



BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

Tel: 01442 800146
Email: townclerk@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk
Website: www.berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk

2nd Floor, Civic Centre
161 High Street, Berkhamsted
Herts HP4 3HD

Minutes of a Meeting of BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL Held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre on Monday 15th May at 7.30 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors:

N. Taylor (Town Mayor)
S. Jordan (Deputy Town Mayor)
I. Bristow
M. Bromberg
W. Conian
K. Fielding
P. Fisher
A. Hawkswood
P. Holditch
R. Mackenzie
N. Morrish
T. Pedrick
G. Stevens
R. Stewart
L. Tate

ALSO PRESENT

Sue Severn, Town Clerk
Joanna Harley, Deputy Town Clerk
4

Members of Public

FC 48/23 Election of Town Mayor

The outgoing Town Mayor, Cllr W Conian, thanked members of the former council and welcomed the new councillors. She had an enjoyable year as Town Mayor and extended her thanks to volunteers in the community for their hard work and to the Town Clerk and office team.

Cllr G Stevens proposed and Cllr P Fisher seconded that Cllr N Taylor be nominated as Town Mayor.

There being no further nominations, it was unanimously **resolved** that Cllr N Taylor be elected as Town Mayor for the council year 2023/24.

Cllr N Taylor put on the mayoral chain and took the chair. He thanked Cllr W Conian for her hard work as Town Mayor and welcomed the new council to the meeting.

FC 49/23 Election of Deputy Mayor

Cllr G Stevens proposed and Cllr P Fisher seconded that Cllr Susan Jordan be nominated as Deputy Town Mayor.

There being no further nominations, it was unanimously **resolved** that Cllr S Jordan be elected as Deputy Town Mayor for the council year 2023/24.

To receive the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor's Declarations of Acceptance of Office

Both were **received** and signed by the Proper Officer.

FC 50/23 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

FC 51/23 Declarations of Interest

- i. Cllr G Stevens declared an interest in FC 57/23, Happy Wanderers grant application, as the applicant was known to him;
- ii. No written requests for dispensations for declarable interests were received; and
- iii. No requests for dispensation were granted.

FC 52/23 The **Minutes of the Previous** Berkhamsted Town Council **Meeting** held on the 3rd of April 2023 (previously circulated) were received and approved and signed by the Chair as a true record.

FC 53/23 To **receive** any outstanding **Declarations of Acceptance of Office** from councillors.

All were **received**.

FC 54/23 Open Forum

Members of the public are invited to speak to the Council to raise issues or concerns, ask questions or make comments. (This session will last for a maximum of 20 minutes. Members of the public may indicate that they wish to speak during debate by raising their hand. The Chair may recognise them, but it is requested that comments are brief, relevant, and not repetitive).

Any updates from Hertfordshire County and Dacorum Borough Councils.

Cllr N Taylor reported that he continues to progress various road issues. There was no update from Dacorum Borough Council as it is in the process of changing administration post-elections.

The Chair of the Berkhamsted Citizens Association (BCA) and Chair of BCA Townscape congratulated the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor and welcomed the new councillors. They gave an overview of the history and work of the BCA and handed out a footpath map to councillors.

FC 55/23 Police & Neighbourhood Planning

No member of the local policing team was present but the clerk advised that the crime figures are

Theft from motor vehicles: 6 Burglary: 3 Dangerous dog: 1
Damage to building: 3 Criminal damage under £5,000: 1
Criminal damage under £5,000 to a vehicle: 3
Action fraud: 1
Theft of motor vehicles: 2

Sarah Anderson is returning to Berkhamsted's policing team.

FC 56/23 Planning and Neighbourhood Planning

There were no urgent planning applications received for consideration.

The first Town Planning Committee of the new council will be held in the Main Hall at 7:30pm on the 22nd of May.

The first meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was held on Monday the 17th April with enthusiasm from the majority of the invited parties.

The next meeting of the Steering Group has been organised for Monday the 26th of June. All councillors are encouraged to attend and the deputy clerk will circulate the presentation and accompanying documents.

