

BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the

TRANSPORT & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Berkhamsted

On Monday 4 February 2019 at 7.30 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors: T Ritchie (Chair)
S Bateman
D Collins
F Earl
P Matthews (Vice Chair)
I Reay
G Yearwood

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors: G Stevens

Officer: J Mason – Town Clerk
4 members of the public

TE 01/19 To receive **apologies for absence**

There no apologies for absence.

TE 02/19 To receive **Declarations of Interest** regarding items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest.

TE 03/19 To approve the **minutes of the meeting** held on 12 November 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2019 were approved as a correct record and were duly signed as such by the chair.

TE 04/19 Actions taken following the 12 November meeting

TE 89/18 - Parking in disabled bays by market stall holders - Cllr Reay had raised the matter at the Berkhamsted Market Fund AGM, under any other business, on 30 November 2018.

TE 90/18 - Displays of produce and goods outside premises in the High Street - Cllr Corry had been unable to attend the 12 November meeting and asked that the item be deferred. The Town Clerk has collated some information from the Market Trust, HCC and DBC. This action needs to be progressed with a view to reporting more fully in April.

TE 96/18 - Chair's Communications - Three Rivers, Dacorum and Hertsmere Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy – The Town Clerk completed the survey and returned it to the consultants, asking them to contact her if they required any further information.

TE 100/18 - Petition from Berkhamsted Youth Town Council - HCC officers have been alerted to the petition and request. Town Clerk is awaiting contact with the YTC reps to finalise the paper to be submitted.

TE 101/18 Phasing of traffic lights at the High Street/Kings Road/Lower Kings Road Junction (*item referred from Full Council 22-10-18 FC 104/18 refers*)

Implementation of waiting and loading restrictions in Lower Kings Road arising from the construction of the multi storey car park.

Cllr D Collins had raised the matter with the MSCP project team members at DBC. The matter will be discussed further at the Parking Forum meeting to be held on 12 February 2019.

Meeting with HCC re phasing of the traffic lights at the junction

Councillors had been copied into e-mails between Mike Younghusband, Mark Youngman at HCC and the Town Clerk. The timescale for the phasing and traffic restrictions etc seems to be "*Prior to first occupation of the development...*". Rupert Thacker would be happy to meet on site with us to discuss phasing at the junction.

TE 05/19 Chair's Communications

- (i) NHS 10 Year plan Conference, 3 April 2019
- (ii) Proposed Waiting Restrictions In Berkhamsted – Consultation pack, e-mail from Lance Holman, HCC, dated 9 November 2019.
- (iii) News Release Hertfordshire County Council: I can't thank Herts Warmer Homes enough.
- (iv) NHS Herts Valley CCG - Meeting to update residents on developing refreshed plan for hospital sites in west Herts on 29 January at the Stanborough Centre in St Albans Road, Watford, WD25 9JL from 7pm to 9pm.
- (v) West Midlands Trains Online Stakeholder Research 2018.
- (vi) Latest News from Visit Herts.
- (vii) NALC Newsletter
- (viii) HAPTC - Enter our draw for a free defibrillator
- (ix) HCC - Walking in Hertfordshire – February 2019

- (x) BDCC - Networking Lunches Launched! - Tuesday 12 February 2019
- (xi) Annely Robinson (NHS Herts Valleys CCG) – e-mail received 21-01-19 enquiring about obtaining CIL/s106 funding from the Town Council.

It was noted that Ms Robinson will be asked for more details although it should be noted that the CIL working group commented in its 13 April 2018 notes that “The group’s view was that although health is an infrastructure issue, it was felt that contributing (*ie from the Town Council’s budget*) to NHS budgets would have little impact...”. Once a response is received the Town Clerk will feedback that information via the CIL working group in the first instance.

TE 06/19 Public Participation

It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders during the course of the meeting so that **members of the public might speak**.

