



EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a remote meeting of the Members of Earley Town Council held on Wednesday 24th November 2021 which commenced at 7.30pm.

Present

Chair – The Mayor, Councillor A Bassett

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

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

Councillors expressed their congratulations to the Senior Operations Support Officer on the safe arrival of her baby.

94. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Houlbrooke, D Ireland and C Jones.

95. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

96. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public in attendance.

97. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Cllr J Eastwell requested an update on Minute 83 ‘Sibley Transfer’ and the Town Clerk confirmed that the issue was still with the respective parties’ appointed solicitors and that the issue of the stream and riparian rights had been resolved to the satisfaction of all parties.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the Minutes of the meeting for the members of the Town Council (71-93) held on Wednesday 6th October 2021 were a true record and could be signed by the Chair.

Councillor M Shaw entered the meeting

98. TOWN MAYOR’S COMMUNICATIONS

The Town Mayor reported that she had enjoyed attending events across Earley and the local area. She noted her visits to:

- The Judicial Service at St James’ Catholic Church on Friday 8th October, which was also the 900th anniversary of the founding of Reading Abbey.
- The induction and installation of the Reverend April Beckerleg at St Nicholas Church on Sunday 10th October.

- Wokingham Volunteer Centre AGM at Wokingham Town Hall on Monday 11th September.
- Thanksgiving Service for HRH Duke of Edinburgh at Reading Minster on Saturday 16th October.
- Readibus AGM on Monday 25th October which was also celebrating 40 years of service.
- Remembrance Sunday Service with the Deputy Town Mayor at Earley St Peter's on Sunday 14th November.
- Welcoming Citizens Advice Wokingham's new Mobile Advice Unit to Sol Joel Park on Friday 19th November.

99. TOWN MAYOR'S CHRISTMAS RECEPTION

Cllr Bassett noted that given the current Covid conditions she was minded to postpone the Town Mayor's Christmas Reception this year and hold a function in the spring when it was hoped that conditions were likely to be improved. Members were in agreement with the Mayor's recommendation and discussed potential dates for the event and best practice for informing the Service to Earley Award winners. It was agreed that the Town Clerk should formally notify the award recipients at this time.

100. COMMITTEE REPORTS

100.1 Amenities & Leisure Committee

Cllr A Newton presented the draft Minutes of the meeting of the Amenities & Leisure Committee held on Wednesday 3rd November 2021.

The draft Minutes of the meeting of the Amenities & Leisure Committee held on 3rd November 2021 (Minutes 50-66) were received.

100.2 Planning Committee

Cllr G Littler presented the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on Tuesday 5th of October 2021, and the draft Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on Tuesday 9th November 2021.

The Minutes of the meeting for the members of the Planning Committee held on 5th October 2021 (Minutes 84-98) and draft Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 9th November 2021 (Minutes 99-111) were received.

100.3 Policy & Resources Committee

Cllr J Clark presented the draft Minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on Wednesday 10th November 2021. She noted Minute 67 'Earley Helpshop – Service Level Agreement' and the Town Clerk updated members that Wokingham Borough Council had confirmed its intention to extend the SLA for a further 2 years at current funding levels.

Cllr Littler highlighted Minute 65 'Earley Station Footbridge' and noted that he thought the penultimate sentence should be redrafted to express that Members were hopeful that further information would be provided at the next meeting with WBC. This change was agreed by the committee members present at the meeting.

The draft Minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on 10th November 2021 (Minutes 59-75) were received.

101. REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES

101.1 Earley Volunteer Drivers Bureau

Cllr M Eastwell provided a verbal report on her attendance, with Cllr A Mickleburgh, at the EVDB AGM on 24th November 2021. Councillors noted the continuing shortage of volunteers, growing client base and EVDB's discussions about working with the Wokingham Volunteer Centre, a decision on that arrangement to be decided in January 2022.

101.2 Wokingham Active Travel Community Hub

Cllr A Neal provided a verbal report on his attendance at three WATCH sessions. He noted that the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan was scheduled to go back out for consultation in January 2022 and that ETC would seek to respond to the LCWIP at that stage.

102. DELEGATION OF POWERS

102.1 Use of Delegated Powers

Members received a report detailing any use of delegated powers since the last meeting of the Council on 6th October 2021. It was noted that the EICR remedial work at Radstock House was scheduled for the Christmas break as the offices would need to be closed to accommodate the works.

