



AMENITIES & LEISURE COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Amenities & Leisure Committee held in the Council Chamber at the Council Offices, Radstock Lane, Earley on Wednesday 11th January 2023 which commenced at 7.45pm.

Present

Chair – Councillor N Brock

Councillors: G Bhangra, M Eastwell, A Long, T Maher, S Matthews, A Newton, C Smith and K Yabsley.

In attendance: J Friend (Town Clerk), M Brown (Operations Manager), G Hawker (Senior Park Ranger).

78. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Bassett and D Ireland.

79. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

80. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

81. ALLOTMENT AWARD WINNERS

Members noted that the winner of the Culver Lane Allotment Awards 2022 had received their prize at the Mayor's Reception in December. Unfortunately, the runner-up had not been able to attend and was not able to attend this evening's meeting either so councillors agreed that the prize, a gift voucher for the Trading Shed, be posted out.

82. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd November 2022 were approved as a true record and it was **RESOLVED** they be signed by the Chair (Minutes 57–77).

83. HUGE EARLEY LITTER PICK

G Hawker informed the meeting that preparations were underway for the event to take place on Sunday 26th March 2023, with both a morning and an afternoon session planned, starting at the Interpretation Centre. Enquiries were being made into whether McDonalds wish to lead a team again this year and if it would be possible to run a session in north Earley as this proved popular last year. Cllr Matthews confirmed that she would be willing to lead the session in north Earley.

Councillors asked if there were other areas of the town which could be served by the litter pick and the Senior Park Ranger explained that it would depend on whether someone could be found to lead a session in these areas. Several councillors volunteered for this task, G Hawker to email all councillors asking for confirmation of who is willing to lead a session and in what location.

The Operations Manager confirmed that all leaders would be supplied with guidance and risk assessments and that equipment and waste bags would be provided.

84. MAIDEN ERLEGH LAKE AND NATURE RESERVE

84.1 Planting

Members noted that the Park Rangers were in the process of planting more snowdrop bulbs and the hazel tree whips.

84.2 Lake

The Senior Park Ranger confirmed that the Wednesday volunteers had assisted with the construction of bases for fifteen floating platforms for the lake. Construction of the platforms would need to be completed and the platforms planted up before they could be tethered on the lake, this was predicted to be in April. Although the platforms wouldn't be established enough for birds to use this nesting season, they should be in good condition for nesting in 2024.

85. CULVER LANE ALLOTMENTS

Councillors were pleased to note that the Council had given permission for representatives from the Allotment Association to install a solar panel on the roof of the Trading Shed. This will be used to power the lights and the card machine.

86. SOL JOEL PARK

Members were pleased to note that there had been no reports of parking issues since BYDL had moved some of its games away from Sol Joel Park and had introduced a parking warden to patrol on match days. The Council will continue to monitor the situation.

87. BUS SHELTERS

Members were pleased to see that the new bus shelters had been installed in Church Road, outside 134a, and The Drive/London Road. They noted that the Operations Manager was soon to be arranging for a further two shelters, both in poor condition, to be replaced.

88. NOTICE BOARDS

Councillors noted that two new, powder-coated steel notice boards had been ordered for installation at Beech Lane/Wilderness Road and Sol Joel car park. The new boards will have the advantage of incorporating a covered area for public use.

89. CORONATION

A wide-ranging discussion took place on ways in which the Town Council could mark the Coronation of King Charles III in May 2023. Members favoured planting a reasonably large tree (and plaque) at one of the Town Council's sites (Paddick Drive, Bulmershe Park and Sol Joel Park were all discussed), as well as finding a way to support community groups and/or residents to hold their own community celebrations, perhaps by way of giving small grants to support street parties or community picnics. The committee's suggestions will be forwarded to the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration at its meeting on 25th January 2023.

90. ASSETS - UPDATES

90.1 Silverdale

At the request of Maiden Erlegh Trust, the Town Council had signed a legal agreement to vacate the building in March 2023 rather than July 2023 as had previously been agreed. In the meantime, Earley Town Council is permitted to use the building for storage purposes only. The Town Council continues with its work to vacate Silverdale, cancelling contracts and removing or disposing of equipment.

90.2 Centrepont

The Town Council continues with its attempts to renew the lease on the Centrepont building. WBC is insisting on the introduction of new clauses into the lease, the Town Council is awaiting formal notification of these changes so that the matter may be considered further.

90.3 Sibly Development

Persimmon now appears to be re-engaging with the transfer process. After an extremely long wait, there is hope that the transfer of the site to Earley Town Council will be completed by the spring.

91. POST OFFICE CLOSURE

Members were disappointed to note that the post office at McColls, Asda had closed on 8th December 2022.

92. WBC TREE STRATEGY - CONSULTATION

Cllr Long volunteered to look at WBC's draft Tree Strategy and will submit comments, in a personal capacity. Information on the draft strategy is available on the Engage Wokingham Borough website until 22nd January 2023.

93. PUBLICATIONS

The Committee noted that the following items had been received and were available for viewing from the Council Offices:

Berkshire Youth	E-newsletter – November 2022
Me2 Club	E-newsletter – November, December 2022
CCB	E-newsletter December 2022
The Friendship Alliance	E-newsletter 30 th November; 14 th December 2022
Involve Community Services	E-newsletter 18 th November; 2 nd December; 16 th December 2022

94. PRESS RELEASES

A press release on the new bus shelters was requested.

95. 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

96. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

97. MAYS LANE CEMETERY

98. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting was declared closed by the Chair at 8.56pm.

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Chair, Amenities & Leisure Committee