The Chair suspended standing orders to enable Mr J Battye to speak. Mr Battye spoke about the disconnect between Dacorum Borough Council’s published tree policy and the actual experience of the application of that policy in Berkhamsted. He emphasised that trees and tree planting provide a cost effective way to mitigate the impact of disastrous climate change. As Councillors would remember, over a year ago he had submitted a freedom of information request to DBC requesting figures for trees removed and replacements. Of 48 trees that had been lost only 23 had been replaced and more significantly of these only 7 were extant. This failure to apply its own policies was contrary to the Core Strategy and wider government sustainable development policies. He referred to a recent planning application that would see the removal of 45 trees in a designated wildlife corridor. Other recent tree losses in Montague, Graemesdyke and North Roads were similarly cited. In total such losses were catastrophic. Trees absorb and store carbon whilst improving air quality. As had been seen at last year’s international climate change conference there was limited time to save the planet for which the responsibility lay with us all. He urged DBC to act before it was too late and to live up to its pledged policies by replacing trees when felled. Measures should be taken to plant more than one replacement for each tree to compensate for previous laxity.

Thanking Mr Battye for his contribution the Chair reinstated standing orders. It was **agreed** that the issue should be referred to the Town Planning Committee. (Mr Battye would forward a transcript of his contribution to the Town Clerk for submission for Planning Committee members). **Action Town Clerk**

ENVIRONMENT

TE 07/19 Ashridge Estate Woodland Management Plan Consultation

To **receive** feedback and **proposals** from Cllr F Earl who attended a presentation regarding the above at Ashridge Estate Visitors Centre on 22 January 2019.

The management plan was being developed in partnership with the Forestry Commission and incorporated environmental, economic and social considerations together with a woodland survey, proposals for woodland protection and the overall management strategy. In particular Cllr Earl focussed on proposals to preserve the ancient woodland, measures to protect the rides and the replacement of relatively recent evergreen plantations with broadleaf woodland.

The following is a link to the consultation documentation:

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ashridge-estate/features/woodland-management-plan-consultation-at-ashridge>

Following a discussion it was **agreed** that the proposals were supported by the Committee. Cllr Earl and the Town Clerk were asked to complete the feedback form to this effect and return it to the Ashridge Estate by the closing date which is Friday 8 February 2019. **Action Cllr F Earl and Town Clerk**

TE 08/19 CIL Working Group

It was **noted** that there will be a meeting of the group on Wednesday 20 February 2019 at 4 pm.

TE 09/19 Replacement of trees in Upper Hall Park

The Chair suspended standing orders to enable Mr Keith Ranger to speak. Mr Ranger supported the comments made by Mr J Battye under item TE 06/19 above wholeheartedly. He went on to explain that he had lived in his house in Upper Hal Park for many years and the road had seen the gradual depletion of trees. All that remained of trees adjacent to his own dwelling were six tree stumps which were not only a trip hazard but led to parking on the verges. At one stage a replacement tree had been planted but it had been a poor specimen and had died. He requested replanting and measures on the corners, such as double yellow lines, to deter parking on the verges.

Thanking Mr Ranger for his contribution the Chair reinstated standing orders.

During discussion Cllr G Stevens referred to points made by both Mr Ranger and Mr Battye and stated that the problem affected the whole town. Concern was expressed at the low survival rate of replanting. The trees planted the previous year in the High Street had been watered by Cllr Yearwood and the Town Warden because DBC's regime was inadequate for newly planted saplings.

It was **RESOLVED** that much stronger and effective support was needed from DBC. Therefore Cllr P Matthews would ask for the application of the tree policy and failures in this respect to be discussed on the agenda at DBC's Planning and Environmental Scrutiny Committee. **Action Cllr P Matthews**

Furthermore it was **agreed** that the Town Clerk would write to the tree officer to raise formally the above issues and to request a meeting to agree a way forward. **Action Town Clerk.**

TE 10/19 Street cleaning in Charles Street and rubbish in Cowper Road

To **receive** proposals from Cllr G Stevens.

Cllr Stevens had been in receipt of complaints about grit, mud and other debris on Charles Street which did not appear to be subject to the same street sweeping regime as previously. The Town Clerk would **speak to and e-mail** the Clean, Safe and Green Team at DBC. **Action Town Clerk**

Turning to the matter of rubbish in Cowper Road, residents had advised Cllr Stevens that litter had increased following the opening of the new bakers on the corner with the High Street. During discussion the lack of bins in the area was raised. It **was agreed** that the Town Clerk should ask the Town Warden to inspect the area and to take appropriate action.

