



AMENITIES & LEISURE COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Amenities & Leisure Committee held in the Council Chamber at the Council Offices, Radstock Lane, Earley on Wednesday 22nd May 2024 which commenced at 7pm.

Present

Chair – Councillor N Brock

Councillors: R Ahlawat, A Bassett, A Bradley, R Browne, R Cook, A Long, S Matthews, B Owen and M Smith.

In attendance: E Carroll (Deputy Town Clerk), M Brown (Operations Manager), A Prior (Park Ranger)

1. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

- 1.1 Nominations were called for the position of Chair of the Amenities & Leisure Committee. One nomination was received and seconded.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Nicola Brock be appointed Chair of the Amenities & Leisure Committee. The decision was unanimous.

- 1.2 Nominations were called for the position of Vice Chair of the Amenities & Leisure Committee. One nomination was received and seconded.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Andrew Long be appointed Vice Chair of the Amenities & Leisure Committee. The decision was unanimous.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6th March 2024 were approved as a true record and it was **RESOLVED** they be signed by the Chair (Minutes 91–105).

6. ALLOTMENTS WORKING PARTY

The Chair reported that visits had commenced in relation to this year's Allotment Competition and asked if any other members would like to be part of the Working Party.

It was agreed that the members of the Allotment Working Party for 2024/2025 would remain as Councillors N Brock, A Bassett, C Smith and non-councillor M Eastwell. The Town Mayor would also be invited to attend one of the visits.

7. MAIDEN ERLEGH LAKE AND NATURE RESERVE

7.1 Earley Environmental Group

Councillors received a written report and were pleased to note that officers have been working collaboratively with Earley Environmental Group on joint events and projects. The Deputy Town Clerk reported that a Bat Walk event is planned for North Earley and that work on this is ongoing.

7.2 Green Fair

Councillors received a written update on the Green Fair and the Deputy Town Clerk reported that a hot food vendor has been secured for the day. Councillor Brock asked councillors to discuss between them whether to have a Councillors stall and to advise the Deputy Town Clerk on any requirements, such as tables etc.

8. PADDICK DRIVE

Councillors were pleased to note that Wokingham Borough Council has agreed to renew the 14-year leases for both Paddick Drive Open Space and Paddick Drive BMX track for another 14 years. Once received and finalised, the Heads of Terms will be presented to the Policy & Resources Committee.

9. COMMUNITY CENTRES

CENTREPOINT

9.1 Repair Café for Earley

Members received a written report and were very encouraged to hear about the plans for a Repair Café in Earley. It was: -

RESOLVED that

9.1.2 The Amenities & Leisure Committee support the establishment of an Earley Repair Café, including the provision of Centrepoint Community Centre one morning/afternoon per month free of charge.

9.1.3 Jess Friend, Senior Operations Support Officer, Councillor A Bradley, Councillor S Matthews and Councillor A Neal to lead the establishment of the Earley Repair Café, with the support of Billie Bachra, Spencers Wood Repair Café Organiser.

9.2 Youth Services

Councillors were pleased to note that Berkshire Youth are conducting a consultation with young people on behalf of Earley Town Council to assess the types of youth service provision required in Earley. The Deputy Town Clerk reported that surveys had now gone to five primary schools and Maiden Erlegh School. A Youth Services Working Party is to be set up by the Policy & Resources Committee at its next meeting on 19th June 2024, which will discuss the consultation results once received.

10. BUS SHELTERS

Members received written and verbal reports from the Operations Manager. They were pleased to note that the cleaning of some of ETC's bus shelters by a professional company had been a great success and that this work would prolong the life of many of the shelters.

The Operations Manager also gave an update on the two missing bus shelters in Church Road, both of which had been struck by vehicles on several occasions and therefore removed for safety reasons. The Operations Manager has raised a question with Wokingham Borough Council on any reported traffic safety issues in Church Road before commissioning replacement shelters, he is awaiting a response.

It was agreed that a recommendation be made to the Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting on 19th June 2024, that £4,000 be transferred from Ear Marked Reserves (Bus Shelters) to the Bus Shelter – General Maintenance budget for the professional cleaning of the remaining bus shelters.

11. OPERATIONS MANAGER – REPORT

The Operations Manager provided a verbal report on matters relating to assets and facilities. This included:

- The Huge Earley Litter Pick held on 24th March 2024 was a great success, 157 people from across Earley took part and a total of 99 bags of litter were collected on the day.
- The replacement of the old vehicle gate on the Beech Lane side of Maiden Earley Nature Reserve.
- The unauthorised removal of an ETC water meter at Mays Lane Cemetery by Thames Water, which they capped off, shutting off the water supply to the top of the cemetery, has now been reinstated by Thames Water and the water supply returned.
- Earley Town Council is once again participating in Plantlife's No Mow May initiative and specific areas of ETC land have been designated to encourage habitat for pollinators across all of our public spaces and community centre gardens.
- Two additional defibrillators have been installed in April 2024, one at Sol Joel Pavilion and the other at Maiden Place Community Centre. These have been registered with the ambulance service and are ready for use.
- The refurbishment work on the gutters and fascias at Radstock House has commenced.

12. COLLINS DRIVE PLAY AREA

Members received a verbal update on the promotional session held for Collins Drive residents on 20th May 2024, which provided them with information on the new play area being installed. Work will commence the week of 10th June 2024. Members viewed the proposed plans and were pleased to hear that the session had been well received and that residents, including many children, had participated.

13. WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL'S SCHOOL STREET INITIATIVE

Councillors received a written report on Wokingham Borough Council's planned School Street Initiative which would see the introduction of ANPR cameras in Radstock Lane by Radstock School, operating during school drop-off and pick-up times.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that the initiative was apparently announced in a WBC Council Meeting in March 2024 but that ETC had not received any communication about the initiative until 16th May 2024. The communication advised that WBC aim to carry out a public consultation in June.

Councillor Bassett and Councillor Brock both raised concerns about the impact the initiative will have on users of ETC’s Helpshop and Radstock Lane Community Centre. Both also questioned what work WBC officers had undertaken to deem Radstock School as a suitable location for this project.

Councillor M Smith suggested that these initiatives were introduced where there are safety concerns.

Councillors were disappointed that there had been no joined up working by WBC with the town council before the initiative had got to the consultation stage and agreed that, now WBC has announced it intends to carry out a consultation, ETC’s concerns about the impacts on hirers and the town council’s business should be raised.

14. BERKSHIRE’S LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY

Councillors noted that the Town Clerk and Councillor Matthews attended a community workshop held on 20th April 2024. The aim of the workshop was to consult with local people and identify priorities for nature recovery. Future events can be found on the Berkshire Nature Recovery Strategy website.

15. PUBLICATIONS

The Committee noted that the following items have been received and are available for viewing from the Council Offices:

Fields in Trust	E-newsletter May 2024
Involve Community Services	E-newsletter 3 rd May 2024

16. PRESS RELEASES, WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA

No press releases were requested.

17. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting was declared closed by the Chair at 8.11pm.

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Chair, Amenities & Leisure Committee