

## **ANNUAL TOWN ELECTORS' MEETING**

Minutes of the Annual Town Electors' Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Radstock Lane, Earley, Berkshire on Wednesday 11th May 2016 which commenced at 7.45 pm.

### **Present**

Chairman – The Mayor, Councillor Mrs M De Jong

Councillors M Ahmed, J Armstrong, Miss L Blumenthal, A Bradley, Dr N Brock, Mrs L Chambers, T Chambers, D Chopping, Mrs J Clark, 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.

There were no Residents in Attendance.

There were two visitors in attendance.

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### **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 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. SERVICE TO EARLEY AWARD**

The Mayor announced that no nominations had been received for 2016 and, therefore, there would be no Service to Earley Award this year.

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

In addressing the Meeting, the Town Mayor, Councillor Mrs M De Jong thanked the Town Council, especially the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk and all the staff for their help and support during her term of office. She also took the opportunity to sincerely thank all the Town Councillors for their support.

The Mayor reported that she felt extremely honoured to have been asked to become Mayor and had thoroughly enjoyed her term in office, meeting various residents of Earley and Lower Earley and sharing in all the activities

across the town. She reported that it had been a privilege to serve the community and both she and her family felt extremely fortunate to live in such a wonderful town, and to be served by Earley Town Council who worked tirelessly for the community as a whole.

The Mayor confirmed that during her term she had been very fortunate to attend many events and wished to highlight some of these;

The Mayor considered that she had been extremely fortunate to have been asked to open the Sol Joel Inclusive Play area together with the Mayor of Wokingham and felt that this was truly a highlight of her year. She felt that this had been a fantastic project that gave all children, able bodied or not, the chance to play together outdoors in a healthy environment and have fun, and that after all this was what childhood should be all about!

The Mayor also attended the installation of the Rev Philip and Hannah Hobday at Earley St Peters Church and considered that they will make a huge contribution to the community. During November she attended the very moving Remembrance Day service at Earley St Peters Church and felt very privileged to participate in the event.

The Mayor had attended a vast number of other events which had been reported back to the Town Council, but wanted to mention the Six Sixty go karting event in Laurel Park which had been held on a cloudy June day, however this had not dampen the spirits of those who attended and the members of the community who attended all appeared to have had a wonderful time.

The Mayor reported that she had been asked to open the underground reservoir in Lower Earley and had been pleased to see many of the residents turning out for this, and she wished to highly commend Thames Water for their work with the community in ensuring that the project went very smoothly.

The Earley Green Fair had been blessed with beautifully sunny weather and she wished to thank Grahame Hawker and his team for once again ensuring that the event ran smoothly.

The Earley 10K Fun Run was held and was enjoyed by young and old alike and The Mayor had been asked to present the winners prizes and, contrary to rumours had not participated in the running!

The Mayor reported that she had attended the youth group at Centre point and commended the youth workers and JAC for the unfailing support with Earley youth. She was also very fortunate to attend a music fusion event with the Mayor of Wokingham and our Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk and reported that it was great to see how the youngsters engage when playing music. She was also very pleased to report that the facilities at Silverdale Centre has been upgraded to a very high standard and the music fusion group were certainly benefitting from this, and also that the bike workshop continued to flourish, she reported that both these facilities were very well attended by the youth in the community.

The Mayor confirmed that she attended the tree planting of the Earley Community Orchard and hoped that the trees will flourish and continue to do so as our community flourishes as well.

The Mayor reported that the council was still having ongoing discussion with Wokingham regarding taking over Laurel Park and looked forward to the successful conclusion of this. One of her very last tasks a Mayor was to present the defibrillator that Woodley Lions raised funds for to Laurel Park football club and she felt extremely reassured that this was now in place.

The Mayor advised that all of the above events were well attended by the community and was very pleased to know that the community, young, not so young and old, all shared a common bond, which was living in Earley and sharing in what our wonderful town has to offer. She also thanked the Town Council for their efforts in the proposed transfer of Redhatch Copse which was nearly finalised and the continuing work on the M4 smart motorway.

The Mayor thanked her Deputy Mayor, Councillor Jackie Rance for her unfailing help and support and for deputising when necessary and wished her everything of the very best for the forthcoming year. The Mayor also reported that she had been advised to enjoy the moment as the Mayoral year would pass quickly. She had found this to be very true and passed on this same advice to the Deputy Mayor, suggesting that she enjoy every minute. The Mayor reported that she had experienced a wonderful year and was sure that it would be wonderful for the new Mayor.

The Mayor thanked her husband for his unfailing support and help throughout her year.

Finally, The Mayor offered her very sincere thanks to the Town Clerk Philip Truppin, whose help, guidance and quiet words of wisdom had helped her throughout her year, and also thanked the past Deputy Town Clerk, Maddy Bristow who retired in October and the current Deputy Town Clerk Jo Shaw, together with all the ladies in the office and the other members of the council staff for their help in making the year a memorable one.

## **5. TOWN ELECTORS**

Mrs P Jorgensen of Cutbush Lane made reference to the continued work at

Mr M Ahmed of Chiltern Crescent made reference to the recent change of personnel 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 Chief Executive of Reading Buses at their next meeting.

## **6. TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 8.15pm