



**EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Meeting of Earley Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Radstock Lane, Earley, Berkshire on Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> November 2019 which commenced at 7.30pm.

**Present**

Chairman – The Mayor, Councillor D Hare.

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

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

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The first twenty minutes of the meeting were set aside for members of the public to pose questions to the Council.

**78. PUBLIC FORUM**

The member of the public requested an update regarding the transfer of Redhatch Copse, the works being carried out and any financial implication on the residents of Earley, stating that the transfer had been in progress for a number of years and that there had been no reference to it in Council Minutes since May 2019.

*Councillor Bhangra entered the meeting*

The Town Clerk advised that, in light of the impending General Election, the Town Council had sought clarification from the Monitoring Officer at Wokingham Borough Council on the Council's position regarding this matter. Unfortunately, due to the calling of the General Election on 12<sup>th</sup> December, the Town Council was in purdah and, as the Sibly transfer was a significant matter, it was unable to comment or make any decisions on the transfer of Redhatch Copse and the Sibly Estate until after the election.

The resident was advised that as Redhatch Copse was still under the ownership of Persimmon Homes, any maintenance concerns would need to be raised with them directly. Councillor Jones advised that progress regarding the transfer of land had been made over recent months and that information would be available to the public after 12<sup>th</sup> December.

*Member of public exited the meeting*

**79. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies of absence.

**80. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## 81. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2019 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

## 82. TOWN MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported that he had attended the following events:

17 <sup>th</sup> October	Celebration Service of Keys Academy, led by Earley St Peters.
18 <sup>th</sup> October	Any Questions at Reading University (London Road site).
24 <sup>th</sup> October	Berkshire Lord-Lieutenant Awards at Bradfield College for Reserve Forces & Cadets Association for the South East (SERFCA).
29 <sup>th</sup> October	Interviews for the Mayors Award, a new award this year, held at 1996 (Earley) Squadron Air Training Corps.
8 <sup>th</sup> November	Delivered a talk at Maiden Erlegh School on local and national politics and local themes to Year 12.
10 <sup>th</sup> November	Remembrance Service at St Peters Church to read second lesson and present wreath.
12 <sup>th</sup> November	AGM of Earley Crescent
19 <sup>th</sup> November	Consecration of Olivia Graham, as Bishop of Reading at St Pauls Cathedral.
22 <sup>nd</sup> November	Wokingham Borough Sports Council Sports Awards 2019 at Holme Grange School, Wokingham. Awarded the Earley Town Council Spirit of Sport Award.
23 <sup>rd</sup> November	Welcoming Service of Bishop Olivia Graham
27 <sup>th</sup> November	Burglary & Fraud Community Conference at Earley Crescent

The Deputy Mayor reported her attendance at the AGM of Involve Community Services held on 14<sup>th</sup> November and provided an overview of their work including the launch of the Cancer Champion Scheme.

Councillor Mickleburgh thanked the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for their reports and added that the 1996 (Earley) Squadron Air Training Corps had given positive feedback on the Mayor's visit. Councillor Mickleburgh further reported that approximately 30 members of the public attended the Burglary & Fraud Community Conference held at Earley Crescent Community Centre.

## 83. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### 83.1 Planning Committee

Councillor Littler presented the Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 8<sup>th</sup> October and 12<sup>th</sup> November noting that the Planning Advisor had been appointed for a further six month term. It was:

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2019 (Minutes 76 - 88) be received.

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2019 (Minutes 89 - 102) be received.

### 83.2 Amenities & Leisure Committee

Councillor Newton presented the Minutes of the Amenities & Leisure Committee meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> November noting that the Christmas Celebrations will be held in the Asda foyer on 3<sup>rd</sup> December at 4.30pm & 5.15pm and 4<sup>th</sup> December at 4.30pm. It was:

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Amenities & Leisure Committee meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2019 (Minutes 43 - 57) be received.

### 83.3 Policy & Resources Committee

Councillor Jones presented the Minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> November. He asked for it to be noted that it was not acceptable for the budget not to have been loaded onto Sage by the previous Finance Officer but that progress had been made by the Town Clerk to introduce a new finance system, which will improve the finance data held and future finance reporting.

Councillor Jones welcomed all Councillors to attend the Budget Working Party meetings on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020. It was:

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2019 (Minutes 46-62) be received.

## **84. REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES**

### 84.1 Reports of Representatives

#### 84.1.1 Localities (formerly Cleaner & Greener)

Councillor Bassett provided a brief report on a visit she made with Councillor Long to the Severn Trent Food Recycling Facility in Wallingford on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

#### 84.1.2 Earley Crescent Community Association

Councillor Brock reported her attendance at the Trustees Meeting of Earley Crescent Community Association held on 26<sup>th</sup> November and advised that the Association is looking for new trustees.

