



POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee, held in the Council Chamber at the Council Offices, Radstock Lane, Earley, Wednesday 11th September 2024 which commenced at 7pm.

Present

Chair – Councillor D Hare

Councillors: A Bassett, N Brock, J Eastwell, T Holton, N Jorgensen, G Littler, A Long, T Maher, S Matthews, S Newton and M Smith.

In attendance: J Friend (Town Clerk) and E Carroll (Deputy Town Clerk)

21. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

23. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

24. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on 10th July 2024 were confirmed as a true record and **RESOLVED** for signature by the Chair. (Minutes 1 - 20).

25. BANK RECONCILIATIONS

Councillors noted that the Bank Reconciliations for June and July 2024 had been made available to the Chair of Policy & Resources Committee for information. A copy of ETC's bank balances as at 31st July 2024 was provided to Councillors.

26. AUDIT 2023/2024

Members noted that the external audit for the year ended 31st March 2024 had been completed. The external auditor confirmed that there are no matters of concern. The Chair thanked officers for their continuing work managing the Town Council's finances.

27. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

Councillors noted that the Chair and the Leader of the Council approved the use of CIL funding (£560) to complete the pathway in the new play area at Collins Drive. It was also noted that ETC's current CIL fund is £34,500, with spend expiry dates between September 2025 and April 2029.

28. COUNCIL INSURANCE 2024/2025

Members noted that a review of the Council's insurance needs had been carried out by the Town Clerk and ETC's broker, James Hallam. Cover had been obtained for all ETC's requirements, including vehicles, at a cost of £34,192, an increase of approximately £1,000 on 2023/24. It was reported that a buildings revaluation exercise would be carried out this year and cover levels amended if necessary.

28.1 Repair Café

Members noted that separate insurance had been obtained for the Earley Repair Café through a specialist broker at a cost of £243. The Earley Repair Café will open to the public on 13th October 2024 with the aim being that in 12 months' time the volunteers will take on the management of the Repair Café, including responsibility for insurances, etc, which will then be funded by Repair Café income.

29. TOWN COUNCIL GRANTS 2024/25

29.1 Grants Awarded

Councillors noted that correspondence had been received from Daisy's Dream, Home-Start Wokingham District, Keep Mobile, Together - One Step at a Time, Link Visiting Scheme and Wokingham Job Support Centre thanking Earley Town Council for the grants awarded in Tranche 1 of the Grants awards for financial year 2024/2025.

30. LEASES – PADDICK DRIVE

Councillors noted that the renewal of ETC's leases on Paddick Drive open space and the BMX Track for a period of 14 years had been agreed by Wokingham Borough Council. The previous two leases will be combined under one lease and the site plan will exclude the layby, which will remain the responsibility of WBC.

Officers are waiting for the final documents to be provided by WBC, these will be checked by ETC's solicitor and presented to Council for approval for signature.

31. YOUTH SERVICES - UPDATE

Members received a written report from the Town Clerk on the work with Berkshire Youth to reinstate a youth service provision and were pleased to hear that progress is being made.

Berkshire Youth has carried out three outreach events during the summer holidays at Sol Joel Park, Chalfont Park and the Events Field, with the purpose being initial engagement with local youngsters.

Berkshire Youth have also carried out a youth survey at Maiden Erlegh School and will be carrying out a further survey at Earley primary schools. Two after school, drop-in sessions at Centrepoint Community Centre have also been organised for 19th and 26th September.

The Town Clerk is waiting for a report from Berkshire Youth, collating the information from these events, once it's received a meeting of the Youth Services Working Group will be arranged.

32. RADSTOCK HOUSE – SOLAR PANELS

Councillors received a written report from the Operations Manager detailing the energy and money saved following the installation of solar panels at Radstock House. The report covered the period 1st January 2024 to 2nd September 2024 and showed that 47% less energy had been drawn from the grid compared with the same period last year.

33. POLICY REVIEW

Councillors noted that a review of the Council’s GDPR policies had been carried out and that revisions had been made to the Data Protection Policy and the Website Privacy & Cookie Policy.

34. ORDERS FOR PAYMENT

Councillors received details of Orders for Payment since the last meeting of the Town Council (Vouchers 6921 - 6941, 6942 – 6966, 6967 – 6975, 6976 – 7001, 7002 – 7020, 7021 – 7044, 7045 – 7048, 7049 - 7071) and Imprest vouchers 970 – 993).

35. PUBLICATIONS

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

CCB (Connecting Communities in Berkshire)	E-newsletter July 2024
TVP	Police & Crime Bulleting – 31 st July & 31 st August 2024 Wokingham North update 1 st August 2024
MERA	Minutes – July & August 2024
Me2 Club	E-newsletter July & August 2024

36. PRESS RELEASES, WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA

Councillors requested that a press release be issued, informing residents of the success of the solar panels project at Radstock House.

37. 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

38. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

39. STAFFING UPDATE

40. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting was declared closed by the Chair at 7.41pm.