

# **BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL**

## **Minutes of a Meeting of**

### **BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Berkhamsted on**

**Monday 22 October 2018 at 7.30 pm**

#### **PRESENT:**

Councillors S Beardshaw (Town Mayor)  
A Armytage  
S Bateman  
D Collins  
E Collins  
G Corry  
F Earl  
Mrs C Green  
J Jones  
P B Matthews  
B Newton (Deputy Mayor)  
Dr I M Reay  
T Ritchie  
G Stevens  
G Yearwood

#### **OTHERS PRESENT:**

Mrs J Mason, Town Clerk

#### **FC 97/18 Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies for absence

#### **FC 98/18 Declarations of Interest**

To **receive declarations of interest** regarding items on the agenda.

Cllr G Corry declared a personal interest in item FC 117/18 because she occupies a property adjacent to Gossoms End surgery and had put forward suggestions as to how the building should be utilised.

Cllr D Collins declared a personal interest in item FC 121/18 because he is the complainant's ward councillor and had discussed the planning applications with him.

#### **FC 99/18 Minutes of Last Meeting**

The **minutes of the last Full Council Meeting** held on 20 August 2018 were received. They were approved as a correct record and were duly signed as such by the Town Mayor.

## **FC 100/18 Town Mayor's Communications**

- (i) HAPTC Bulletin 4 September 2018
- (ii) Chiltern Arts Autumn Weekend 28 and 29 August 2018
- (iii) Chiltern Society Pop Up Cinema Events 22 September – 9 October 2018
- (iv) NALC Newsletter September 2018
- (v) Hospice of St Francis Newsletter November 2018
- (vi) CDA Herts Bulletin September 2018
- (vii) Dacorum Residents' Survey – DBC's survey closes on Friday 9 November and seeks views on their current priorities. A link to the survey is also on the Town Council's website.
- (viii) NHS Herts Valleys CCG 10 October e-mail regarding a series of meetings to update on plans for developing hospital sites  
  
It was **noted** that there are two meetings remaining. First, on Wednesday 24 October 2018 from 7 – 9 pm in the Trinity Church Hall, Beaconsfield Road, St Albans and secondly on Tuesday 6 November in The Hub Room at West Herts College, Watford.
- (ix) NALC Chief Executive's bulletin 5 October 2018
- (x) NHS Herts Valley CCG notification of a "Let's get connected networking event" on 28 November 2018 at 9.45 am at South Hill Centre, Cemetery Hill, Hemel Hempstead.

## **FC 101/18 Public Participation**

There were no members of the public present.

### **STANDING COMMITTEES**

To **receive and adopt** the minutes of the:

## **FC 102/18 Finance and Policy Committee**

Held on: 10 September 2018

Cllr J Jones had chaired the meeting in Cllr B Newton's absence. She highlighted key points from the minutes which were **received and adopted**.

## **FC 103/18 Town Planning Committee**

Cllr A Armytage, chair of the Town Planning Committee, highlighted key points from the minutes of the **28 August, 17 September and 8 October** meetings. In particular, at the 28 August meeting, a presentation had been made by Bidwells regarding the second phase of the Taylor Wimpey development at Durrants Lane, Shootersway site, know as Bearroc Park. A number of residents

had attended. Of particular concern were the access route and the departure from DBC's masterplan for the area with building now being proposed on designated open land. Members of the public had also spoken in objection to the proposals for temporary parking at The Moor during the construction of the multi storey car park. In particular they were against the removal of three mature trees at the access to the temporary car park. (As members were aware, the proposals had subsequently been amended and a revised application has been submitted.)

The minutes were **received and adopted**.

The Town Planning Committee were thanked for their thoroughness and accuracy in examining and commenting on applications.

It was also **agreed** that James Doe, DBC's Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regeneration should be invited to speak to the Town Council regarding development sites in view of concerns expressed.

Cllr D Collins **undertook** to seek Berkhamsted representation on a "Task and Finish" group that is being established at DBC whose membership will be drawn from localities potentially affected by proposed development.

## **FC 104/18 Transport & Environment Committee**

Held on: 24 September 2018.

Cllr T Ritchie, the Chair of the Transport and Environment Committee reported that twenty two members of the public had attended to speak in objection to the proposal referred to in minute FC 103/18 above, namely, the proposal to remove three mature trees to facilitate access to the temporary car park at The Moor. As a result he and Cllr D Collins had asked DBC to review these proposals. As a result the entrance had been amended avoiding the need to remove the three trees. He understood that notwithstanding, one of the trees would have to come down because it was seriously diseased.

The minutes were **received and adopted**.

During a discussion it was **agreed that the Town Clerk** should again urge DBC to implement the revised waiting and loading restrictions in Lower Kings road as a matter of urgency, preferably before Christmas.

