

BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of

BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

Held via 'Zoom' video conferencing on

Monday 20 July 2020 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors G Corry – Deputy Town Mayor
S Cloughton
P de Hoest
P Fisher
R Freedman
J Jones
T Porter
N Taylor
P White

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mr Tony Noakes, Town Clerk
Mrs J Mason

NOT PRESENT:

A Peeler

OPENING MATTERS AND GOVERNANCE

FC 87/20 To receive **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr's A Armytage, W Conian, M Hardinge, N Woolner and G Stevens.

FC 88/20 To **receive declarations of interest** regarding items on the agenda

None.

FC 89/20 **Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 18 May 2020 were **received and approved.**

FC 90/20 Public Participation

Suspension of standing orders to allow any members of the public present to speak.

No members of public were present.

FC 91/20 Town Mayor's Communications

- (i) The Town Clerk gave an update on the Multi Storey Car Park (MSCP). The 2 outstanding items are the lighting survey for the Lower Kings Road mini-roundabout and tree work at the entrance to the MSCP. Expected opening will be mid-August 2020.
- (ii) Councillors agreed to allow Rothschild Surgery to use parking spaces for patient use close to the youth centre, Gossoms End. There would be no rental charge/lease cost to the Surgery or liability of its use by surgery patients or staff, to the Town Council. Any improvements/upgrades to the parking area would be made by Rothschild Surgery and at their cost. The Town Council will reserve the right to revisit this arrangement every 12 months, subsequent to the signing of the agreement. No guarantee/warranty of the number of parking spaces can be given by the Town Council.

Action – Town Clerk

FC 92/20 Internal audit report

The Internal Audit Report arising from the auditor's visit made on 3 June 2020 was **received and adopted**.

The auditor's overall conclusion was that the Town Council had maintained more than adequate and effective internal control measures during the financial year 2019-20. As a result, she had completed and signed the Annual Internal Audit Report which forms part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

FC 93/20 Annual Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2020

The following are for **RESOLUTION**:

- (i) The Town Council **considered** the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), Section 1, Annual Governance Statement. Cllr R Freedman proposed, Cllr S Cloughton seconded and it was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Annual Governance Statement be approved. The statement was then signed by the Town Clerk and the Deputy Town Mayor.

In undertaking such consideration Council referred to the Statement of Internal Control which was reviewed and adopted at Full Council on 18 May 2020 in addition to the Internal Auditor's report adopted at FC 92/20 above.

- (ii) The Town Clerk, as RFO, had signed and certified the AGAR Section 2, Accounting statements for 2019/20, by signing and dating;

- (iii) The Town Council then **considered** the AGAR section 2, Accounting Statements for 2019/20. Cllr P de Hoest proposed, Cllr R Freedman seconded and it was resolved unanimously that the Accounting Statements be approved. The Deputy Town Mayor then signed and dated the Accounting Statements to confirm such approval;
- (iv) It was **agreed** that the period during which electors and interested persons may exercise rights relating to the annual accounts will be Monday 27 July – Monday 7 September 2020 (30 working days). The relevant notice advising of such rights will therefore be displayed on the website and Town Council notice boards from Thursday 23 July 2020.
- (v) The unaudited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2020 prepared by DCK Accounting Solutions were **received and approved**; the Deputy Town Mayor and the Town Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer then signed and dated the balance sheet.

At this stage in the meeting, Councillors expressed their thanks and appreciation to **Mrs J Mason** for the last 4 years of direction and dedication in her role as Berkhamsted Town Clerk. Councillors wished Mrs J Mason a very happy retirement. Mrs J Mason then left the meeting at 8.05pm.

STANDING COMMITTEES

To receive and adopt the following minutes:

FC 94/20 Transport & Environment Committee held on:

15 June 2020.

The minutes were **received and adopted**.

FC 95/20 Town Planning Committee

Held on: 1 June 2020
 22 June 2020
 13 July 2020

In relation to the 13 July 2020 minutes. Cllr J Jones drew attention to application 20/01799/FHA. The Committee had had an objection subject to conditions. Cllr J Jones wanted the minutes to reflect that it was agreed that the decision was a majority decision (to object) rather than unanimous.

The minutes were **received and adopted**.

SUB-COMMITTEES & WORKING GROUPS

FC 96/20 Allotment Management Team

- (i) The minutes of the Allotment Management Team meeting held on the 6 July 2020 were adopted.

- (ii) The Committee endorsed and agreed to the recommendation that there should be no increase to allotment charges for 2020/21. The current year (2019/20) annual charges will therefore remain in place for 2020/21.

FC 97/20 Canal and Riverside Working Group

- (i) The notes of the meeting held on the 9 June 2020 were adopted.
- (ii) Cllr P de Hoest raised a point about the scope of the CARP terms of reference and stated that he would like to see a wider role for CARP and also DBC representation on the working group. Cllr N Taylor said that he would interview Cllrs for their views (including Cllr P de Hoest) and revisit the Terms of Reference.

COVID-19

FC 98/20 The Town Clerk gave an update on the introduction of social distancing measures in the High Street and ongoing discussions with HCC Highways.

FC 99/20 Review of Facebook. Cllr P White suggested that the Town Council could widen its Facebook reach by ‘friending’ the numerous Berkhamsted group sites with a presence on the platform. This was agreed and the Town Clerk would progress.

Cllr P de Hoest would like the Town Council to review the overall external communications of the Town Council. The scope of this would include website and social media activity.

FC 100/20 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 101/20 Full Council congratulated Mrs J Harley on her successful completion of CiLCA and **Approved** her salary point 29 of scale range LC2(29-32) move to point 30 from 1 July 2020.

FC 102/20 Full Council **Ratified** the appointment of Mrs Dori Beecroft to the position of Finance & Allotment Officer from 1 September 2020.

FC 103/20 Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 8.36 pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

Full Council Minutes Actions – 20 July 2020

Reference	Action	Complete	Outstanding - Responsibility
76/20	Review of the effectiveness of internal audit		Final quarter 2020 - TN
91/20	Rothschild Surgery Car Parking Agreement - MoU		Town Clerk to progress with legal support
93/20	Publish AGAR and Annual Accounts on website & Notice Boards	Yes	
97/20	Interview Cllrs to canvass views on CARP and ToR		Cllr N Taylor
99/20	Facebook Development and External Communication Strategy		Town Clerk & Cllr P de Hoest