter and circulate to all Councillors for comments before submitting them to Castle Point Borough Council. Proposed by Cllr P Gilson, seconded by Cllr A Arscott and agreed unanimously.

223/24 Southend City Councillors Reports (For information Only)

Southend City Council Councillors gave updates on what had been happening at the City Council. This included tree work that had taken place, dredging of the Gypsie Bridge pool, Belton Way highway works having been completed, the removal of the badgers on Cliffs Parade, the 20-mph experimental order for roads off Glendale Gardens and the two planning applications for the old Barclays Bank.

224/24 Clerks Report

1. Insurance – The Clerk has contacted Southend City Council (SCC) re the column inspections and permits (emailed 3rd September) to find out what was required. After further emails to SCC the Clerk heard back on the 11th September. The Clerk will now complete the paperwork. The column inspection has been completed and is valid until October 2025. The Clerk also advised that after contacting the insurance company the Council does have cover for the hanging baskets. The Clerk will also complete the paperwork for the Christmas Lights.

225/24 Committee Vacancies

A brief discussion took place regarding the vacancies on the Community and Culture Committee and the Planning, Licensing and Highways Committee. Cllr A Hart suggested that the vacancies were left until the next Full Council meeting in November 2024 when the new Councillors will have been elected to the Council. Proposed by Cllr A Hart, seconded by Cllr Dr D Bowry; with 3 for and 5 against the motion was not passed. Cllr S McCurdy put forward that Cllr J Suttling be added to the Community and Culture Committee. Cllr J Suttling agreed with this as she wanted to become more involved. Proposed by Cllr S McCurdy, seconded by Cllr B Arscott; with 7 for and 1 abstention the motion was passed. The remaining vacancies on the Planning, Licensing and Highways Committee remain vacant and will be looked at in November 2024.

226/24 Committee Meeting Minutes

The following committee meeting minutes were noted:

a) Finance and Governance Committee meetings held on 2nd July 2024 and 13th August 2024.

- b) Planning, Highways and Licensing Committee meetings held on 9th July 2024.
- c) Community and Culture Committee meetings held on 16th July 2024 and 20th August 2024.
- d) Staffing Committee meetings held on 17th July 2024 and 13th August 2024.

8.12pm Cllr S McCurdy left the meeting.

227/24 Meeting Dates

The Clerk had circulated a proposal from Cllr A Hart to change the meeting dates for the remainder of the municipal year. The Clerk had also put forward an amended schedule. A discussion took place. Cllr A Hart proposed the amended meeting schedule he had produced, seconded by Cllr Dr D Bowry with 2 for, 4 against and 1 abstention the motion was not passed. Cllr B Arscott proposed the amended meeting schedule the Clerk had produced, seconded by Cllr J Garston with 4 for, 2 against and 1 abstention the motion was passed. The sheet the Clerk provided was to be undated in a more coherent manner and recirculated to all Councillors.

228/24 Insurance

The Clerk had circulated the renewal notice from the insurance company for the year 2024/25. The cost for the year is £3,721.76. The contract for the insurance was for a 5-year period from 2022. It was agreed to pay the invoice. Proposed by Cllr B Arscott, seconded by Cllr J Suttling and agreed unanimously.

229/24 Bank Mandate and Invoice Checking

The Clerk asked the Council to allow her to be added to the bank mandate for HSBC and for the CCLA account. Proposed by Cllr B Arscott, seconded by Cllr J Suttling and agreed unanimously.

The Clerk had circulated a list of dates with Councillors names against them for checking the invoices for payment. The Clerk asked the Councillors to let her know if they would not be able to make the date, she had allocated them to.

230/24 Internal Auditor for 2024/25

The Clerk had circulated two quotes for undertaking the internal audit for the financial year 2024/25. It was agreed that the Council would re-engage Heelis and Lodge for the financial year 2024/25. Proposed by Cllr B Arscott, seconded by Cllr A Hart and agreed unanimously.

231/24 Financial Transactions

The Clerk had circulated the expenditure and income for the month of August 2024. It was agreed to pay all the invoices. Proposed by Cllr P Gilson, seconded by Cllr B Arscott and agreed unanimously.

