



EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Earley Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Radstock Lane, Earley, Berkshire on Wednesday, 16th October 2019 which commenced at 7.30pm.

Present

Chairman – The Mayor, Councillor D Hare.

Councillors A Bassett, G Bhangra, N Brock, J Clark, R Cook, R Houlbrooke, D Ireland, I Khayinza, G Littler, A Long, T Maher, A Mickleburgh, A Neal, A Newton, M Shaw, C Smith, P Stothart and K Yabsley.

In Attendance: Jo Friend (Town Clerk), J Friend (Senior Operations Support Officer) and one member of the public.

The first twenty minutes of the meeting were set aside for members of the public to pose questions to the Council. There were no questions.

58. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Chopping, J Eastwell, M Eastwell, C Jones, S Matthews and R Sangster.

59. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

60. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 31st July 2019 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

61. TOWN MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported that he had attended the following events:

22 nd August	Champagne tea at Austen House Care Home and a chance to speak with the families of the residents and engage in an interactive game.
4 th September	Involve Community Services 40 th Anniversary Reception.
4 th September	High Sheriff of the Royal County of Berkshire's Reception.
27 th September	Citizens Advice Wokingham Reception celebrating the 80 th anniversary of the service. The Mayor was presented to The Princess Royal, a patron of the Citizens Advice Bureau.
8 th October	Ceremonial Service at Minster Church of St Mary the Virgin marking the beginning of the Judicial Year.
8 th October	Vespers Service at St. Margaret's Westminster Abbey to celebrate the Coptic feast of Nayrouz.

62. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councillor Newton joined the meeting at 7.40pm

62.1 Planning Committee

Councillor Littler presented the Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 13th August and 10th September, noting that in relation to Minute 65 a Bus Working Party meeting is to be convened. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 13th August 2019 (Minutes 50 – 61) be received.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 10th September 2019 (Minutes 62 – 75) be received.

62.2 Amenities & Leisure Committee

Councillor Newton presented the Minutes of the Amenities & Leisure Committee meeting held on 4th September 2019 and provided an update on progress of discussions regarding: the installation of beehives at Culver Lane allotments; the introduction of recycling bins and the funding request for a new mixer at Silverdale Centre.

The Christmas Working Group had held their first meeting and were awaiting responses from schools invited to take part in carol singing in the Asda foyer on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th December. Councillor Newton agreed to circulate information about the carol singing arrangements and information on the Maiden Place Christmas lights event to all Councillors. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Amenities & Leisure Committee meeting held on 4th September 2019 (Minutes 30 – 42) be received.

62.3 Policy & Resources Committee

Councillor Clark presented the Minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on 18th September 2019. Councillor Clark advised that the Service to Earley Award and the grant application processes are under review, to ensure a more transparent and widely publicised processes. The draft documents will be reported to the next Committee meeting on 20th November. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on 18th September 2019 (Minutes 30 – 45) be received.

62.4 Community & Youth Sub-Committee

Councillor Clark presented the Minutes of the Community & Youth Sub-Committee meeting held on 17th September 2019 and advised that a Youth Working Party had been set up. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Community & Youth Sub-Committee meeting held on 17th September 2019 (Minutes 49 – 58) be received

63. REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES

63.1 Reports of Representatives

63.1.1 Wokingham Citizens Advice Bureau AGM

Councillor Mickleburgh provided a brief report from the Wokingham Citizens Advice Bureau AGM held on 27th September 2019 noting a very positive experience.

63.1.2 Wokingham Volunteer Centre AGM

Councillor Bassett presented a report on the meeting attended on 11th September 2019 noting that the Centre perform a number of different roles including: matching up volunteers with charities; providing training to volunteers; coordinating the Wokingham Transport Scheme; and running the 'Green 'n Tidy' gardening service.

63.1.3 Open Day – Reading Crown Court

Councillor Bassett gave a verbal report on the Open Day attended on 21st September noting that the event was very well attended and had various activities to offer to all. Talks available included: becoming a magistrate; being a judge; the probation service; the youth offending team; and Thames Valley Police.

63.1.4 Cleaner & Greener/Place Clienting Meeting

Councillor Bassett advised that the next meeting will be taking place the week commencing 21st October in Wallingford. Councillor Bassett and Councillor Long will be attending a tour of a food waste recycling centre.

64. **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

The Chairman thanked the Senior Operations Support Officer for her work in the Finance Department following the departures of the Finance Manager and Finance Assistant.

64.1 Conclusion of Audit 2018/19

The Town Clerk presented an update on the conclusion of the external audit for 2018/19 and acknowledged that in accordance with regulations, the Notice of Conclusion has been displayed on the Town Council website.

64.2 Finance Software

The Town Clerk reported on the finance software currently used by the Town Council noting that it is not best suited to Town Council finance and requires manual manipulation to produce figures and reports suitable for presentation to Council. The recommendation of both the internal auditor and the Finance Advisor is to move to a more appropriate software.

Following discussions held at the SLCC conference, the Town Clerk proposed that the Council migrate to RBS Rialtas Omega Financial Software. The recommendation of RBS is to prepare all financial information, including a review of nominal codes by 30th November 2019 to enable RBS to set up the Town Council ready to go live in the first week of January 2020. RBS advise this timeframe to ensure they can provide the training and initial support required to ensure a smooth migration.