#### 84.1.3 Woodley & North Earley (WANE) Community Forum

Councillor Shaw reported her attendance at the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> November, with the key focus being cycling in the Woodley precinct.

#### 84.1.4 EEG Wind Turbine Visit

Councillor Long reported his visit with Councillor J Eastwell, Councillor M Eastwell and Councillor Chopping to the EEG Wind Turbine, to learn about how electricity is generated, and the costs involved.

#### 84.1.5 Loddon Valley Leisure Centre

Councillor Ireland reported his communications with People & Places, Loddon Valley Leisure Centre with a key focus on the Get Berkshire Active scheme which offers opportunities to inactive people and to people who may have financial difficulty accessing

sport facilities. It was suggested that the Council may be able to support the promotion of the application process in future years.

#### 84.1.6 Readibus

Councillor Maher reported his attendance at the Readibus AGM held on 20<sup>th</sup> October noting that they have seen a reduction in grants over the past year.

#### 84.1.7 The Earley Charity

Councillor Maher reported attendance at a meeting of The Earley Charity on 27<sup>th</sup> November noting that they are looking to move their office to the Earley Crescent Centre.

### 85. DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

The Town Council welcomed Emma Carroll, the new Deputy Town Clerk, who took up her position on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

### 86. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

#### 86.1 Finance Software

The Town Clerk reported that the purchase of the new finance software, RBS Rialtas Omega, has been progressed. Installation of the software is scheduled to take place in mid-January 2020, followed by three days on-site training provided by the company. The Town Clerk and the Senior Operations Support Officer have been working on new finance codes and a new chart of accounts for the new system. It is the Town Clerk's intention to recruit a new Finance Officer to start work in the new year.

#### 86.2 Bookings and Cemetery Software

The Town Clerk reported that the purchase of the new Facilities Bookings Management software, also provided by RBS Rialtas, has been progressed. Installation of software is scheduled to take place in early March 2020, followed by one day on-site training provided by the company. The purchase of the Cemetery Management software has been put on hold until the cemetery extension project has been progressed.

### 87. GRANTS

Councillor Mickleburgh presented the Town Council with the revised Grants Policy, as recommended by the Policy & Resources Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2019, for consideration and adoption. Councillor Mickleburgh thanked all those involved in the review process. It was:

**RESOLVED** that the revised Grants Policy be adopted.

### 88. SULV UPDATE

Councillor Matthews reported that Woodley Town Council were unable to attend a meeting of the SULV Joint Working Party before the general election however, Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) has advised that comments for consideration in the review of the Local Plan Update, should be submitted whilst the plan is in draft form, before it goes out to consultation.

The Town Council considered a request from Councillor Matthews that power be delegated to Councillor Matthews and Councillor Bassett, Earley Town Council's representatives on the

SULV Joint Working Party, to submit comment to Wokingham Borough Council on the designation of Bulmershe/SULV. It was:

**RESOLVED** that the power to submit comment as Earley Town Council representatives on the SULV Joint Working Party to Wokingham Borough Council be delegated to Councillor Matthews and Councillor Bassett.

It was agreed that the report be provided to the Chair of the Planning Committee for review prior to submission.

**89. SERVICE TO EARLEY AWARDS**

Members considered the revised terms of reference for the Service to Earley Awards, as recommended by the Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2019. It was:

**RESOLVED** that the revised terms of reference be adopted.

**90. COUNCILLORS' ATTENDANCES**

90.1 Record of Members' Attendance

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

**91. ORDERS FOR PAYMENT**

The Town Council noted the details of the Orders for Payment (2650 – 2688).

**92. PUBLICATIONS**

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

CCB – Connecting Communities in Berkshire:	E – bulletin - October 2019
Involve Wokingham	E – newsletter October 2019
Me2 Club	Newsletter – October 2019
Maiden Erlegh Residents Association	Minutes of the meeting on 14 <sup>th</sup> November 2019
Earley Community Orchard Group	Minutes of the AGM held on 20 <sup>th</sup> October 2019.

**93. PRESS RELEASES**

Consideration was given to whether any of the foregoing items should be the subject of a press release. It was agreed that, owing to purdah, a press release regarding the new Grants Policy should be delayed until after 12<sup>th</sup> December.

**94. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

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

**PART II**

95. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

96. **STAFFING MATTERS**

97. **CENTREPOINT HIRER**

98. **TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 9.26pm.

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**Town Mayor**