Action Town Clerk/ Town Warden

TE 11/19 Heritage Hub

The update report from Mr N Groves, BLHMS, on the Heritage Hub project, which had been attached to the agenda, was **received**.

It was **noted** that there would be a presentation from various heritage organisations at the Annual Town Meeting on Thursday 14 March 2019.

TE 12/19 Berkhamsted Castle

It was **noted** that Cllr P Matthews and the Town Clerk will be meeting with Mr T Cockerill, Free Sites Partnership Manager, English Heritage, on Friday 1 March 2019 at 10 am.

TE 13/19 Station Road / Lower Kings Road – concerns and solutions

The Chair suspended standing orders to enable Mr A Ralton to speak. Mr Ralton recapped on the points made in recent e-mail correspondence with the Town Clerk and Cllr I Reay. Mr Ralton was concerned about the state of the road and pavements, which were difficult to navigate, especially at night, because of potholes, flooding and cracked surfaces. These faults caused problems for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians alike. There were also damaged verges caused by parking adjacent to the Crystal Palace takeaway. As this area was one of the gateways into Berkhamsted it was disappointing to see such disrepair.

The Chair thanked Mr Ralton for his contribution and reinstated standing orders.

The Committee did acknowledge that the area looked messy although it was noted that HCC's focus was primarily on safety rather than appearance. Following a discussion it was agreed to convene a site meeting between Cllr Reay, the Town Warden and the HCC technician for the area. Mr Ralton would be asked to provide a schematic drawing showing the key areas of concern and would be welcome to come along to the meeting if he wished. In the meantime the ownership of the verge near the Crystal Place would be investigated. In due

course Network Rail might be contacted regarding the undertaking of any remedial works proposed.

Action Cllr Reay, HCC and Town Warden.

TRANSPORT

TE 14/19 Parking Forum issues

Multi storey Car Park project and other updates.

There would be a Parking Forum meeting on Tuesday 12 February 2019 and the notes of that meeting would be circulated to the Committee by way of an update.

Action Parking Forum Members

On a separate but related matter Cllr Collins advised that businesses, organisations and members of the public had expressed concerns about the new two hour maximum stay for parking in Water Lane car park. Cllr Collins undertook to consult DBC about the possibility of reverting to a 4 hour maximum stay.

TE 15/19 Phasing of traffic lights at the High street/Lower Kings Road/Kings Road junction and implementation of waiting and loading restrictions in Lower Kings Road

To **discuss and agree** further action in the light of recent e-mail correspondence referred to in the Clerk's report attached to the agenda.

In the first instance, it was **agreed** that HCC staff should be invited to a site meeting to discuss the phasing of the lights irrespective of any undertakings associated with the construction of the multi storey car park.

Action Town Clerk

Secondly, the traffic management issues in Lower Kings Road would be discussed with the MSCP manager at the Parking Forum. There were concerns that some of the initial proposals may have been amended in the final permission.

Action Parking Forum Members

TE 16/19 Parking in Bridgewater Road

To **receive** an update from Cllr Reay and to **consider** possible proposals regarding restrictions to commuter parking in the area.

Cllr Reay advised that it was proposed to undertake a second consultation following the monitoring of displacement parking. In the meantime the yellow lining arising from the original consultation would be limited to between Murray Road and Delahay Rise. If this further consultation went ahead he hoped that the town Council would contribute to the cost from CIL monies. It was **agreed** that this proposition would be put to the CIL Working Group meeting on 20 February 2019.

Action Town Clerk

TE 17/19 Pedestrian crossing at Billet Lane

To **discuss and consider** a request from a member of the public for a pedestrian crossing to be installed in Billet Lane on safety grounds (a letter dated 14 January 2019 from a Chiltern Park Avenue resident was circulated to councillors on 17 January 2019).

The matter was discussed in detail. However, given the poor visibility at the point suggested and previous investment in road safety measures in the area eg the new pedestrian crossing at the junction with the High Street and the crossing further up towards the roundabout, it was **agreed** that it would **not be possible** to recommend the scheme proposed. The Town Clerk would contact the member of the public to explain the outcome of the discussion.

Action Town Clerk

TE 18/18 Close of meeting

The meeting close at 9 pm.

Signed.....

Date.....