



**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 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023 which commenced at 7pm.

Present

Chair – Councillor N Brock

Councillors: R Ahlawat, A Bassett, R Browne, M De Jong, A Long, T Maher, S Matthews and B Owen.

In attendance: J Friend (Town Clerk), M Brown (Operations Manager).

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**18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were apologies for absence from Cllrs A Bradley, R Cook and C Smith.

**19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**20. PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no members of the public present.

**21. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023 were approved as a true record and it was **RESOLVED** they be signed by the Chair (Minutes 1 - 17).

**22. CULVER LANE ALLOTMENTS**

It was noted that members of the Allotment Working Party had commenced their series of visits in their capacity as judges for the Best Allotment competition 2023.

**23. MAIDEN ERLEGH LAKE AND NATURE RESERVE**

23.1 Green Fair – Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2023

It was noted that most of the stall places had been booked and that officers were in discussions with the Rotary Club who had agreed to provide refreshments on the day. Officers were preparing the activities for the ETC stall. Cllr C Smith had volunteered to organise the town councillors stall, details of which were awaited.

**24. MAYS LANE CEMETERY**

24.1 Extension Project

Members received an update from the Town Clerk. The trial pits had been dug and the laboratory results for the soil samples were expected soon. A site visit for the Cemetery Working Party will be arranged for the week commencing 10<sup>th</sup> July.

#### 24.2 Tractor Shed

It was noted that an upgraded intruder alarm had been installed at the tractor shed.

#### 24.3 Commonwealth War Graves

Members noted that the sign provided by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission was now in place.

### 25. COMMUNITY CENTRES

#### 25.1 Radstock Lane Community Centre

##### 25.1.1 The Elizabeth Room

The Town Clerk gave an update on the numerous charities and groups which were expanding their services to the Earley area in order to make use of the facilities at the Elizabeth Room. Cllr De Jong informed Members that she had visited the new facility and was very impressed with the way it had been transformed. Cllr T Maher asked that an update on use of the Elizabeth Room be provided to the committee on a quarterly basis.

### 26. OPERATIONS MANAGER - REPORT

The Operations Manager provided a verbal report on matters relating to assets and facilities. Tasks recently undertaken included:

- Updating of safe working practices and creation of further documentation
- Installation of new noticeboards
- Repairing of SJP basketball hoop and back board
- Completion of summer tree inspection
- Preparations for fishing season complete including bramble clearance and general maintenance of fishing bays
- Preparation of SJP site for, and support of Earley St Peters sports day
- Two more staff received First Aid training

### 27. NOTICEBOARDS

Members noted that a further four new noticeboards had been installed at the Council Offices, Culver Lane Allotments and Maiden Erlegh Nature Reserve (x2). Cllr A Bassett reported that the council notices on some noticeboards appeared to have been eaten by insects, this was particularly noticeable in the noticeboard opposite Tiptree Close. Officers agreed to laminate notices in these troublesome areas.

### 28. DEFIBRILLATOR PROJECT

#### 28.1 Radstock Lane Community Centre

It was noted that a replacement defibrillator and cabinet had been ordered for the external wall of Radstock Community Centre.

### 29. TELEPHONE KIOSK – SILVERDALE ROAD

Members discussed possible future uses for the red telephone box in Silverdale Road, which had been adopted by Earley Town Council. They noted that it had been vandalised and was in poor condition but were agreed that, if a suitable use could be found, they would prefer to leave

it where it is rather than try to move the telephone box to another location where, among other things, it would not have any power supply.

A lively, positive discussion followed, with councillors sharing ideas and showing examples of other telephone box conversions they had seen elsewhere in the country. It was agreed that an approach would be made to Reading University asking if any of their departments would like to use the telephone kiosk as part of one of their projects or to perhaps showcase work. The Town Council could renovate the exterior of the box and possibly provide a grant if the university had any viable proposals.

### **30. GREEN EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

#### **30.1 Bric-a-Brac**

Members noted the success of the pop-up bric-a-brac stall at the council offices and agreed that the initiative supported the Town Council's green agenda.

#### **30.1 Clothes Swap**

It was noted that another Clothes Swap event was being held at the Council Offices on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023, Members were encouraged to volunteer for an hour or so to reduce the requirement on officers to supervise it. Cllr A Bassett indicated that she would be willing to help out.

#### **30.2 Green Events**

Members considered the report provided and noted that officers were planning to repeat some of the environmentally themed events staged in the run up to COP 26. Any activities organised will be advertised on the website, noticeboards and promoted on the Town Council's Facebook page.

### **31. OAK PROCESSIONARY MOTH**

Councillors were pleased to note that grounds staff had been provided with guidance on dealing with any suspected sightings of the oak processionary moth or its caterpillars. The Town Clerk confirmed that there was no evidence that the moth was present on any of the Town Council's land but that officers would remain vigilant.

### **32. SOL JOEL PARK CENTENARY**

Members discussed organising an event to celebrate the centenary of the opening of Sol Joel Park. It was agreed that, in principle, this was something the Council should pursue but first officers would compile the facts around the gifting of the land, the role of the National Playing Fields Association (now Fields in Trust) and the involvement of dignitaries in 1926 and 1927.

### **33. DOG WASTE BAGS**

The Town Clerk's report was considered and it was

**RESOLVED** that the limit of one pack of dog waste bags per resident per month would be lifted with immediate effect.

**34. PUBLICATIONS**

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

MERA	Minutes of Executive Committee meeting – 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2023
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**35. PRESS RELEASES**

No press releases were requested.

**36. TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The meeting was declared closed by the Chair at 8.49pm.

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Chair, Amenities & Leisure Committee