It was agreed that research was needed to ensure full historical financial records were available to access once the migration had taken place. After detailed discussion, it was

RESOLVED that RBS Rialtas Omega Financial Software be purchased, the migration be conducted as per the timeframe detailed above and the full training offer be utilised.

64.2.1 Facilities Booking Management Software

The current bookings software does not link directly with any financial software and requires information to be exported, manipulated and then imported to the finance software.

RBS offer a Facilities Bookings Management software that links directly with their Financial Software, thus streamlining the invoicing process and minimising human error. Councillors discussed the timeframe for introducing this software to ensure a smooth transition. It was

RESOLVED that the Facilities Bookings Management software be purchased and introduced as the Town Clerk felt appropriate and the full training offer be utilised.

64.2.2 Cemeteries and Memorials Management Software

The Town Clerk provided an overview of the RBS Cemeteries and Memorials Management software and recommended that due to the large amounts of data to be transferred, the purchase and transfer to this be reviewed at a later date, possibly with the intention of the software being adopted in line with the cemetery extension.

65. **FINANCIAL AWARDS**

65.1 Music Fusion Project

In 2018-19 the Music Fusion Project at Silverdale Youth Centre received £1,400 funding from More Arts' Legacy Fund. More Arts have confirmed that this funding was to support the initial set up of the project and as such are unable to provide the same level of funding for the 2019-20 year. The annual cost of the project is £2,660 and whilst the Reading Rock Academy Foundation, who deliver the project, are seeking additional sources of funding, the project is likely to require further financial support to enable it to run for the 2019-20 year. After discussion it was

RESOLVED that the Town Council provide funding, up to a maximum of £2,660 if necessary, to cover any shortfalls to ensure the Music Fusion Project continues running for the 2019-20 year. Councillors agreed that in future years the Project would be required to be self-funding but could apply for a grant from the Town Council via the formal grant application process.

65.2 Wokingham Borough Sports Award

The Town Council noted a request received from Wokingham Borough Sports Council for the Town Council to continue to sponsor the 'Spirit of Sport' award, known as the Earley Town Council Cup, which is given annually in recognition of team spirit, friendship, determination and sportsmanship. It was

RESOLVED that, in accordance with the provisions of the General Power of Competence, as adopted by this Council, a contribution of £75 be made to the Wokingham Sports Sponsorship Fund for the purpose of funding the 'Spirit of Sport' award.

66. **PARKING ISSUES – SILVERDALE ROAD**

Councillor Mickleburgh reported to the Council on the response received from Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) following a site meeting regarding the potential installation of bollards on Silverdale Road between Hillside Road and Finch Road.

WBC advised that they would not object to the Town Council funding the installation of timber post bollards but expressed concerns that the provision of bollards would relocate the antisocial parking behaviour elsewhere in the neighbourhood. The view of WBC is that an amendment to waiting restrictions would be more effective in managing parking for improved visibility for parents and children needing to cross Silverdale Road, however Traffic Regulation Orders do take time.

It was agreed that more information was required in order to reach a resolution, this included: the views of the residents affected; the views of Loddon Primary School; the cost and suitability of different types of bollards and the potential impact on buses or emergency service vehicles should the installation of bollards on the verge lead to cars parking on the roadside instead. The Town Clerk agreed, with the support of Officers, to try to get more information on the introduction of yellow lines and the installation of bollards on the highway.

67. BOROUGH PARISH LIAISON FORUM

Following an offer by the Chairman of the Borough Parish Liaison Forum, Councillor Michael Firmager, to visit Earley Town Council it was agreed that the Town Clerk would invite Councillor Firmager to attend a Full Council meeting.

68. WBC CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP

It was

RESOLVED that Councillor Newton be appointed the Town Council representative on the WBC Climate Emergency Working Group. The next meeting is on 9th December.

69. COUNCILLORS' ATTENDANCES

69.1 Record of Members' Attendance

Members noted details of Councillors' attendance during 2019/20 at meetings of the Council and its Committees.

70. ORDERS FOR PAYMENT

Members noted details of Orders for Payment (2451 – 2477, 2478 – 2511, 2512 – 2516, 2517 – 2519, 2520 – 2522 and 2523 – 2543) and Imprest Vouchers (364 – 370).

71. PUBLICATIONS

It was noted that the following publication had been received and is available for perusal in the Council Offices:

CCB – Connecting Communities in Berkshire:	E – bulletin - September 2019
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72. PRESS RELEASES

Consideration was given to whether any of the foregoing items should be the subject of a press release. It was agreed that once confirmed, the funding of the Music Fusion Project receive special press attention.

73. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was **RESOLVED** that the remaining items on the Agenda be taken under Part II.

It was

RESOLVED that the member of the public, being the (soon to begin employment) new Deputy Town Clerk, remain for these discussions.

PART II

74. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

75. POST OFFICE - SILVERDALE ROAD

76. STAFFING MATTERS

77. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 9.59pm.

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Town Mayor