FC 57/23 Finance and Council Administration

The following matters were reports and matters for resolution:

Finance

- The council's accounts and financial reports to 30th April 2023 were **received** and **agreed** as circulated. The town clerk will circulate the annual council budget details to councillors so that they can familiarise themselves with the details.
- The small grant application from the Happy Wanderers was considered and it was **agreed** to grant them **£400**. The town clerk will circulate the grant policy documents to councillors so that they are aware of the criteria for future applications.
- The dates for the exercise of public rights to view the accounts from the 19th June to 28th July 2023 were **noted**.
- The timetable for the annual audit was **noted** as follows:
 - (i) 04 May 2023 - year end closedown for 2022/23.
 - (ii) 23 May 2023 - Internal Audit final visit.
 - (iv) 05 June 2023 - Full Council Meeting to approve Annual Governance and Accountability Return/Annual Accounts.
 - (v) 30th June 2023 - Latest date for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to arrive with External Auditors.
- It was **resolved** to add the following councillors as signatories on all the council's bank accounts:
 - Councillor Robert Stewart
 - Councillor Susan Jordan
 - Councillor Rebecca Mackenzie

Administration

- General Power of Competence

Cllr N Taylor proposed and Cllr W Conian seconded and it was therefore **resolved** that the town council, in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, Section 8, as set out in the Statutory Instrument Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, has met the following criteria:

- more than two thirds of the members of the Council have stood for election;
- the Town Clerk holds the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA); and will therefore use the Power of Competence to the next ordinary election in 2027, when it must resolve that it meets the eligibility criteria to continue to be an eligible parish council.
- The council's Statement of Internal Control was **adopted**.

- The 2023-24 Committees and Working Group membership was **discussed** and **agreed**.
- The appointment of representative to outside bodies was **agreed**.
- It was **noted** that the councillor training will be held on Monday the 12th June at 6.00pm.
- The meeting date schedule for 2023/24 was **agreed**.
- Renewal of the council's insurance policy was **confirmed**.
- The following council and staff's subscriptions to outside bodies were **noted**:
National Association of Local Council and Hertfordshire Association of Local Councils,
and Society of Local Council Clerks, CIMA.

FC 58/23 Community and Events

Coronation

The clerk reported that the event had been a great success with over 5000 people in attendance. Approximately £4000 was raised on the raffle with more from vendors, the proceeds of which will be spent on children's free summer and Christmas events. The sponsorship from local businesses of over £12,000 meant that the original budget of £30,000 was underspent and the cost for the event only came in at around £8,000.

The council thanked former Councillor Anne Foster for her very hard work in organising the event and voted for a formal thank you letter to be sent by the clerk. The council also thanked the town clerk and office team for their work.

Cllr N Taylor advised councillors to think about future event ideas and what they would like to be involved in generally for future discussion at full council.

The clerk advised that the office team will support all event management and council initiatives but councillors are encouraged to volunteer and assist.

Cllr W Conian advised that the council could consider shutting the high street for future events.

Cllr L Tate advised he would like to be involved in the Great Big Green Week.

Dementia Friendly Town

The deputy clerk reported that there will be a dementia friend's session on the 24th of May for local organisations and stakeholders, hosted by Berkhamsted Town Council, the Alzheimer's Society, Ashlyns (B&M) Care Home and Age UK Dacorum. Councillors are encouraged to attend the session. After this event, the next steps to becoming a dementia friendly community will be reviewed and actions agreed.

Summer Front Garden Competition (Gardens for nature)

The clerk reported that a number of entries had been received, including a local school for its Platinum Jubilee garden. Judging will take place between the 3rd - 14th July. Signs are being produced for entrants to put in their windows showing that they were taking part.

Free summer activities for children

The deputy clerk reported that there will be a free event for children running every Thursday during the summer holidays, between the 27th July - 31st August in the Civic Centre. Events will be bookable via Event Brite and promotion will begin shortly.

Future free children events for all age ranges will be discussed.

FC 59/23 Communication

The clerk requested that all councillors send a Jpeg picture and short biography for the council website and newsletter.

Council **agreed** a target date for the end of June for newsletter publication. The clerk requested that any articles councillors would like included are sent to her in the next couple of weeks. A draft contents list was discussed as follows:

- Promotion of free summer children’s activities
- Dementia Friendly initiative
- New councillor introductions
- Neighbourhood Plan
- Cyber Security

The clerk requested that councillors check their town council email daily and use that email address for council business.

FC 60/23 Meetings and matters of report

None

FC 61/23 Date of next meetings

Monday 5th June

Monday 3rd July

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20:43pm

Signed: _____

Dated: _____