

EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Earley Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Radstock Lane, Earley, Berkshire on Wednesday, 25th June 2014 which commenced at 7.55 pm.

Present

Chairman – The Mayor, Councillor Mrs L Chambers

J Armstrong, Miss L Blumenthal, A Bradley, T Chambers, D Chopping, Ms M De Jong (from 8.10pm), Ms P Dunn, J Eastwell, M Firmager, G Grandison, D Hare, N Holloway, N Jorgensen, Mrs P Jorgensen, Mrs J Lissaman, T Maher (until 8.05pm), K Miall, N Page, Miss J Rance, A Thomas, B Wedge

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Ahmed (religious reasons), T Holton (at WBC meeting), and Mrs A Stuart. In addition, Ms M De Jong apologised for her late arrival at the meeting due to a work commitment.

21. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

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

22. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

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

8th May – Mencap AGM
10TH May – Finals of Trials for Schools at Reading Crown Court
11th May – Wokingham Mayor's Concert
2nd June – High Sheriff of Berkshire's Summer Reception
4th June – Visit to well known local resident Jean Sawyer on her 80th Birthday
10th June – Radstock School conservation event where she judged the fancy dress
12th June – Air Cadets Official Parade presentation
21st June – EASI summer party
22nd June – The 660 Karting event at Laurel Park

In addition, the Mayor advised that, unfortunately, due to her attendance at the Air Cadets event she had been unable to be present for the whole of the Volunteer Driver Bureau AGM, and Councillor T Chambers had attended in her absence. She had, however, been able to join the meeting later in the evening.

23. TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEES

23.1 Planning Committee

23.1.1 Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 13th May 2014

The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 13th May were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor T Chambers.

With regard to Minute 3.2, which dealt with the appointments to the various Sub Committees and Working Parties, a Member present said that she was concerned to note from the Minutes of the Woodley Town Council meeting which took place on the same evening that the Minutes suggested that Earley Town Council had given notice that it no longer wished to continue the Site of Urban Landscape Value Working Party and Woodley Town Council had resolved that no representatives be appointed to the Working Party. The Minutes of the Town Council Planning Committee which took place on the same evening indicated that any appointments to the Working Party should be deferred until the June meeting of the Committee, awaiting Woodley Town Council's actions with regard to appointing representatives to the Working Party.

After the discussion on this matter, it was

RESOLVED that

1. The Town Clerk be requested to confer with the Town Clerk at Woodley regarding the content of the Minutes of the Woodley Town Council meeting of 13th May.
2. On the proposition of Councillor T Chambers seconded by Councillor J Armstrong the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 13th May 2014 Minutes 1 -14) be adopted.

23.1.2 Meeting of the 10th June 2014

In presenting the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting on the 10th June 2014 the Committee Chairman, Councillor T Chambers drew attention to a number of Planning Applications which had been considered at that meeting and specifically 0859 which was for the erection of an elderly care facility in Pitts Lane, 1069 for the construction of three detached dwellings in Palmerstone Road and 1218 which was a large extension to a property in Whitegates Lane.

On the proposition of Councillor T Chambers seconded by Councillor J Armstrong it was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on the 10th June 2014 (Minutes 15 – 25) be adopted.

23.2 Amenities & Leisure Committee

In presenting the minutes of the Amenities & Leisure Committee meeting held on 28th May 2014, the Committee Chairman, Councillor M Firmager drew particular attention to Minute 5.1.1 in respect of the re-launch of the Music Fusion Project at Silverdale Centre, and Minute 11 regarding the World War I Commemorations. Attention was also drawn to the recommendation at Minute 13 concerning the date of the next meeting of the Amenities & Leisure Committee.

Following a request from a Member, the Town Clerk gave an update on the progress with the provision of additional parking at Sol Joel Park as part of the A329 Cycleway Project. It was confirmed that work had started ahead of time and the contractors were currently on site.

A Member present expressed disappointment at the Committee's decision to remove the possible representation of Earley Town Council on the Management Committee of the Loddon Valley Leisure Centre from the Ongoing Matters List as he felt that the Town Council should be involved with the Leisure Centre, given that it was one of the largest facilities in the Town.

RESOLVED that

1. On the proposition of Councillor Mrs P Jorgensen, seconded by Councillor J Eastwell the Town Clerk be requested to write to the Borough Council's Executive Member, Councillor Angus Ross, to ask that consideration be given to the Town Council being involved in the regular meetings which the Borough Council had with representatives of the Leisure Centre.
2. On the proposition of Councillor M Firmager, seconded by Councillor B Wedge that the Minutes of the meeting of the Amenities & Leisure Committee held on the 28th May 2014 (Minutes 1 – 18) be adopted and the recommendation at Minute 13 be agreed.

23.3 Policy & Resources Committee

The Minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee were presented by the Committee Chairman, Councillor N Jorgensen.

On the proposition of Councillor N Jorgensen, seconded by Councillor T Chambers it was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on the 4th June 2014 (Minutes 1 – 11) be adopted.

24. ANNUAL TOWN ELECTORS' MEETING

Councillors received and noted the Minutes of the Annual Town Electors' Meeting held on the 7th May 2014.

25. REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES

25.1 Reports of Representatives

25.1.1 ARC

Councillors noted details of the Minutes of the ARC Management Committee meeting held on the 4th June 2014 which had been circulated with the Supplementary Agenda.

