

EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Earley Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Radstock Lane, Earley, Berkshire on Wednesday 21st February 2018 which commenced at 7.45pm.

Present

Chairman – The Mayor, Councillor M Firmager

Councillors M Ahmed, J Armstrong, Dr N Brock, Mrs L Chambers, T Chambers, Mrs J Clark, Mrs M De Jong, Ms P Dunn, G Grandison, T Holton, R Houlbrooke, N Jorgensen, Mrs P Jorgensen, W Luck, Mrs S Matthews, Miss J Rance JP, J Russell, Mrs A Swaddle, B Wedge and P Willis.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Miss L Blumenthal (WBC), A Bradley, D Chopping and C Smith (WBC)

65. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on the 29th November 2017 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

66. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor announced that since the last meeting of the Town Council he had attended a number of events as follows:-

1 st December	Christmas Lights switch on and carols at Maiden Place Shopping Centre
2 nd December	Hillside School Christmas Fair
9 th December	Air Cadets Christmas Meal at Wokingham Cricket Club
10 th December	Wokingham Borough Schools Carol Concert at Loddon Valley Leisure Centre
17 th December	St Peter's Church Christmas Carol Concert
17 th January	Wokingham Borough Mayor's Magical Fundraising

67. TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEES

To receive the following:

67.1 Planning Committee

671.1 The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 5th December 2017 were presented by Councillor W Luck

On the proposition of Councillor Luck seconded by Councillor J Armstrong it was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 5th December 2017 (Minutes 84 – 98) be approved.

67.1.2 The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 9th January 2018 were presented by Councillor W Luck

On the proposition of Councillor Luck seconded by Councillor B Wedge it was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 9th January 2018 (Minutes 99 – 109) be approved.

- 67.1.3 The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 6th February 2018 were approved by Councillor W Luck

On the proposition of Councillor Luck seconded by Councillor P Willis it was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 6th February 2018 (Minutes 110 – 120) be approved.

67.2 Amenities & Leisure Committee

- 67.2.1 The Minutes of the meeting of the Amenities & Leisure Committee held on 17th January 2018 were presented by Councillor Mrs L Chambers

On the proposition of Councillor Mrs L Chambers seconded by Councillor T Chambers it was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Amenities & Leisure Committee held on 17th January 2018 (Minutes 52 - 61) be approved.

67.3 Policy & Resources Committee

- 67.3.1 The Minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on 31st January 2018 were presented by Councillor N Jorgensen.

In presenting the Minutes, Councillor Jorgensen drew particular attention to Minute 43.1 concerning the draft estimates of income and expenditure and the level of the Town Council's Precept for 2018/19. In asking Members to consider these recommendations, the Committee Chairman highlighted the good service from Town Council staff which benefits local residents. He confirmed that in addition to the current services provided, the Council plans to spend considerable capital sums on equipment and facilities. The plans for upgrading play equipment at Meadow Park and the purchase of a Ransome Batwing and Quadraplay to replace existing aging machinery and ensure the continuation of high standards of maintenance in Town Council parks were highlighted.

Councillor Jorgensen confirmed the Town Council's continuing support to local groups that provide services for elderly and less able Earley residents. He also confirmed support for the Citizens Advice Bureau in Wokingham and Reading and voluntary groups that provide services to Earley Residents.

In conclusion, Councillor Jorgensen advised that if agreed for 2018/19, the increase to the Town Council's Precept would be 4.996%, at £859,700 which equated to a charge of £72.59 for a Band D household, an increase of £3.45 for the year.

On the proposition of Councillor N Jorgensen and seconded by Councillor G Grandison it was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee held on 31st January 2018 (Minutes 42 – 52) be approved

68. REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES

68.1 Reports of Representatives

68.1.1 Wokingham Borough Sports Council

Councillors noted a report on a meeting of Wokingham Borough Sports Council held on 30th January 2018, prepared by Councillor Michael Firmager previously circulated with the agenda.

68.1.2 CResCent AGM

Councillors noted a report on a meeting of the CResCent AGM held on 14th November 2017, prepared by Councillor Tim Chambers previously circulated with the agenda.

68.1.3 CResCent Trustees Meeting

Councillors noted a report on a meeting of the CResCent Trustees Meeting held on 12th February 2018, prepared by Councillor Tim Chambers circulated with the agenda.

68.1.4 Earley Day Centre

Councillors noted a report on a meeting of Earley Day Centre held on 9th January 2018, prepared by Councillor Mrs Linda Chambers previously circulated with the agenda.

