

BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of

BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

Held via 'Zoom' video conferencing on

Monday 29 March 2021 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors G Stevens – Town Mayor
A Armytage
S Cloughton
W Conian
P de Hoest
P Fisher
R Freedman
J Jones
T Porter
N Taylor
P White

OTHERS PRESENT:

Officers: T Noakes, Town Clerk

NOT PRESENT:

Councillors A Peeler
M Hardinge

OPENING MATTERS AND GOVERNANCE

FC 18/21 To receive **Apologies for Absence.**

Apologies were received from Cllr G Corry and Cllr N Woolner.

FC 19/21 To receive **declarations of interest** regarding items on the agenda.

There were **no declarations** of interest.

FC 20/21 **Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the Berkhamsted Town Council held on 11 January 2021 were **approved.**

FC 21/21 Public Participation

To **suspend standing orders** to allow any members of the public present to speak.

FC 35/21 High Street Changes to Parking

- (i) Mr P Elsworth, Chair of BDCC spoke in favour of the proposed changes to parking on the High Street. Closing some of the High Street parking spaces would improve pedestrian access to local business's trading along the High Street.
- (ii) Cllr W Conian presented the latest version agreed with HCC. FC agreed unanimously to approve the release of £45,000 of funding to progress the project. HCC will provide a detailed list of planters and changes to signage. BTC will procure the plants/flowers once the planters are in place. This project had been included in the 2021/22 approved budget and will be drawn down from CIL funds. The latest agreed version of the High Street layout is attached. The revisions required to deliver this project in the attached format, require DBC approval and include additional Pay and Display provision on Prince Edward Street.

Action – Cllr W Conian & Town Clerk

FC 22/21 Town Mayor's Communications

- (i) The letter signed by 12 local Parish/Town Councils, dated 22 February 2021, asking for the 2020-2038 BDC Local Plan to be withdrawn had been sent to the leader of DBC, Cllr A Williams. No reply had yet been received.

STANDING COMMITTEES

The minutes of the:

FC 23/21 Full Council

Held on 11 January 2021

Were **adopted**.

FC 24/21 Town Planning Committee

Held on 18 January 2021
8 February 2021
1 March 2021
22 March 2021

Were **adopted**.

FC 25/21 Transport and Environment Committee

Held on 15 February 2021

Were **adopted**.

FC 26/21 Finance & Policy Committee

Held on: 15 March 2021

Were **adopted**.

FC 27/21 AMT

Held on 25 January 2021

Were **adopted**.

OTHER WORKING GROUPS & COMMITTEES

FC 28/21 Swan Youth Project & Youth Town Council

- (i) The Swan Youth Centre is planning to reopen on 12 April 2021.

FC 29/21 Review of the Annual Town Meeting

- (i) A discussion took place reviewing the recent ATM held on the 18 March 2021 by Zoom. Feedback had been positive from attendees (over 30 residents logged into the meeting). Town Council staff were thanked for the preparation and using the PowerPoint slides as the communication channel.
- (ii) The Mayor thanked Sgt Damien Hewitt, Herts Police, for his attendance and thorough update of policing in Berkhamsted.

Action - Town Clerk

FC 30/21 Virtual meeting legislation

- (i) The current legislation which permits local authorities to hold virtual meetings is due to expire on the 6 May 2021. Information received in the last 2 days confirmed that this would not be extended beyond that date. This information was **noted** by FC.
- (ii) As a result, on (i) above, the Town Clerk was asked to complete a full; risk assessment of the current Council Chamber and look at alternative venues for reinstating face to face meetings safely, post 7 May 2021.

Action – Town Clerk

FINANCE & GOVERNANCE

FC 31/21 Town Council use of debit card

- (i) The application for and use of a debit card for use by Town Council staff in place of a petty cash float was **approved**. This will have a maximum value of £225, which is the same value as the current petty cash float.

Action – Finance Officer

FC 32/21 Changes to Financial Regulations and Internal Controls

To **review, approve and adopt** the Town Council's Financial Regulations, which have been updated to:

- (i) Add the Deputy Town Clerk to relevant sections allowing for authorisation of orders up to £5000.
- (ii) Detail the use of a Town Council debit card in section 5. This has been adapted as per NALC's model Financial Regulations and removes the use of a petty cash float from section 5. Changes have been made to in accordance with NALC's model Financial Regulations. All changes on the financial regulations are shown as tracked.