25.1.2 Readibus

Councillor D Chopping gave details of the meeting of the Readibus Committee which had taken place on the 5th June 2014. He advised that, unfortunately, he would be unable to attend the next meeting on the 9th July 2014 and it was

RESOLVED that Councillor B Wedge should attend the Readibus meeting on the 9th July 2014.

26. FINANCIAL MATTERS

26.1 Balance Sheet & Supporting Information

Councillors were advised that the Town Council fell below the threshold requiring its accounts to be prepared to include the value of assets and infrastructure including depreciation in capital charges.

A copy of the Town Council's Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2014 had been circulated with the Agenda for Councillors consideration.

Following a question from a Member the Town Clerk advised that the sum of £4,000.00, which appeared in Section 9 of the Notes of the Accounts, related to a grant claimed but not yet received at the time of preparation of the accounts, in respect of a Fields in Trust Grant towards the cost of some new play equipment installed at Meadow Park. The Town Clerk confirmed that this money had now been received.

RESOLVED that the Earley Town Council's Statement of Accounts and supporting documentation for the year ended March 2014, as appended to these Minutes, be approved.

26.2 Internal Audit to March 2014

Councillors were advised that the Internal Auditor had now completed his review of the Accounts (prior to submission to the External Auditor) and also completed his internal audit for 2013/14. Councillors were further reminded that the Internal Auditor had prepared an interim report which had been presented to the Council in December 2013 and a copy of this further report had been circulated with the Agenda for their consideration.

RESOLVED that the final report of the Internal Auditor for the year 2013/14, as appended to these Minutes, be noted.

26.3 Audit of Accounts to March 2014

Councillors were reminded that under the Account and Audit Regulations, the audit of the Town Council's accounts was under "the lighter touch" regime. This required that the External Auditor received the Annual Return completed by the Town Council, part of which required the Chairman of this meeting and the Responsible Financial Officer to sign a "Statement of Accounts" and the "Statement of Assurance" on behalf of the Town Council.

A copy of the appropriate sections of the Annual Return had been circulated with the Agenda for Councillors' consideration.

A Member present requested that it be minuted that the Town Council's thanks be extended to the Town Clerk, the Deputy Town Clerk and the Senior Finance Officer for their continued diligence in the management of the Town Council's finances.

RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts and the Statement of Assurance be confirmed and the Chairman and the Responsible Financial Officer be asked to sign the documents as appended to these Minutes on behalf of the Town Council.

27. RISK ASSESSMENTS

Councillors were reminded that as part of the Account and Audit Regulations, the Town Council was required to carry out risk assessments for all its assets and operations. To assist in this, specialist software was used. All assets and operations were reviewed, potential risks identified and then categorised as low, medium or high. From this information an action plan was produced which detailed what measures were in place/would be put in place to contain or reduce the identified risks.

Councillors were reminded that when this matter was considered at the February 2013 meeting of the Town Council, at Minute 79.1, it was resolved that the Standing Committees should review the appropriate sections of the Risk Assessments during the next financial year and make recommendations and amendments as appropriate. It was confirmed that this process had now taken place and appropriate amendments made and Councillors were, therefore, asked to adopt the updated Risk Assessments, as précised in the Action Plan which had been circulated with the Agenda and to authorise their signing.

It was

RESOLVED that the Mayor and Responsible Financial Officer be authorised to sign off the current Risk Assessments as appended to these Minutes.

28. COUNCILLORS' ATTENDANCES

Following the discussions recorded at Minute 15.1, a Member present queried why the attendance of Councillor Miss L Blumenthal, up until the time of the by-election, had not been greyed out as requested in the copy of the attendance list accompanying the Minute. The Town Clerk assured the Town Council that this request had been carried out in the official Minute Book copy of the Attendance List.

It was

RESOLVED that details of Councillors' attendances to date for 2014 as appended to these Minutes be noted.

29. ORDERS FOR PAYMENT

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

Following a question from a Member, the Town Clerk advised that Voucher 73, in the sum of £5,707.25 was in respect of the provision of internet services to the Silverdale Centre, as well as upgrades to the computer equipment and software at the Town Council Offices.

RESOLVED that the various accounts as set out in the list attached to these Minutes (Vouchers 65 – 111) be paid in the sums as stated and details of the Imprest Account (Vouchers 021 – 032) be noted.

30. **PUBLICATIONS**

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

Wokingham Borough Council:	Agenda for Meeting of The Council held 12 th June 2014.
Maiden Erlegh Residents' Association:	Minutes of meeting held 8 th May 2014.

Woodley Town Council	Agenda 24 th June 2014 Financial Statements for year ended 31 st March 2014
Wokingham Borough Council	Agenda - Meeting of Executive 26 th June 2014
NAG	Agenda 7 th July 2014

31. **PRESS RELEASES**

It was

RESOLVED that the following items should receive special press attention:-

1. The revamp of the Music Fusion Group at the Silverdale Centre with particular reference to the ages of possible attendees.
2. The fact that the Town Council had given agreement for Council Officers to enter into formal negotiations with the Borough Council and Developers with the view to the Town Council taking over ownership of Redhatch Copse.

32. **TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The Meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 8.47 pm