68.1.5 Earley Volunteer Driver Bureau

Councillors noted a report on a meeting of the Earley Volunteer Driver Bureau held on 29th January 2018, prepared by Councillor Pamela Dunn previously circulated with the supplementary agenda.

69. MAIDEN PLACE POST OFFICE

Councillors considered the contents of a letter received from the Post Office concerning the future of a presence at Maiden Place previously circulated with the agenda

The Town Mayor, Councillor M Firmager reported that he had received correspondence on this matter which indicated that efforts were in place to resume Post Office services at Maiden Place and that applications for potential partners to run the facility would be welcomed. Following discussion it was

RESOLVED that the Town Mayor write a letter on behalf of the Town Council to the Post Office to highlight the importance of the service and encourage a solution for the benefit of local residents. It was also noted that the next nearest service was located at Asda, over one mile away.

70. INTERNAL AUDIT 2017/18

70.1 Report of Internal Auditor

Councillors noted that the Internal Auditor had completed the review of financial systems and controls and both her report and also the report prepared by Senior Officers of the Council, were attached.

The Town Clerk drew attention to the report prepared by Senior Officers and provided further detail on the changes which had taken place over the last year that have contributed to the results detailed in the Internal Audit interim report. He highlighted the pressing need for the changes required to the current inadequate system to enable the Town Council to run an accurate accounting system fit for the future.

The Town Clerk also referred to the volume of transactions which take place owing to the large number of facilities run by the Town Council and also that nearly one third of income was generated through these facilities. As detailed in the Officers Report, a number of different software accounting systems were currently being examined in detail together with their ability to interface with booking systems, allotment booking systems and cemetery booking systems. The importance of the reporting functionality of these systems was also stressed.

The Town Clerk provided assurances that a number of the issues that the Interim Audit Report highlighted such as the data back-log, were now in hand and that he was confident that the end of year deadlines would be achieved with no further problem.

RESOLVED that the interim report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended 31st March 2018, as appended to these Minutes be noted and that the Audit Action Plan, should appear on the agenda of the next meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee.

71. **SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**

Councillors considered the Schedule of Meetings for the 2018/19 Municipal Year, attached to the agenda. It was further noted that the Schedule had been compiled with reference to the Draft Meetings Calendar for Wokingham Borough Council.

RESOLVED that the scheduled meetings for 2018/19, as attached to these Minutes, be adopted.

71.1 **Schedule of Sub-Committee Meetings**

Councillors considered the suggested meeting dates for the Community & Youth Sub-Committee. Following the decision of the Policy & Resources Committee at Minute 44.2 the suggested dates were as follows:

2018

Wednesday, 30th May
 Wednesday, 18th July
 Wednesday, 19th September

2019

Wednesday, 30th January
 Wednesday, 20th March

All meetings to commence at 7.15 pm, and terminate at 8.00 pm.

RESOLVED that the suggested meeting dates as detailed in the Agenda be adopted.

72. COUNCILLORS' ATTENDANCES**72.1 Record of Members' Attendance**

Councillors noted details of the Councillors' attendances during 2017/18 which had been circulated with the agenda, and which are appended to these Minutes.

73. ORDERS FOR PAYMENT

Councillors were requested to receive details of Orders for Payment since the last meeting of the Town Council.

RESOLVED that the various accounts as set out in the list attached to these Minutes (Vouchers 826 – 856, 857 – 889 and 890 – 902) and Imprest (Vouchers 081 – 122) be paid in the sums as stated.

73. PUBLICATIONS

Councillors noted that the following publications had been received and were available for perusal in the Council Offices:

Earley Crescent Community Association:	Minutes of 76 th Meeting of the Board of Trustees held on 27 th November 2017.
Woodley Town Council:	Agenda and Minutes for the period 12 th December 2017 to 30 th January 2018. Revised Budget Estimates 2017/18, Budget Estimates 2018/19: Revision A. Proposed Charges 2018/19 Appendix.
Maiden Erlegh Residents' Association:	Minutes of meeting held 14 th December 2017. Minutes of meeting held 11 th January 2018. Minutes of meeting held 8 th February 2018.
Neighbourhood Action Group (Community Forum):	Agenda for meeting to be held 12 th February 2018.
Earley Community Minibus:	Agenda for Meeting held 13 th February 2018.

74. PRESS RELEASES

RESOLVED that the following items received special press attention

1. The closure of the Post Office in Maiden Place
2. Earley Town Council Precept agreement and comments

75. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 8.48pm.