In addition, the issue of the phasing of the traffic lights at the High Street/Kings Road/Lower Kings Road junction should be **referred to the next T & E meeting** scheduled for 12 November.

## **SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS**

### **FC 105/18 Festival of Light Committee**

- (i) To **receive** a verbal update on arrangements for this year's Festival which is on Sunday 25 November.

Cllr B Newton and the Town Clerk reported that arrangements were proceeding well and that all the groups involved were working hard to

make the event a success. A good variety of stalls would be in place and the entertainment arrangements were almost complete. Confirmation of the London Community Gospel Choir's attendance\* was awaited from the Faith Work Trust who so generously sponsored the Choir's performance the previous year.

\*(Confirmed 23-10-18)

- (ii) To **seek** volunteers to help with refreshments.

Cllrs I Reay, Mrs C Green, A Armytage, C Beardshaw had volunteered to help. Any further volunteers would be very welcome especially to help with the clearing up.

#### **FC 106/18 CARP**

- (i) It was **Resolved** that the Town Clerk should continue to seek a meeting with members of the Canal and River Trust;
- (ii) Cllrs A Armytage and F Earl were **nominated** to attend with her.

#### **FC 107/18 Berkhamsted Youth Town Council**

- (i) The Youth Town Council Minutes of the 27 September 2018 meeting had been circulated;
- (ii) A report was received on the meeting held on 12 October attended by the Treasurer of BYTC, the Town Mayor and the Town Clerk.

The role of BYTC had been considered and although it had no statutory authority it had been explained that the Town Council would always be happy to consider items that might be suitable for consideration at the relevant committee. Indeed, an item from the Youth Town Council would be discussed at T & E on 12 November.

Other issues discussed had been concerns about policing and tackling anti-social and violent behaviour, particularly around the Skate Park.

Following the meeting the Town Mayor had contacted the office of David Gauke MP about the possibility of arranging a visit to the House of Commons for Youth Town Councillors. This would be **referred to the next** BYTC meeting.

The Council welcomed increased interaction with BYTC. Cllr G Stevens commented that improved youth services were required in the town.

#### **MEMBERSHIP OF OUTSIDE BODIES**

#### **FC 108/18 Plastic Free Berko Group**

- (i) Cllr B Newton's nomination as the Town Council's representative at meetings of the group **was approved**;

- (ii) It was **noted** that Plastic Free Berko is part of the Transition Towns organisation;
- (iii) The group will meet in the Council Chamber on the first Tuesday of the month.

**FC 109/18 AGM Berkhamsted Town Hall Trust Thursday 29 November 2018**

Mr R Case **was appointed** as a trustee and the Town Clerk **will advise** the secretary of the Trust in advance of the AGM.

**FC 110/18 Berkhamsted Castle Trust**

- (i) Councillors were **reminded** that the Council is invited to nominate a trustee as a member of Berkhamsted Castle Trust.
- (ii) A letter dated 17 October from Mr A Barham, Chairman, Berkhamsted Castle Trust had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. This set out the criteria required of potential Trustees. The Trust's constitution had also been received.

Following a discussion it was agreed that the matter needed further consideration. **Cllr D Collins** would **review** the nomination requirements in more detail and **come forward with a proposal** for consideration.

**FINANCIAL MATTERS**

**FC 111/18 Re-appointment of Internal Auditor for 2018/19**

- i. It was **Resolved** that Auditing Solutions Ltd, Clackerbrook Farm, 46 The Common, Bromham, SN15 2JJ be re-appointed as the Town Council's internal auditors:
- ii. It was **Resolved** that the Town Clerk should confirm the above in writing to auditing solutions.

**FC 112/18 Annual Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2018 – Completion of Limited Assurance Review by PKF Littlejohn LLP (External Auditors)**

- i. The Council **received, approved and accepted** the signed Annual Governance and Accountability Return received under cover of the External Auditor's 27 September 2018 letter. These were previously circulated and are attached to the agenda for ease of reference together with a copy of the notice of conclusion of audit;
- ii. It was **noted** that the certificate, notice of conclusion of audit and full return with supporting documentation were published on 28 September 2018 on the website. The notice of conclusion of audit was placed on all Town Council notice boards and all papers made available for public inspection as set out on the notice of conclusion of audit. Public access to documents will be available for not less than five years;
- iii. The auditor's opinion that on the basis of their review the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and there are no other

matters that have come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met, **was noted.**

#### **FC 113/18 Income and Expenditure including Receipts and Payments Schedule**

- (i) The Council **noted and approved** the **Income and Expenditure and Variance Analysis** at 30 September 2018.
- (ii) The Receipts and Payments Schedule for the period 1 August 2018 – 30 September 2018 has been sent to Cllrs B Newton and G Stevens for scrutiny. They reported back that there were no issues to raise. They had both signed the schedule. It was noted that allotment holder names had been excluded to ensure GDPR compliance.