Were **reviewed, approved, and adopted.**

Action – Deputy Clerk

FC 33/21 Bank Account Authorised Signatory Mandates

- i) In reviewing the signatories for the Town Council Account Mandates (FC 13/20 refers) it has been noted that there are some additions to be made on the below accounts:
 - a. **Cambridge** - to **nominate** and **authorise** the addition of one councillor as a signatory.
 - b. **Saffron** - to **nominate** and **authorise** the addition of one councillor as a signatory.
 - c. **Santander** - to **nominate** and **authorise** the addition of two councillors as signatories for account.
 - d. **Shawbrook**– to **nominate** and **authorise** the addition of two councillor as signatories.

Cllrs S Cloughton, R Freedman and J Jones were nominated and authorised to be signatories for the above accounts

- ii) FC **noted** that the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and Finance Officer have already been authorised to be added as signatories to all Town Council Account Mandates (NatWest, Santander, Cambridge Building Society, Shawbrook Bank and Saffron Building Society). FC 78/20 and FC 130/20 refers.

Action: Finance Officer

POLICY MATTERS

FC 34/21 Grant Governance and Forms/Policy documents

- (i) The new grant policies and forms for both general and environmental grants were **reviewed and adopted**.
- (ii) The grant governance process for the Environmental Grants scheme which was approved in principle by the Transport and Environment Committee on the 15 February 2021 was **reviewed and agreed**.

Action – Deputy Clerk

FC 36/21 IT Infrastructure

Item was withdrawn due to not receiving the latest version of the proposal.

FC 37/21 Bus Project & Public Transport Motion

- (i) The BTC Public Transport Scrutiny ToR's were **approved (amended version)**. It was agreed that Cllr S Cloughton will chair the Scrutiny Committee with members as follows: Cllrs G Stevens, N Taylor, P White, P de Hoest, W Conian.
- (ii) The Berkhamsted Public Transport Strategy Motion was **approved**.

FC 38/21 Adopt a Phone Box

FC **approved** the application to BT to adopt the phone box outside St Peter's Church on the High Street. **Action – Deputy Town Clerk**

FC 39/21 To **RESOLVE** 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 40/21 Risk Register and Assessment March 2021

- (i) The Town Council's Risk Register and Assessment prepared by the Deputy Town Clerk in accordance with guidance set out in section 5 of the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance's (JPAG) document entitled "Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – A Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practice" was **noted**.
- (ii) The updated Risk Register and Assessment was **reviewed, approved, and adopted**.

FC 41/21 Staff Salary Grades and Increments

- (i) The proposal that the Finance Officer should progress to salary point 24 on the scale range LC2 (24-28), with effect from the 1 March 2021 was **approved.** **Action – Town Clerk**
- (ii) The proposal that the Town Warden should progress to salary point 13 on the scale range LC1 (13-17) with effect from 1 January 2021 was **approved.** **Action – Town Clerk**

FC 42/21 The ‘Moor’ Playground Upgrade Project

The alternative proposals for new playground equipment on the Moor were reviewed. FC approved the Wildwood design for installation on the Moor. The asset would be transferred to DBC for inspections and maintenance of the equipment. Funding for £20K is included in the 2021/22 approved BTC budget. **Action – Cllr W Conian and Town Clerk**

FC 43/21 Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 22.21 hrs.

Signed.....

Date.....

Full Council Minutes Actions – 29 March 2021

Reference	Action	Complete	Outstanding / Responsibility
35/21	High Street changes to parking – FC approved £45,000 funding to progress project with HCC/DBC.		Cllr W Conian & Town Clerk
29/21	Annual Town Meeting letter of thanks.		Town Clerk
30/21	Risk Assessment of Council Chamber and alternative venues to ensure Council meetings can be held safely.	✓	Town Clerk & Deputy Town Clerk
31/21	Debit Card application	✓	Finance Officer
32/21	Changes to Financial Regulations and Internal Controls.	✓	Deputy Town Clerk
37/21	Bus Project & Public Transport Motion		Deputy Town Clerk
38/21	BT Phone Box Adoption		Deputy Town Clerk
41/21	Salary Changes	✓	Town Clerk
42/21	Authorised signatories for accounts		Finance Officer

43/21	Moor playground equipment project		Cllr W Conian & Town Clerk
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