



## **EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of the meeting of Earley Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Radstock Lane on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023 which commenced at 7.00pm.

### **Present**

Chair – The Town Mayor, Councillor C Smith

Councillors: R Ahlawat, A Bassett, A Bradley, N, Brock, R Cook, M De Jong, D Hare, T Holton, M Iyengunmwena, S Jordan, N Jorgensen, P Jorgensen, I Khayinza, G Littler, A Long, T Maher, S Matthews, A Neal, S Newton, B Owen and H Sarasan.

In Attendance: J Friend (Town Clerk), E Carroll (Deputy Town Clerk) and Y Crocker (Committees Officer)

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### **43. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R Browne, J Eastwell and M Smith.

*Councillor H Sarasan joined the meeting.*

### **44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr T Holton declared an interest in agenda Item 18 - Advisor to the Planning Committee.

### **45. PUBLIC FORUM**

No members of the public were present.

### **46. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of Earley Town Council (23-42) held on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023 were a true and correct record and could be signed by the Chair.

### **47. TOWN MAYOR'S COMMUNICATION**

Members received a written report from the Town Mayor detailing the events she had attended recently. These included Hawkedon School's sports day, the Promise Inclusion AGM, a Project Salama fundraising event in Newbury and a celebration of Maiden Erlegh Pre-School's opening at its new venue.

The Deputy Mayor, Cllr M De Jong, reported on her attendance on the 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at the Lower Earley Salvation Army Hub's afternoon tea event. She reported that this was a good opportunity to see the community garden, a project which Earley Town Council had supported through grant funding. Councillor De Jong was very impressed by the garden and the Hub and highly recommended other councillors visit it and meet some of the volunteers who worked there.

#### **48. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### **48.1 Amenities and Leisure Committee**

Cllr N Brock presented the draft Minutes of the Amenities and Leisure Committee meeting (Minutes 18-36) held on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023. The Council received the draft Minutes.

##### **48.2 Planning Committee**

Cllr R Cook presented the draft Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting (Minutes 18 - 31) held on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023. The Council received the Minutes.

##### **48.3 Policy and Resources Committee**

Cllr D Hare presented the draft Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting (Minutes 21 - 40) held on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023. The Council received the draft Minutes.

#### **49. REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES**

##### **Kenton Road Day Centre**

Cllr A Bassett told Members that due to confusion regarding the date she had not attended the AGM but she had since had contact with the Chair to discuss the agenda. The Day Centre is having ongoing issues with subsidence and they had also been hoping to upgrade the toilet facilities at the centre to incorporate a disabled toilet. Unfortunately, their application for funding from a charity had been unsuccessful. Cllr A Bassett noted that the Day Centre had not applied for an ETC grant this year and suggested that perhaps they could apply to the Town Council. Members agreed that an application for a grant could be considered by the Council.

#### **50. WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – CIL REQUEST**

Members discussed the recommendation from the Policies and Resources Committee that the Town Council make a contribution of £1,293.21 per year, for a 3 year period, from CIL monies towards the funding of local bus services, following a request from Wokingham Borough Council.

Members **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation with the following additions:

- Earley Town Council to pay the sum on an annual basis
- Earley Town Council to reserve the right to review the Town Council's financial contribution towards funding if bus routes were cancelled or altered.

#### **51. MAYS LANE CEMETERY**

##### **Extension Project Update**

Members received a written update on the cemetery extension project from the Town Clerk. Cllr S Newton asked if the extension would be opened in phases, the Town Clerk responded that the plan was to open the whole extension in Spring/Summer 2024. Cllr S Newton also asked if a timeline for the project was available. The Town Clerk advised members that a topographical survey was being conducted shortly, this would feed into a site plan and a scope of works. As these steps progressed, a timeline for the project would become clearer. She confirmed that the cemetery working group would be updated on progress and that regular reports would be provided to Council.

**52. SWR CONSULTATION – TRAIN STATION CHANGES**

Members discussed the changes being proposed under SWR’s programme of modernisation for train stations, including the closure of ticket offices. Members raised concerns about the impact of the proposals on certain sections of the community who may have issues if unable to seek assistance from a ticket office, they were of the view that the proposals would disproportionately affect elderly and disabled residents as well as those with poor IT skills. Councillors were also of the view that the reduction of staffing levels at Earley station was substantial. Members agreed to submit a response to the consultation. Cllr A Neal provided draft wording which will form the basis of the response.

**53. COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE**

Record of Members Attendance

Members noted the amendment regarding Cllr A Neal’s record of attendance for the planning meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> June to show that he was attending a meeting at the Borough Council.

**54. ORDERS FOR PAYMENT**

Members noted the details of Orders for Payment (Vouchers 5951 – 5971, 5972 – 5976) and Imprest vouchers (833 - 845).

**55. PUBLICATIONS**

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

TVP Police & Crime Commissioner	E-update July 2023
Friendship Alliance	E-newsletter July 2023
Involve Community Services	E-newsletter 8 <sup>th</sup> July 2023
Hardship Alliance Action Group	Minutes - 12 <sup>th</sup> July 2023

**56. PRESS RELEASES, WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA**

The following press releases and posts were agreed:

- The Town Council’s agreement to contribute towards the funding of local bus services
- The Town Council’s response to the SWR train station consultation and promotion of the extension to the consultation deadline
- Promotion of the Green Fair

**57. 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**

**58. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**59. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**60. PLANNING ADVISOR**

**61. TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The meeting was declared closed by the Chair at 7.40pm

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**Town Mayor**