#### **NEWSLETTER**

- FC 114/18** (i) The content of the November 2018 newsletter was previewed. The Town Clerk and working group members were thanked for their work.
- (ii) The printing and distribution costs will total £1,520 net. These costs were ratified. Three printers had been contacted and the company selected, Dor 2 Dor will print and distribute the newsletter.

#### **OTHER MATTERS**

- FC 115/18** It was **noted** that the **Dacorum Town & Parish Council Conference** will be held on Friday 30 November at the Forum, Hemel Hempstead.

Cllrs B Newton, A Armytage, S Beardshaw and the Town Clerk will attend.

#### **FC 116/18 Berkhamsted Castle**

- (i) To **receive** a brief update on matters associated with Berkhamsted Castle  
  
An e-mail had been received from Tim Cockerill of English Heritage warmly welcoming the securing of the land to the east of the Castle site by Berkhamsted Castle Trust. Discussions are in progress between the Trust and English Heritage and Mr Cockerill had also indicated that good progress was being made with the specification of requirements for a Conservation Management Plan.
- (ii) Following a discussion, it was **Resolved** that a meeting of the Castle Liaison Group should be called to start discussions on how the Town Council can work together effectively with stakeholders now that the Trust is established. The Town Clerk will liaise with the relevant parties with a view to arranging such a meeting.

## **FC 117/18 Merger of GP Surgeries**

To **discuss and agree** any appropriate action by the Town Council (Cllr T Ritchie)

Cllr Ritchie confirmed that although the Milton House and Boxwell Road surgeries had merged in August they were still operating separate locations whilst Gossoms End, an ideal joint premises, was under-occupied. In the meantime, the surgeries were experiencing staff shortages and residents were having difficulty booking GP appointments and accessing associated services. Cllr G Yearwood endorsed the above comments and added that the situation was untenable causing stress to all involved.

It was **agreed** that an impasse seem to have been reached between the various NHS bodies. This had to be resolved so that Gossoms End could be utilised as the joint surgery premises. To this end Cllr D Collins undertook to raise the problem with DBC and would be accompanied at that meeting by Cllr P Matthews.  
**Action Cllrs D Collins and P Matthews**

**FC 118/18 It was RESOLVED** that under Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded for the remainder of the 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 119/18 Deputy Town Clerk Post**

- (i) To **receive** a verbal report from the panel members who interviewed candidates on 26 September 2018

The interview panel members had been Cllrs S Beardshaw, I Reay and the Town Clerk. There had been a very good response to the job advertisement and five well qualified and experienced applicants had been interviewed. Mrs Joanna Harley had been the successful candidate and has now been offered the position of Deputy Town Clerk.

- (ii) To ratify the appointment of Deputy Town Clerk

The Town Clerk has now completed all pre-employment checks and received satisfactory, written references from Mrs Harley's previous employers. The start date will be Tuesday 27 November 2018 and Mrs Harley will work 28 hours per week at salary point SCP 34. The Town Council was very pleased **to ratify the appointment of Mrs J Harley to the post of Deputy Town Clerk**. The Town Clerk will now make all further arrangements and finalise Mrs Harley's contract of employment.

## **FC 120/18 Other Staffing Matters**

- (i) It was **Resolved** that the Finance and Allotment Officer should move from salary point 32 to point 33 with effect from 1 November 2018 which is the anniversary of her appointment to the LC2 Substantive Benchmark range. The Town Clerk should write to the Finance and Allotment Officer confirming this change.

- (ii) It was **Resolved** that the Town Warden should move from salary point 20 to salary point 21 with effect from 1 January 2019 which is the anniversary of his appointment to LC1 Substantive Benchmark range. The Town Clerk should write to the Town Warden confirming this change.

**FC 121/18 Berkhamsted Town Council Complaints Procedure**

A verbal report was **received** under clause 5 of the Town Council’s complaints procedure. The complaint was against the Town Planning Committee and concerned planning applications for a property in Murray Road. Cllrs I Reay, A Armytage and the Town Clerk met with the complainant on 3 October 2018 when the issues raised by the complainant were discussed in full. Most of his concerns were associated with DBC’s procedures although he had felt let down by the Town Council in that the most recent application had been decided under delegated authority; an objection by the Town Council would have triggered a referral to the Development Management Committee for decision. The Town Clerk had written to the complainant following the meeting summarising discussions and undertakings given to discuss various issues with DBC officers, including the “call in” procedure.

**Action Town Clerk**

Signed.....

Date.....