



ANNUAL TOWN ELECTORS' MEETING 2023

Minutes of the meeting of Annual Town Electors' Meeting held in the Function Room at Maiden Place Community Centre, Maiden Place, Earley, Reading on Tuesday 21st March 2023, which commenced at 7.00pm.

Present

Chair – The Town Mayor, Councillor T Maher

ETC Officers: E Carroll (Deputy Town Clerk), Max Brown (Operations Manager), Jess Friend (Senior Operations Support Officer)

In attendance: Anne Bassett, Nicola Brock, Rosemary Cook, Andrew Mickleburgh, John Eastwell, Miriam Eastwell, Ralph Houlbrooke, Andrew Long, Sheena Matthews, Mike Smith and representatives from Crescent Resource Centre, Earley Adopt A Street Initiative, Earley Environmental Group, Kenton Road Day Centre, Maiden Erlegh Residents Association, Torch Help Hub and members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Judith Clark, David Hare Alastair Neal, Caroline Smith, Keith Yabsley, Tim Marsh and Dr Marion Shaw.

2. PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Minutes of the Annual Town Electors' Meeting held on the 15th May 2019 were confirmed as a true record. Following an amendment to page 1, to correct the spelling of the name 'Norman' to then be signed by the Town Mayor.

3. EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL

The Town Mayor reported to the meeting the activities of the Town Council over the past 18 – 24 months, which included the replacement of two bus shelters and two noticeboards, the upgrading of fire alarm systems and the installation of access control to improve health and safety in council buildings.

Activities also included various improvements at the Maiden Erlegh Nature Reserve, the community centres and other council sites. The planting of a memorial tree in memory of the Loddon Viaduct Disaster and the erection of a memorial plaque to commemorate those who worked and supported others during the covid pandemic were also carried out by the council. Other activities included the return of the Green Fair following a 2-year absence due to covid and a series of green events held in the lead up to COP26.

The Town Mayor also informed the meeting of future plans of the council such as, the reopening of the bike workshop and delivery of youth services from Centrepoint, the reviewing of energy consumption in all council buildings, the upgrade of play equipment at Meadow Park and the continued work on the Mays Lane Cemetery extension. Also, the refurbishment or replacement of Council noticeboards.

4. SERVICE TO EARLEY AWARD

The Town Mayor awarded Mr Bob Collis from Earley Environmental Group (EEG) with the Service to Earley Award in recognition of his contribution to the Earley community. Mr Collis is an active member of the Earley Adopt Street Initiative (EASI), a regular member of the Wednesday Volunteers, he produces the Earley Calendar which includes photographs that he has taken and he is dedicated to promoting and educating people in green and environmental issues. Mr Collis thanked everyone for his award, which he dedicated to everything green and environmental and to the members of EEG and EASI.

5. PRESENTATIONS

The following presentation were given to the meeting: -

5.1 Earley Environmental Group – Bob Collis

EEG has 300 members who are involved in environmental talks, walks and local events. The group promotes local green space and has developed the concept of the Earley Green Corridor. Current projects include the White Letter Hairstreak Project which aims to create areas to attract this particular butterfly.

5.2 The Crescent Resource Centre – Kate Long

A community-based centre for local residents which offers a varied employability programme, English courses, an information helpdesk and a coffee bar. It also provides rooms to hire which enables other groups and organisations to be able to deliver their services.

5.3 Earley Adopt a Street Initiative (EASI) – Brenda Hill

A coordinated group of residents with 300 volunteers who carry out litter picks in particular adopted streets in the community and also carry out larger community litter picks twice a year. The group is always looking for new volunteers and is also currently looking for a recycling champion.

5.4 Kenton Road Day Centre – Linda Chambers

A social drop-in centre for over 50s where people can sit and socialise. The centre also hosts various activities such as canasta, movies, knit & natter, art groups, bingo and many more. The aim of the centre is to reduce isolation and loneliness and always welcomes new visitors.

5.5 Maiden Erlegh Residents Association (MERA) – Colin Mair

A local resident association which has area representatives who communicate with residents and assist them with raising issues with relevant local organisations as well as distributing a local magazine. Out of 1000 houses within MERA's boundary, 90% are members, who pay a sub of £1 per year.

5.6 TORCH Help Hub – Anita & Steve Prince

Earley Help Hub was formed in March 2020, during the covid pandemic, bringing together 7 local churches, with over 30 volunteers. The hub provided food parcels, wellbeing cafes, warm and friendly spaces to come and meet people. The hub then joined TORCH to become TORCH Help Hub which has united 20 churches with over 90 volunteers providing additional support such as shopping services, other support services and provide volunteers to carry out practical tasks like gardening and DIY jobs. The group is also always looking for new volunteers.

6. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Town Mayor thanked everyone for attending, the groups for their presentations and council staff for organising the meeting. The meeting was declared closed at 8.07pm.

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Town Mayor