



EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting for Members of Earley Town Council held remotely on Wednesday 30th March 2022 which commenced at 7.30pm.

Present

Chair – The Mayor, Councillor A Bassett

Councillors: G Bhangra, N Brock, D Chopping, J Clark, R Cook, J Eastwell, M Eastwell, D Hare, R Houlbrooke, C Jones, I Khayinza, G Littler, A Long, T Maher, S Matthews, A Mickleburgh, A Neal, R Sangster, M Shaw, C Smith, M Smith and K Yabsley.

In Attendance: J Friend (Town Clerk), E Carroll (Deputy Town Clerk), and R Fryer (Democratic Services Officer).

The meeting opened with a minute's silence to remember all those impacted by the war in Ukraine.

Councillors discussed the merits of flying the flag of Ukraine from the Council Offices. Members were of the opinion that a flag should be flown to show solidarity with the people of Ukraine. Members also agreed that the purchase cost of the flag should be borne by Councillors, not by residents. It was

RECOMMENDED that a Ukrainian flag be purchased, that the cost be borne by Councillors and that it should be raised at the earliest opportunity.

139. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Ireland, and A Newton.

140. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

141. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public in attendance.

142. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council (119-138) held on Wednesday 9th February 2022 were a true record and could be signed by the Chair.

143. TOWN MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Town Mayor reported that she had enjoyed attending events across Earley and the local area, although some had been cancelled due to Coronavirus. She noted her visits to:

- Meeting new residents from Hong Kong at Trinity Church on Thursday 3rd March 2022.

- Attending the World Day of Prayer service at Park United Reform Church on Friday 23rd March 2022.
- The unveiling of the Covid recognition plaque at the Council Offices on Friday 18th March 2022.
- Hosting the Service to Earley Awards at Radstock Lane Community Centre on Saturday 19th March 2022. She wished to thank the officers for organising the event and noted how pleased the recipients had been to receive their awards.

144. COUNCILLOR ROLES

144.1 Chair of Staffing Committee

It was noted that Cllr D Hare had replaced Cllr C Jones as Chair of the Staffing Committee.

145. COMMITTEE REPORTS

145.1 Amenities and Leisure Committee

Cllr N Brock presented the draft Minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Leisure Committee held on Wednesday 2nd March 2022. She noted Minute 96 ‘Platinum Jubilee’ and the Committee’s discussions on how best to mark Queen Elizabeth II’s Platinum Jubilee.

The draft Minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Leisure Committee held on 2nd March 2022 (Minutes 83-101) were received.

145.2 Planning Committee

Cllr G Littler presented the Minutes of a meeting for members of the Planning Committee held on Tuesday 8th February 2022, and the draft Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on Tuesday 8th March 2022. He highlighted Minute 161 ‘Wokingham Borough Active Travel Fund – Woodley to Reading Active Travel Route Consultation’ noting WBC had conceded the need to rethink the scheme and that WBC had committed to consulting with both Woodley Town Council and Earley Town Council on the revised scheme prior to wider public consultation.

The Minutes of the meeting for members of the Planning Committee held on 8th February 2022 (Minutes 138-153) and draft Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on 8th March 2022 (Minutes 154-166) were received.

145.3 Policy and Resources Committee

Cllr D Hare presented the draft Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on Wednesday 16th March 2022.

The draft Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 16th March 2022 (Minutes 98-121) were received.

146. REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES

146.1 Kenton Road Earley Day Centre

Cllr Bassett reported on her attendance at the Kenton Road Earley Day Centre committee meeting on 29th March 2022. She passed on their thanks to Cllr Chopping for his advice on the car park issues at the Centre.

146.2 Borough Parish Liaison Forum

Cllr Neal reported on the meeting of the Borough Parish Liaison Committee on 7th February 2022 attended by himself and Cllr Littler. He noted the presentations on Tackling Homelessness in the Borough and the Tree Strategy which he recommended to members. It was noted that ETC's requested item on Planning Application Notifications to Residents had not resulted in any useful outcomes.

Cllr Bhangra entered the meeting

147. RECEIPT OF AGENDAS

The Town Clerk informed Members that, to aid the Climate Emergency work being carried out, consideration was being given to the despatch methods of all agendas and supporting documents to councillors. Members discussed the pros and cons of no longer receiving hardcopy documentation for meetings and noted that the despatch methods available should not disadvantage any individual from carrying out their role as councillor. It was agreed that it would be down to individual choice for each councillor whether they received their meeting documentation electronically or in hardcopy. There would also be the option to have a hardcopy available at the meeting itself, thereby reducing postage costs. To ensure that clear instruction was available to officers, Members would be required to complete a form if they wished to opt out of receiving hardcopy documentation posted to their home address.