232/24 Financial Reviews

The Clerk had circulated the bank reconciliations for August 2024. These were agreed.

The Clerk had circulated the budget summary up to the end of August 2024 for comparison and agreement. The budget was noted and agreed.

233/24 Poppy Wreaths

The Clerk had circulated the quote for the various poppy wreaths and asked the Council how many they would like to purchase and which type. It was agreed to purchase four of the Type B wreaths at the cost of £20 per wreath. Proposed by Cllr B Arscott, seconded by Cllr Dr D Bowry and agreed unanimously.

234/24 Christmas Lights, Christmas Tree, and Christmas Events

The Clerk had circulated the quote from the Christmas Light company for purchasing, installing, and decorating the Christmas Tree for the Library Gardens. She had also circulated the proposal for the setting of the lights around the Town. After a discussion it was agreed to approve the quote for the Christmas Tree at a cost of £3,000 plus VAT. Proposed by Cllr B Arscott, seconded by Cllr P Gillson and agreed unanimously. Cllr C Mulroney had emailed to ask for a comparison cost with the previous year. The Clerk had advised that the cost for 2023/24 was £2,800 plus VAT.

It was agreed to set up a working group to discuss what the turning on of the lights event might look like. The working group would consist of Cllrs P Gilson, J Suttling, A Hart, Dr D Bowery, C Mulroney, and B Arscott.

235/24 Art Exhibition

The Clerk had circulated a short report on the possible art exhibition and Cllr P Gillson spoke about it in more detail. This included details of when the event would take place (from the 29th November 2024), who may possibly open it, what the opening would look like, monies raised from the event possibly going to the Chair's Charity etc. A discussion then took place, and questions were asked by Councillors. A proposal to have the event was agreed. Proposed by Cllr P Gilson, seconded by Cllr J Suttling and agreed unanimously.

236/24 Memorial Bench

The Clerk advised that the installation of a memorial bench for Roger Harbidge at Strand Wharf had in principle been agreed. However, the Clerk was bringing this to the Council for full agreement. Cllr B Arscott explained the situation and although there was concern that this could possibly open the door to further requests for benches, he explained this was a one off. It was proposed to install the bench. Proposed by Cllr B Arscott, seconded by Cllr P Gilson; with 6 for and 1 against the motion was passed.

237/24 Allotment Tenancy and Application Form 2024

The Clerk had circulated the revised recommended paperwork from the allotment working group for the allotment tenants to complete when taking on a plot and the updated terms and conditions. The paperwork also included a new form for any complaints that may arise. It was proposed to adopt the new paperwork. Proposed by Cllr P Gilson, seconded by Cllr B Arscott and agreed unanimously.

Cllr P Wexham asked about the money paid to each of the allotment associations.

Cllr B Arscott advised the amount agreed was part of the service agreement with the associations for maintaining the sites.

238/24 IT Update

The Clerk had circulated the quote for moving the Councils files over to the Cloud. The cost of this was £255 plus VAT. It was agreed to accept the quote and move the files. Proposed by Cllr P Gilson, seconded by Cllr J Garston and agreed unanimously.

The Clerk had circulated the quote for a laptop for herself at a cost of £945 plus VAT. The quote included setting up the laptop. It was agreed to purchase a laptop for the Clerk. Proposed by Cllr P Gilson, seconded by Cllr J Garston and agreed unanimously.

239/24 Updates from Councilors and Matters for Information

Cllr P Gilson advised he was looking into the Gypsy bridge shelter repair, and this would be brought back to a Community and Culture Committee meeting.

Cllr B Arscott advised he attended Essex Association Local Councils (EALC) Annual General Meeting.

240/24 Private and Confidential

RESOLVED to exclude the press and public (The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960) due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. Proposed by Cllr B Arscott, seconded by Cllr R Garston and agreed unanimously.

241/24 Staffing Matters

A discussion took place regarding a legal case involving an ex-employee and agreement was made. Proposed by Cllr B Arscott, seconded by Cllr J Suttling and agreed unanimously.

The Clerk asked for agreement to advertise the part-time Caretaker Vacancy. This was agreed.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.45pm