



EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Earley Town Council held remotely on Wednesday, 14th October 2020 which commenced at 7:30pm.

Present

Chairman – The Mayor, Councillor D Hare.

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

In Attendance: J Friend (Town Clerk), E Carroll (Deputy Town Clerk), R Fryer (Democratic Services Officer) and a member of the public.

58. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J and M Eastwell.

59. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor G Littler declared an interest in Item 12 – Telecommunications Apparatus – Sol Joel Park, as a nearby resident.

60. PUBLIC FORUM

Resident S. Neal asked whether the Town Council shared his opinion that an 80' 5G tower would destroy the rural character of the park, could be sited elsewhere and should be vigorously opposed as the Council has a duty to preserve the playing fields.

61. TELECOMMUNICATIONS APPARATUS – SOL JOEL PARK

61.1 Councillors **RESOLVED** to bring forward discussions regarding Telecommunications Apparatus – Sol Joel Park.

61.2 Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's written report in relation to the request from the Harlequin Group to erect a 5G telecommunications mast in Sol Joel Park. Councillors were of the opinion that Sol Joel Park was not a suitable location for a 5G telecommunications mast, but understood the need to improve the 5G network. It was noted that there were a number of legal impediments to the erection of a tower including the covenant in the lease from Reading Borough Council, the Deed of Dedication with Fields in Trust and the charitable trust. Members agreed that the Town Clerk should produce a letter outlining why Sol Joel Park was not an appropriate location, and to arrange a face to face meeting with Harlequin, in a spirit of collaboration, to help identify a more suitable location. It was

RESOLVED to write to Harlequin to arrange a meeting to make clear the strength of feeling.

61.3 **RESOLVED** to copy Reading Borough Council, as freeholder, into communication.

The member of the public left the meeting

62. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council (39-57) held on Wednesday 29th July 2020 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

63. TOWN MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported on his visit to the opening of 'Fad' a new fruit, vegetable and halal butchery shop in Silverdale Road on Saturday 19th September. He reported on the enticing array of goods and was keen to encourage support for local traders.

64. COMMITTEE REPORTS

64.1 Amenities & Leisure Committee

Councillor A Newton presented the draft Minutes of the Amenities & Leisure Committee meeting held on the 2nd of September 2020. She noted the re-opening of Ali's recycling collection point, the progress made on the local walks project and youth outreach work, and that the requested press release was withdrawn after

The draft Minutes of the Amenities & Leisure Committee meeting held on 2nd of September 2020 (Minutes 17-32) were received.

64.2 Planning Committee

Councillor G Littler presented the Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 11th August and 8th September 2020. He noted that a draft response to the Planning for the Future white paper had been prepared, and would be circulated to Members prior to submission.

The Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 11th August (Minutes 1-16) and 8th September 2020 (Minutes 17-33) were received.

64.3 Policy & Resources Committee

Councillor C Jones presented the draft Minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on 16th September 2020. He noted that Earley Town Council's help shop had reopened when many other Councils had not, including the Borough.

The draft Minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on 16th September 2020 (Minutes 38 - 56) were received.

65. REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES

65.1 Queen Victoria Institute Fund

Members noted Councillor I Khayinza had stepped down from the position of Town Council representative for the Queen Victoria Institute Fund, owing to issues arising out of the pandemic. The Council considered a replacement and it was

RESOLVED that Councillor David Hare be appointed the Town Council representative to the Queen Victoria Institute Fund.

65.2 Councillors discussed whether the current pandemic situation was affecting their ability to carry out their representative on other bodies roles, and if there were any measures the Town Council could put in place to assist them. Members agreed these local relationships were important and were minded to proactively contact their representative bodies to ascertain their requirements during the pandemic period.

66. COVID 19 RISK ASSESSMENTS

66.1 Members noted that the Town Council's Covid-19 Risk Assessment was regularly updated and reflected changes in legislation and government guidance.

66.2 Councillors noted that separate Covid-19 Risk Assessments were in place for each Town Council activity as they resumed. These now included Community Centres and Football Pitch Hire. In line with Government requirements, QR codes had been downloaded and were displayed in the community centres and sports pavilions.

67. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

67.1 Financial Update 202/21

It was noted that a comprehensive financial update was considered by the Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting on 16th September 2020.

67.1.1 Councillors noted the additional information provided in relation to the impact of the pandemic on Community Centre income so far this financial year.

