



EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Earley Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Radstock Lane on Wednesday 12th October 2022 which commenced at 7.30pm.

Present

Chair – The Town Mayor, Councillor T Maher

Councillors: N Brock, R Cook, J Eastwell, M Eastwell, R Houlbrooke, C Jones, I Khayinza, G Littler, A Long, S Matthews, A Newton, R Sangster, C Smith, and K Yabsley.

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

72. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G Bhangra, D Chopping, J Clark, D Hare, A Mickleburgh, A Neal, M Shaw, and M Smith.

73. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

Councillor Khayinza entered the meeting

74. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public in attendance.

75. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of Earley Town Council (49-71) held on Wednesday 27th July 2022 were a true and correct record and could be signed by the Chair.

76. TOWN MAYOR'S COMMUNICATION

The Town Mayor reported that he had attended the Readibus AGM, Earley Green Fair, 1996 (Earley) Squadron Air Cadets, Reading FC Community Trust fishing project, Reading Cultural Society book launch, Maiden Erlegh School, Citizens Advice Wokingham AGM, Trinity Concert Band anniversary concert, Berkshire Vision AGM, and Berkshire Healthcare Foundation AGM. He noted that he had been keen to improve the visibility of the office and was keen to continue building relationships with all communities in Earley.

The Deputy Town Mayor reported she had attended the 'Love Unites' festival in Reading, the Army Cadet Force Annual Training Camp, and the South East Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association awards.

77. COMMITTEE REPORTS

77.1 Committee Vacancies

The current vacancies on the Council's standing committees were discussed. Councillors noted that, whilst these committees had a maximum number of seats, they could operate with fewer members as long as the meetings were quorate. It was confirmed that membership numbers for all standing committees were well in excess of the quorum.

77.1.1 Cllr A Long volunteered to join the Policy and Resources Committee. After being duly proposed and seconded it was

RESOLVED that Cllr A Long would serve on the Policy and Resources Committee for the remainder of the municipal year 2022/23.

77.2 Amenities and Leisure Committee

Cllr N Brock presented the draft Minutes of the Amenities and Leisure Committee meeting (Minutes 39 – 56) held on 28th September 2022. The Council received the Minutes.

77.3 Planning Committee

Cllr G Littler presented the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting (Minutes 30 – 44) held on 2nd August 2022 and the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting (Minutes 45 - 58) held on 6th September 2022. The Council received the Minutes.

78. REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES

78.1 Kenton Road Day Centre

Members received a written report from Cllr A Bassett on her attendance at meetings of the Kenton Road Day Centre.

78.2 Highwood Management Conference

Councillors noted that the minutes of the Highwood Management Conference meeting held on 3rd August 2022 had been circulated and that Cllrs G Littler, A Neal, and S Matthews had attended.

78.3 Borough Parish Liaison Forum

It was noted that the draft minutes of the Borough Parish Liaison Forum meeting held on 23rd August 2022 had been circulated and that Cllrs A Neal and S Matthews had attended the meeting.

79. EXTERNAL AUDITOR

Councillors considered the Town Clerk's recommendation that Earley Town Council remain within the central procurement process of the Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments. Members considered the complexity of exiting such a scheme and the cost-benefits it provided. It was

RESOLVED that Earley Town Council remain within the central procurement process of the SAAA.

80. DELEGATION OF POWERS

80.1 Scheme of Delegation - Coronavirus

Members discussed whether to continue the additional temporary delegation measures adopted at Full Council on 11th May 2022 – Minute 15.2. The Council and its committees were continuing to meet face to face which meant that it had not been necessary to use such delegation measures for some time, however, councillors were agreed that it would be sensible to retain them for the time being. It was

RESOLVED that the additional temporary delegation measures detailed in Minute 15.2 at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 11th May 2022 be continued. The adoption of these measures to be reviewed again at the next meeting of Full Council.

81. WBC INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL SURVEY

Councillors considered Wokingham Borough Council's offer to arrange a meeting with the Independent Remuneration Panel following the responses submitted by town and parish councils to its survey. The majority had expressed an intention to retain a system of expenses for town councillors rather than adopting an allowance system. It was agreed that no meeting was necessary.

82. ELECTORAL COMMISSION REVIEW

The recommendation of the Policy and Resources Committee's meeting of 5th October 2022 that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's public consultation on a review of the Wokingham borough electoral wards did not warrant a town council response at this stage was noted and agreed.

83. TRAINING

83.1 Finance Themed Summit

Members noted that the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, and Finance Officer had attended a one-day remote finance summit on 7th September 2022 which had proven to be informative and useful.

83.2 Planning Refresher

It was noted that Cllr G Littler and the Deputy Town Clerk had attended refresher Planning training provided by WBC on 27th September 2022. Cllr Littler noted that the training had been useful. He suggested that a training session focussed on household applications for extensions would prove very useful for members of Earley Town Council's Planning Committee in future and that WBC had indicated it may be willing to organise such training.

Councillors enquired as to where they may find information about training options for councillors. The Town Clerk responded that details of training opportunities were provided to councillors when they arose but that councillors may wish to explore the BALC and NALC websites for further information. If more specialised training was required, then other external providers could be approached by ETC. She confirmed that the training budget covered both officers and councillors and that should members wish to attend any training they contact her to make the necessary arrangements.

84. COUNCILLORS' ATTENDANCE

84.1 Record of Members' Attendance

Members noted the details of Councillors' attendance, both remote and face to face, during 2022/23 at meetings of the Council and its Committees.

85. ORDERS FOR PAYMENT

Councillors noted that no Orders for Payment had been produced since the last meeting of the Town Council or Policy and Resources Committee.

86. PUBLICATIONS

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

Berkshire Youth	E-newsletter September 2022
CCB	E-Bulletin July 2022
MERA	Magazine Summer 2022
MERA	Minutes of Meeting 14.7.22
Me2 Club	E-newsletter 30 th September 2022

87. PRESS RELEASES

No press releases were requested.

Councillor Newton enquired about progress on the Loddon Viaduct Disaster memorial. The Town Clerk reported that a site for a memorial tree had been agreed and the wording of the plaque was currently being finalised.

88. 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

89. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

90. COMMITTEE REPORTS

91. COMMUNITY CENTRES

92. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting was declared closed by the Chair at 8:15pm.

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Town Mayor