

## **BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of the meeting of

## **BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL**

Held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Berkhamsted on

**Monday 19 January 2015 at 7.30 pm**

### **PRESENT:**

Councillors T Ritchie, Deputy Mayor  
A Armytage  
J Ashbourn  
D Bonnett  
D J Collins  
E R Collins  
Mrs C Green  
Dr L Handy  
Dr I M Reay  
G Stevens  
PC Warren

No members of the public.

### **ABSENT:**

Councillors S A Bateman  
F Macdonald

**OFFICER:** Gary Cox, Town Clerk

### **OPENING MATTERS**

#### **FC 01/15 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Matthews and Laws. Councillor Ritchie took the Chair.

#### **FC 02/15 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

#### **FC 03/15 Minutes of Last Meeting**

Full Council **RESOLVED:**

To amend minutes of the last meeting held on 10 November 2014 to record that Councillor Mrs C Green was present at the meeting.

With that amendment, the minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

#### **FC 04/15 Town Mayor's Communications**

Full Council noted the following communications.

- The Sparrows Herne Trust Turnpike Marker outside 352 High Street has now been listed at Grade II, being of special architectural or historic interest; and the letter of thanks from the Citizens Association for support in getting turnpike marker listed.
- An invitation to lunch and the Board meeting of the Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group on 29 January 2015.
- That Herts County Council intend to make an Order to prohibit traffic from using:
  - Whitehill for three days during 11-13 February 2015 for utility maintenance works
  - Brownlow Road and Castle Hill between 9.30am and 2.00pm on 1 March 2015 to ensure public safety and prevent accidents for the Berkhamsted Half Marathon and Fun Run.
- That Herts County Council has made an Order for a 20 mph speed limit on the High Street from Boxwell Road to Manor Street, Elm Grove, Prince Edward Street, Church Lane, Rectory Lane and Water Lane, which came into effect on Monday 19 January 2015.

#### **FC 05/15 Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

#### **FC 06/15 Consultation on Parish Polls**

Following discussion, Full Council agreed proposals in the DCLG consultation on modernising parish poll regulations and that agreement be conveyed to HAPTC to include in a wider response to the consultation. **Action: Town Clerk**

#### **FC 07/15 Policy on Filming, Photographing or Recording Council meetings**

Full Council considered advice and a draft policy on data protection and retention issues on new openness legislation allowing the photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting proceedings of Council meetings.

The Clerk advised that the openness legislation was clear that all elected members and members of the public, particularly those who wished to speak would have deemed to consent to being filmed or recorded.

Councillors expressed a concern that the openness legislation is contrary to European Union legislation on personal data privacy which would allow a Councillor not to participate in any session being filmed or recorded. The Clerk was asked to seek further advice on this issue. **Action: Town Clerk**

Subject to that advice, Full Council agreed to the revised policy and that the policy be kept under review and agreed at each annual meeting of Council.

## **STANDING COMMITTEES**

### **FC 08/15 Town Planning Committee**

It was **RESOLVED**:

That the minutes of the Town Planning Committee meetings held on 24 November 2014, 15 December 2014 and 5 January 2015 be received and adopted.

### **FC 09/15 Finance and Policy Committee**

It was **RESOLVED**:

That the minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee meeting held on 22 December 2014 be received and adopted.

### **FC 10/15 General Dispensation**

The Town Council considered a request from Councillor Ashbourn for a dispensation under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011.

It was **RESOLVED**:

That a general dispensation is granted to allow Councillor Ashbourn to participate in a debate on a matter and vote notwithstanding that they may have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest where that matter relates to the functions of the Council related to:

- an allowance, payment or indemnity given to members;
- any ceremonial honour given to members; and
- setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

### **FC 11/15 Budget 2015/16**

Full Council noted recommendations from the Finance and Policy Committee and **RESOLVED**:

That the budget for the financial year 2015/16 be approved and adopted.

**FC 12/15 Town Council Precept**

Full Council noted recommendations from the Finance and Policy Committee and **RESOLVED:**

That the precept for 2015/16 with the Band D charge remaining unchanged at £19.18 for Band D properties.

This would provide a precept of £156,375, which with a Council Tax Support Grant of £4,314 would provide overall precept income of £160,689.

**FC 13/15 Concurrent Services Grant**

Full Council noted recommendations from the Finance and Policy Committee and **RESOLVED:**

That the estimate for Concurrent Services and Town Warden expenses to be put to the Borough Council for 2015/16 should be £17,949.

**WORKING GROUPS**

**FC 14/15 Canal & Riverside Partnership**

It was **RESOLVED:**

That the meeting of the Canal & Riverside Partnership held on 9 December 2014 be received and adopted.

**COMMUNITY SAFETY**

**FC 15/15 PCSO Report**

Full Council noted the PCSO report for November to December 2014 from PCSO James McLean.

Full Council discussed the apparent increase in salesmen and charity collectors making door-to-door calls across the town in recent months.

Full Council referred an issue of whether Berkhamsted could be designated a 'no-cold caller area' to the Transport and Environment Committee for consideration.

**Part 2**

**Closed Session – Exclusion of the Press and Public**

It was **RESOLVED:**

That under Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded during the items in Part II of the agenda for this meeting, because it is likely that publicity would prejudice the public

interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business or for other special reasons stated in the resolution, arising from the nature of the business or proceedings.

#### **FC 16/15 Staffing**

Full Council reviewed the provision of services to the Town Council by Community Action Dacorum.

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council:

- Ends the agreements for services from Community Action Dacorum
- Directly employs the Finance and Allotment Officer
- Moves to another provider for payroll services.

#### **FC 17/15 Recruitment**

Full Council noted that the Town Clerk had given notice to leave and approved the Support Services Group to manage the recruitment process for a new Town Clerk.

In discussion, it was agreed that the Deputy Mayor should become a member of the Support Services Group and be closely involved in the recruitment of the next Town Clerk.

As part of the recruitment and selection process, the Support Services Group was asked to

- clarify on what is required of the Town Clerk and provide a clear set of competencies for the role
- look at practical ways to test the capability of candidates in key competencies for the role
- consider using psychometric testing as part of the selection process
- involve differing Councillors in the sift and interview stages of recruitment
- arrange for training in recruitment and selection as required for Councillors involved in the process.

#### **FC 18/15 Close of Meeting**

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.