68. DELEGATION OF POWERS

68.1 Full Council

Members discussed the continuation of the schedule of delegation of emergency powers to the Town Clerk, and either the Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor, Leader or Deputy Leader. It was

RESOLVED that the schedule of delegation of emergency powers to the Town Clerk, plus either the Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor, Leader or Deputy Leader continue.

68.2 Planning Committee

Councillors noted that the monthly virtual meetings of the Planning Committee had been a success and considered whether the scheme of delegation of powers regarding this committee should remain suspended. It was

RESOLVED that the system of delegation, as adopted by Council in relation to the operations of the Planning Committee prior to the enactment of the 2020 Regulations, should remain suspended.

69. TOWN COUNCIL POLICIES

The Town Council received the recommendation of the Policy and Resources Committee that the following policies should be adopted. Members discussed the provenance of the policies and the scope and nature of future policies. Councillors wished to express their thanks to the Senior Operations Support Officer for her efforts in producing these policy documents.

69.1 Equality and Diversity Policy

It was **RESOLVED** that the Equality and Diversity Policy be adopted.

69.2 Child Protection and Vulnerable Persons Policy

It was **RESOLVED** that the Child Protection and Vulnerable Persons Policy be adopted.

69.3 Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy

It was **RESOLVED** that the Anti-Harassment AND Bullying Policy be adopted.

70. EARLEY+ PILOT PROJECT

The Town Clerk provided a verbal report on the mental health pilot project being carried out in the Earley+ Primary Care Network area. It was noted that this was a collaboration between Wokingham Borough Council, Citizens Advice Wokingham and two GP surgeries; Brookside and Wilderness Road and would take place within the Primary Care boundary.

Councillors were pleased to note that Earley Town Council was assisting with the project in terms of arranging for the doorstep delivery of leaflets to every household in Earley as well as promotion of the scheme through notice boards, websites and social media. Members were pleased to note the community spirit demonstrated by this collaboration and wished to express their thanks to Early Adopt a Street Initiative, who had agreed to deliver the leaflets.

71. FLOODING

The recent flooding in the Egremont Drive area was discussed, and Councillors noted the history and frequency of flooding in the area. It was noted that local residents had approached Maiden Early Residents Association to put their concerns to Wokingham Borough Council. Borough Councillors Mickleburgh and Jones were to meet with WBC officers on Friday 16th October to discuss the situation and potential resolutions. Councillor Mickleburgh would report back on the findings.

Councillors requested that, following the report on the meeting with WBC officers, a letter be sent to Wokingham Borough Council urging them to carry out work to the culvert, as recommended by the Environment Agency, as this appeared to be the primary cause of the repeated instances of flooding in the area.

72. REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

It was noted that the arrangements for this year's Remembrance Sunday commemorations had been amended to comply with Coronavirus restrictions. The parade would not take place, nor would the usual church service take place. Members were pleased to note that the Town Mayor, Councillor David Hare, would be attending the invitation only livestreamed assembly at the War Memorial as the representative of both Earley Town Council and Wokingham Borough Council. Once the details of the livestream were finalised, ETC would promote them.

73. COUNCILLORS' ATTENDANCES

73.1 Record of Members' Attendance

Members noted details of Councillors' attendance during 2020/21 at meetings of the Council and its Committees.

74. ORDERS FOR PAYMENT

Councillors noted the details of Orders for Payment (Vouchers 3413 – 3436, 3437 – 3443, 3444 - 3467), and Imprest Account (Vouchers 15 - 22).

75. PUBLICATIONS

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

MERA	Chairman’s Decisions – 10th September 2020
Me2 Club	Electronic Newsletter – September 2020
CCB	E-bulletin September 2020
Thames Valley Police	Police & Crime Commissioner Newsletter – September 2020
Involve Wokingham	Newsletter – September 2020
Earley NAG	Minutes of meeting - 7 th September 2020

76. PRESS RELEASES

Councillors requested press releases be issued in regard to the 5G telecommunications mast in Sol Joel Park, the flooding in the Egremont Drive area and the Earley+ Pilot Project.

77. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

There were no members of the public or press present. It was agreed that the remaining items on the Agenda be taken under Part II.

PART II

78. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

79. UPDATE FROM STAFFING COMMITTEE

80. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting was declared closed by the Chair at 9.32pm

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Town Mayor