102.2 Full Council

Members considered the continuing impact of the pandemic on the Council's ability to hold all meetings face to face whilst ensuring the safety of all participants. It was

RECOMMENDED that the schedule of delegated powers detailed in Minutes 7, 7.1 and 7.2 'Delegated Powers' at the Annual Meeting of the Council, 4th May 2021, be continued for Full Council meetings, whilst meetings of committees should continue to be held in person if possible. The continued adoption of the scheme to be reviewed again at the next meeting of Full Council.

103. COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT

Councillors considered the recommendation of the Policy and Resources Committee (Minute 69 - 10th November 2021) that the updated LGA Model Councillor Code of Conduct, as amended and adopted by Wokingham Borough Council, be adopted by Earley Town Council. Members requested upgraded pages be produced for Councillor's handbooks. It was

RECOMMENDED that Earley Town Council adopt the updated LGA Model Councillor Code of Conduct, as amended and adopted by Wokingham Borough Council.

104. CULVER LANE ALLOTMENTS- FEES

Members considered the recommendation of the Amenities and Leisure Committee (Minute 56 - 3rd November 2021) that a nominal increase be applied to allotment fees with effect from January 2023. It was

RECOMMENDED that fees be increased by a nominal sum, within a range of 50p - £2 as determined by the Town Clerk, with effect from January 2023.

105. CIL REQUEST

The Council considered the recommendation of the Policy and Resources Committee (Minute 68, 10th November 2021) that Earley Town Council Community Infrastructure Levy funds are not made available to Wokingham Borough Council for the purpose of replacing exercise equipment in Carnival Field. It was

RECOMMENDED that WBC's request that ETC CIL monies be used for this purpose be declined.

106. LOCAL PLAN UPDATE

Cllr S Matthews provided a verbal update on the LPU Revised Growth Strategy Briefing session she attended, alongside Cllr A Neal and some Borough Councillors, on 17th November 2021. She noted the restrictions of the content involved, and the compressed timescales. She also noted a desire for clarity on the criteria used to select the sites chosen, and easier accessibility and availability of the necessary documents on the WBC website.

Cllr G Littler highlighted the intention of the Planning Committee to create a working party at its meeting on 7th December 2021, and to draft a response for approval for the meeting on 11th January 2022. Councillors were invited to send responses to the working party once it had been formed.

107. EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL GREEN EVENTS 2021

Members noted the Town Clerk's report on the '26 to COP 26' events, as discussed by the Amenities and Leisure Committee on 3rd November 2021, which had been circulated to all councillors. Councillors expressed their thanks to the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, and all officers for their efforts in planning and delivering the programme of events.

108. COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE

Cllr J Clark provided an update on the Covid-19 commemorative plaque, to be installed at the Council Offices. The wording had been agreed but the details of the plaque itself were still to be confirmed:

Earley Town Council

'This plaque commemorates and thanks everyone who selflessly worked and supported others during the Covid-19 pandemic.'

Month/Year plaque installed

109. 250K TREES – WBC PRE-CONSULTATION SURVEY

Councillors noted that Wokingham Borough Council had launched a pre-consultation survey on the Wokingham Engage website as part of its work to develop a tree strategy. Cllr D Hare noted that the DEFRA recommendation for land the size of Wokingham borough was that 300,000 trees could be planted. Members requested that the Town Clerk send a letter to WBC asking why the tree strategy sought to plant 250,000 rather than the DEFRA recommendation of 300,000 trees.

110. COUNCILLORS' ATTENDANCE

110.1 Record of Members' Attendance

Members noted details of Councillors' attendance during 2021/22 at meetings of the Council and its Committees and at remote meetings held for members of Council and its Committees.

Councillors requested that the Record of Virtual Meetings indicate where a virtual meeting was not held because a physical meeting was held in its place.

111. ORDERS FOR PAYMENT

Councillors noted the details of Orders for Payment (Vouchers 4398 – 4424, 4425 – 4463 and 4464 – 4465), and that there were no Imprest Account vouchers to report.

112. PUBLICATIONS

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

The Friendship Alliance	e-newsletter 10 th November 2021
Fields in Trust	e-newsletter November 2021
Involve Community Services	e-newsletter 12 th November 2021

113. PRESS RELEASES

No press releases were requested.

114. 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

115. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

116. USE OF DELEGATED POWERS

117. COMMITTEE REPORTS

118. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting was declared closed by the Chair at 8.47pm.

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Town Mayor