148. DELEGATION OF POWERS

148.1 Use of Delegated Powers

It was noted that there had been no use of delegated powers since the last meeting of Full Council on 9th February 2022.

148.2 Scheme of Delegation

Members considered the continuing impact of the pandemic on the Council's ability to hold face to face meetings whilst trying to ensure the safety of all participants. Councillors noted the current high levels of Covid infection in Wokingham and it was

RECOMMENDED that the schedule of delegated powers detailed in Minutes 7, 7.1 and 7.2 'Delegated Powers' at the Annual Meeting of the Council, 4th May 2021, be continued for Full Council meetings, whilst meetings of committees should be held in person if considered appropriate and sensible. The continued adoption of the scheme to be reviewed again at the next meeting of Full Council.

149. INTERNAL AUDIT

Councillors noted that the interim internal audit report for the year ending 31st March 2022 had been received by the Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting on 16th March 2022. Members expressed their thanks to officers for their efforts in achieving another positive report.

150. ASSET REGISTER

Members were pleased to note that, as part of the year end process, the Town Council's Asset Register was being updated.

151. TOWN COUNCIL GRANTS

Councillors discussed the grant recommendations of the Policy & Resources Committee. Cllr Hare, Chair of the Policy & Resources Committee, explained the reasoning behind the recommendations and noted that they were proposing some funds be kept in reserve for distribution later in the year. He noted that the committee was awaiting further details from some applicants, when received their applications would be further considered. Cllr Hare thanked officers and members of the Policy & Resources Committee for their efforts. It was

RECOMMENDED that the Policy & Resources Committee recommendations for 2022/23 be accepted and grants be awarded in line with these recommendations.

152. CLIMATE EMERGENCY

152.1 Green Infrastructure Policy

Members considered the recommendation of the Policy & Resources Committee that the Green Infrastructure Policy, as drafted by the Climate Emergency working group, be adopted. It was

RECOMMENDED that the Green Infrastructure Policy, as drafted by the Climate Emergency working group, be formally adopted.

Councillors discussed adopting the Green Infrastructure Action Plan and noted that this could be considered at the next meeting of Full Council on 11th May 2022.

152.2 Climate Emergency Action Plan

Cllr C Smith provided an update from the Climate Emergency working group, highlighting some of the challenges ahead and the progress that has been made so far. The Chair thanked the working group and town council officers for setting the Council on the correct path but noted that there was a long road ahead.

153. HELP – HUGE EARLEY LITTER PICK

It was noted that the Huge Earley Litter Pick was scheduled to take place on Sunday 3rd April 2022, with volunteers meeting at two different sites in Earley: the Interpretation Centre at the Maiden Erlegh Nature Reserve and, in north Earley, the junction of the Drive/London Road. A further group from McDonalds would be starting at Chalfont Park.

154. COUNCILLORS' ATTENDANCE

154.1 Record of Members' Attendance

Members noted details of Councillors' attendance during 2021/22 at meetings of the Council and its Committees and at remote meetings for members of the Council and its Committees.

155. ORDERS FOR PAYMENT

Councillors noted the details of Orders for Payment (Vouchers 4708 – 4749, 4749 – 4753, and 4754 – 4788) and Imprest Account vouchers (647 – 653).

156. PUBLICATIONS

It was noted that the following publications had been received and were available for perusal from the Council Offices.

Wokingham Volunteer Centre	e-newsletter March 2022
Maiden Erlegh Residents' Association	Meeting Minutes 10 th March 2022
Connecting Communities in Berkshire	e-bulletin March 2022
Involve Community Services	e-newsletter 18 th March 2022

157. PRESS RELEASES

Councillors noted that the pre-election period limited what could be publicly released but requested that a press release be issued regarding the Town Council grants once the period had ended.

158. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

There were no members of the public or press present. It was agreed that the remaining items on the Agenda be taken under Part II.

PART II

159. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

160. COMMITTEE REPORTS

161. LEASES

162. OUTSTANDING BALANCES

163. ADVISOR TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

164. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting was declared closed by the Chair at 9:53pm.

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Town Mayor