

ANNUAL TOWN ELECTORS' MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Town Electors' Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Radstock Lane, Earley, Berkshire on Wednesday 20th May 2015 which commenced at 7.45 pm

Present

Chairman – The Mayor, Councillor Mrs L Chambers

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

There were no apologies.

Residents in Attendance Mrs Jean and Mr Barrie Theobald (Sevenoaks Road), Mr Colin and Mrs Lucy Theobald and Mrs Jane and Mr Neil Hindman, (Guests of Mr and Mrs B Theobald) and representatives of Earley Day Centre.

1. ENTITLEMENT TO SPEAK

The Chairman of the Council drew the attention of the Meeting to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 (Part 1), Section 13 (1) and to the requirement that only Local Government Electors of the Parish of Earley were entitled to speak. She continued by asking those addressing the Meeting to first give their names and addresses.

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Town Electors' Meeting held on the 7th May 2014 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3. SERVICE TO EARLEY AWARD

The Mayor announced that it gave her great pleasure to advise that the Town Council had decided to present Service to Earley Awards to Mrs Jean and Mr Barrie Theobald.

In presenting the Awards, the Chairman highlighted the fantastic work which the recipients had been involved in for many years, all in a voluntary capacity for the benefit of the local community.

4. **TOWN COUNCIL ACTIVITIES DURING 2014/15**

In addressing the Meeting, the Town Mayor, Councillor Mrs L Chambers, thanked Town Councillors for giving her the opportunity to be Mayor for a second term of Office and for their support throughout the year. She confirmed that it had been a great honour to be so closely involved in the community and to be accepted in such a friendly manner by so many people. She advised that as a Council, all Members worked very hard for the Town and it made her extremely proud and gave her great pleasure to be part of what was now a very mature and integrated community.

The Mayor confirmed that she had attended a large number of events during the year, a number of which were in commemoration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the start of the First World War when she had attended many special services across the Borough, including a Service held at Earley St Peter's Church when a list of those young soldiers who did not return from the War were read out.

The Mayor said that she had been involved in a vast number of events during her term which she had reported back on a regular basis at Council meetings, but said that she would like to make special mention of the following:-

The Six Sixty Carting Event which took place and which was enjoyed by a wide cross section of the community and was a wonderful occasion for families and friends to join together and have fun. This involved large groups meeting at Laurel Park in the afternoon to picnic, party and compete in this fun event.

The Mayor made mention of the Earley Green Fair, which, yet again was organised with great precision by Grahame Hawker, the Senior Park Ranger and his team. All the pitches were filled, a number of which by people returning from them being at the Fair in previous years. Although, unfortunately, this year's event was subject to two heavy downpours of rain, this did not dampen people's spirits and it was very well attended.

The Earley 10K Fun Run, in its second year doubled the number of entrants with people coming not just from Earley to take part. It was very well organised and was enjoyed by all. Once again bringing a large number of people in the community together. The Mayor said it was her belief that these events, along with the good work done by the churches and other organisations in Earley, brought good community spirit to the Town and expressed a wish that this should continue for many years to come.

Turning to the work of the Town Council, the Mayor confirmed that this had been another successful year and that Councillors should feel very satisfied that the two Community & Youth Centres were becoming more used. The Music Fusion Group at Silverdale Centre was attracting younger members on a Wednesday evening and the Bike Workshop was benefiting from the reorganisation of the Centre which had taken place during the February half term. These alterations also benefitted the Maiden Erlegh Pre School Group which now had a much larger and self-contained area within the Centre.

At Centrepont, a successful Saturday Evening Youth Club had been set up which was re-establishing youth provision in the location. This could not have been achieved without the enthusiasm of the JAC Youth Workers and she expressed her grateful thanks to that organisation.

Turning to Sol Joel Park the Mayor confirmed that the new car park had been completed and was relieving the parking situation when football events were taking place at the park. The new inclusive play equipment had now been ordered and the installation would commence shortly.

Councillor Mrs Chambers confirmed that this Council was continuing negotiations with Wokingham Borough Council with a view to adopting the Redhatch Copse for the continued enjoyment of residents in the Town. She said that she was also very pleased to report that, on the M4 Smart Motorway, it had recently been confirmed that the request from the Town Council for quiet tarmac had been agreed and it was hoped that this would dramatically reduce the noise making life more pleasant for those residents that live near the motorway.

The Mayor thanked the Deputy, Councillor Ken Miall who had supported her through her term of office, and particularly when he stood in for her at some weekend events when she had unexpected health problems. She also expressed her thanks to her husband Tim for his support throughout the term and particularly acting as her chauffeur for many weeks when she was unable to drive. Councillor Mrs Chambers also expressed her sincere thanks to all her fellow Councillors, to the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and Officers and staff at the Town Council Offices who had enabled her to fulfil her duties and make her own experience of Mayor very memorable. She also expressed her thanks to all those who gave their time voluntarily in the Town, much of which she had been able to witness during her numerous visits during her term of office.

Councillor Mrs Chambers said that it had been a great honour and privilege to hold the position of Mayor and she would look back on this time with great fondness. She wished her successor all the very best for the coming year and encouraged her to enjoy the experience.

In conclusion she said that she would like to mention the wonderful displays of wild flowers on the verges last year and that were very popular with local residents and they would be repeated again this year. She concluded by giving her kindest wishes to all present and grateful thanks for the opportunity of being Earley Town Mayor

5. TOWN ELECTORS

Councillor M. Ahmed thanked Councillor Mrs Chambers for the manner in which she had conducted herself in the position and for the work that she had done for the Town.

Councillor Ahmed made reference to the recent change of personal at Reading Buses, and asked whether there was any plan to invite the new Executive Officer to a future meeting of the Town Council. Councillors Chopping and Grandison agreed to forward an invitation to the new Executive of Reading Buses at their next meeting.

6. **TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 8.12pm