



## **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 4<sup>th</sup> March 2026 which commenced at 7pm.

### Present

Chair – Councillor N Brock

Councillors: R Ahlawat, A Bassett, A Bradley, R Browne, R Cook, A Long and S Matthews.

In attendance: E Carroll (Deputy Town Clerk)

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### **68. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs M De Jong, T Maher and A Newton. The Town Clerk and Operations Manager also gave their apologies.

### **69. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

*Councillor Matthews entered the meeting.*

### **70. PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no members of the public present.

### **71. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2026 were approved as a true record and it was **RESOLVED** they be signed by the Chair. (Minutes 54-67)

### **72. CULVER LANE ALLOTMENTS**

#### **72.1 Raised Beds & Troughs**

Members were pleased to note that the raised beds and troughs have been promoted by the Allotment Association in their newsletter and that the rate of uptake has improved.

#### **72.2 Allotment Competition Guidelines**

Members reviewed the guidelines for the annual allotment competition and agreed that the guidelines should remain as they are with no changes for 2026.

### **73. MAYS LANE CEMETERY**

Councillors received a report on the work undertaken to extend the Cremated Remains Interment section at Mays Lane Cemetery. Councillors were pleased that the work has mostly been completed with the soil dug over and roots/debris removed. Fencing has been erected, with golden privet hedging planted along it and grass seed put down.

Staff will be checking the site regularly and watering when necessary. The next steps will be to install a pathway and benches. The work will provide approximately 5 years of cremated remains plots.

#### **74. COMMUNITY CENTRES**

##### **74.1 Maiden Place Community Centre**

###### **74.1.1 Car Park Wall**

Councillors were pleased to note that the work to repair the damaged wall has now been completed and that cycle rails have been installed in two areas of the parking area by the wall.

##### **74.2 Centrepoint Community Centre**

###### **74.2.1 Bike Workshop**

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that interviews for a Bike Workshop Coordinator had been carried out and that a suitable candidate has been offered the position. The next stage will be to work on operational processes, decide on opening hours and recruit volunteers, with the aim of opening the Bike Workshop in June 2026.

#### **75. MEADOW PARK**

Members received a report on the work to upgrade Meadow Park play areas. The plan is to improve the junior and toddler play areas, add a sensory/quiet area and to move and update the current gym equipment.

An initial public consultation on the types of playground equipment people would like to see was undertaken at the Green Fair in 2025. An additional consultation is to now be carried out with Loddon Primary School, the nearby school to Meadow Park. Once this consultation has been completed, a detailed specification for the site can be drawn up and play companies invited to submit designs and quotes.

#### **76. OPERATIONS MANAGER – REPORT**

The Deputy Town Clerk provided a verbal report on behalf of the Operations Manager which included the following:

- Details of the remedial works at the Council Offices following a recent investigation into the inefficiencies of the heating system
- Details of the work to extend the current cremated remains area at Mays Lane cemetery
- An update on the Huge Earley Litter Pick being held on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March
- Avian Flu and the measures being taken at Maiden Erlegh Nature Reserve
- Details of the building survey carried out at Sol Joel Park pavilion
- Delivery of 600 bulbs to be planted in the flower bed by the Toby Carvery
- Wildflower seeding carried out in Collins Drive
- Delivery of trees from Woodland Trust Trees to be planted at Maiden Erlegh Nature Reserve and Bulmershe Park
- Details of a Tomography Survey carried out at Sol Joel Park.

#### **77. LODDON VALLEY RAMBLERS – ROUND EARLEY ROUTE**

Councillors noted that the Loddon Valley Ramblers are working on creating a new 15-mile walking route around the Earley boundary and have requested that the Town Council add the walk to the others it currently hosts on its website.

Councillor Long has been engaging with Loddon Valley Ramblers on this project in a personal capacity and has requested that this arrangement be formalised. It was: -

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Long be formally appointed to engage with Loddon Valley Ramblers in his capacity as Town Councillor but should there be any decision that requires input from the Town Council that this is referred to the Amenities & Leisure Committee.

## **78. PHONE BOX PROJECT**

Members received an update on the progress of the phone box project following the renovation of the phone box in Silverdale Road to a display case for art and local history projects. The first artwork display was by students at Maiden Erlegh Secondary School and the second display by children with additional needs from Together: One Step at A Time.

Members were pleased to note that the project has been met with such positivity on social media with comments praising the work. Officers are now liaising with the University of Reading and the Museum of English Rural Life on future displays. Austen House Care Home has also expressed an interest to involve its residents in the project.

## **79. COMMUNITY EVENTS**

### **79.1 Town Mayor's Coffee Morning**

Members noted that the Town Mayor will be holding a Coffee Morning at Maiden Place Community Centre on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April to raise funds for her chosen charity, Pets As Therapy (PAT). The event will be attended by representatives from the charity and several PAT dogs. There will also be a free bunting making workshop run by students from the University of Reading, as part of its centenary celebrations.

### **79.2 Moveability**

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that the Town Clerk had recently attended a Connecting Communities in Berkshire (CCB) meeting, where she took part in a seated chair exercises demonstration delivered by Moveability. Moveability provide sessions in the community which are suitable for people with limited mobility, the elderly and people who find exercise difficult. The sessions are designed to be sociable and include a 'social cuppa'.

Councillors discussed the possibility of ETC providing Moveability sessions at one of its community centres and were keen to support the idea in principle. The Town Clerk is currently waiting on more detailed information about the sessions.

## **80. CRESCENT CENTRE**

Councillors received an update from Councillor Brock on her meeting along with the Town Clerk and representatives of the Crescent Centre. The centre offers rooms for hire which are suitable for events, meetings and activities. The centre also delivers various courses including English courses, IT courses and Employability courses. There is also a large modern kitchen which provides cooking facilities. At the meeting there was a discussion on how the Town Council and the Crescent Centre could work together with suggestions of possible joint activities being hosted at the centre.

Councillors agreed that they would support the suggestion of the Town Council working with the Crescent Centre on delivering joint activities and would like to offer the centre a pitch at this year's Green Fair to help promote its facilities and courses. It was agreed that there should be further discussion on possible ideas on how the two organisations can work together in the future. Councillor Brock informed Councillors that she is due to attend a trustees meeting shortly.

**81. TOWN COUNCIL QUESTIONS AT WBC MEETINGS**

The committee were asked to consider any councillor requests for specific questions to be submitted to WBC meetings and to also agree the WBC meeting to which the Town Clerk is to submit the question.

Members **RESOLVED** that they had no questions to submit at this time.

**82. PUBLICATIONS**

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

Huntley & Palmer’s Allotment Association	E-newsletter January 2026
Involve Community Services	E-newsletters – January & February 2026
Connecting Communities in Berkshire (CCB)	E-newsletters – January & February 2026
Friendship Alliance	E-newsletter – January 2026

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

No press releases were requested.

**84. TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The meeting was declared closed by the Chair at 8.10pm

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Chair, Amenities & Leisure Committee