



**EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Earley Town Council held remotely on Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 which commenced at 6.30pm.

**Present**

Chairman – The Mayor, Councillor D Hare

Councillors A Bassett, G Bhangra, N Brock, D Chopping, 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, R Sangster, M Shaw, C Smith, M Smith and K Yabsley.

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

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**1. TOWN MAYOR (CHAIR)**

- 1.1 The outgoing Town Mayor, Councillor D Hare, addressed the Council and thanked councillors and officers for their support, advice and encouragement throughout his term of office. He noted how the Council had worked well together, and how much he had enjoyed his term in office and the opportunity to serve the residents of Earley.

Councillors paid tribute to the outgoing Town Mayor and thanked him for his service.

- 1.2 The outgoing Town Mayor called for nominations for the office of Town Mayor (Chair) for 2021/22.

There was one nomination. After being duly proposed and seconded it was

**RESOLVED** that Councillor A Bassett be elected to the office of Town Mayor for the municipal year 2021/22.

- 1.3 Councillor D Hare relinquished the chair and Councillor A Bassett assumed the chair.

Councillors congratulated the new Town Mayor on her appointment.

*Councillor R Sangster entered the meeting*

**2. DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR (VICE CHAIR)**

The Town Mayor called for nominations for the position of Deputy Town Mayor (Vice Chair) for 2021/22.

There was one nomination. After being duly proposed and seconded it was

**RESOLVED** that Councillor T Maher be elected to the position of Deputy Town Mayor for the municipal year 2021/22.

**3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

5. **PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no members of the public present.

6. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council (130-154) held on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 were a true record and should be signed by the Chair.

7. **DELEGATED POWERS**

Members considered the Town Clerk's reports on the repercussions of the recent High Court's decision not to permit the extension of virtual meeting powers under current legislation, and her recommendations regarding the renewal of delegated powers. Councillors thanked the Clerk for a comprehensive and detailed document. It was

7.1 **RESOLVED** that Earley Town Council adopt Option A – ETC to hold virtual meetings for the Members of the individual committees at which those Members would discuss agenda items and make recommendations rather than resolutions. Members of the public and other town councillors would be welcome to attend these meetings, the agendas and joining instructions to be published on the Town Council website.

7.2 Members also **RESOLVED** to adopt an enhanced Scheme of Delegation (under s 101, Local Government Act, 1972) granting the Town Clerk, or, in her absence, the Deputy Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair or Leader, the power to make any decision required in the course of the Council's business, excepting matters which cannot be legally delegated. This delegated authority to include time specific matters, urgent items, emergencies as well as matters as recommended by Members of the Committees, or members of full Council, at their virtual meetings. Any use of these delegated powers not previously covered by a Council or Committee recommendation to be reported to Council.

7.3 It was also **RESOLVED** that the Annual Return would be discussed and reviewed at a virtual meeting of Councillors on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021, this meeting to have a full agenda. The scheduled full Council meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2021 will, as required under current legislation, be held as a physical meeting of the Council, at which Councillors must vote on the approval of the Annual Return. However, any physical meeting of the Council must comply with Covid-secure guidelines plus health & safety legislation, therefore only a quorum of Members can be accommodated in the Council Chamber and the length of the meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2021 will be kept short.

8. **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

Councillors considered the Town Clerk's recommendation to suspend standing orders 12(g), 12 (h) and 12(i) for the duration of this meeting. It was

**RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders 12(g), 12(h) and 12(i) for the duration of this meeting.

9. **STANDING COMMITTEES**

9.1 It was **RESOLVED** that the following Standing Committees would continue in the municipal year 2021/22:

- Amenities and Leisure Committee
- Policy and Resources Committee
- Planning Committee

9.2 Membership of Standing Committees

9.2.1 It was noted that the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor shall be members of every Committee.

9.2.2 It was **RESOLVED** that the current membership of the Standing Committees should continue for the municipal year 2021/22, or until such time as the Council agrees otherwise.

9.2.3 It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor D Hare take Councillor T Maher’s seat on the Policy and Resources Committee.

9.3 Chairs of Standing Committees

It was **RESOLVED** that the current Chairs of the Standing Committees remain in post for the municipal year 2021/22:

- Amenities and Leisure Committee – Councillor A Newton
- Policy and Resources Committee – Councillor C Jones
- Planning Committee – Councillor G Littler

**10. COUNCILLORS’ ATTENDANCE**

10.1 Record of Members’ Attendance

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

**11. PRESS RELEASES**

Councillors requested the following press releases be issued:

- 11.1 The election of the new Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor.
- 11.2 The revised arrangements regarding Earley Town Council meetings and the rationale behind them.

**12. 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**

**13. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**14. TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 7.15pm.

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**Town Mayor**