

# **BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL**

## **Minutes of a Meeting of the**

### **TRANSPORT & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

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

**On Monday 16 December 2019 at 7.30 pm**

#### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Councillors: W Conian (Chair)  
N Taylor (Vice Chair)  
S Cloughton  
P Fisher  
T Porter

#### **ALSO PRESENT:**

**Town Councillors:** Cllr G Stevens (Town Mayor)

**Hertfordshire County Council:** Cllr I Reay

**Officer:** J Mason – Town Clerk

**TE 85/19** To receive **apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were **received** from Cllr M Hardinge and Cllr A Peeler.

**TE 86/19** To receive **Declarations of Interest** regarding items on the agenda

None.

**TE 87/19** To approve the **minutes of the meeting** held on 21 October 2019.

The minutes were **approved** as a correct record and were duly **signed** as such by the Chair.

**TE 88/19** Actions taken following the 21 October 2019 meeting not covered elsewhere on the agenda. The following were **noted**:

TE 69/19 & TE 57/19 – work on traffic lights at junction to convert to “Puffin” installation – The Town Clerk liaised with HCC and the Chamber of Commerce and it was agreed that this work should take place early in the New Year to avoid Christmas (date to be confirmed).

TE 72/19 – dropped kerbs in Station Road - the proposed site meeting to discuss with HCC took place on 9 December. See also TE 91/19 below.

TE 72/19 – HCC gulley clearance policy – The Town Clerk wrote to HCC's Director of Environment and Infrastructure about this issue on 27 November 2019 (also copied to all Town Councillors that day).

TE 72/19 - Ashlyns School Tree work - the information about the tree works was obtained from Ashlyns and an information notice was posted on the Town Council website.

TE 81/19 – Angle Passage Flower Bed – A letter of thanks was sent to Mrs S Garrett on 19 November 2019.

TE 82/19 – Canal and River Partnership - The Deputy Town Clerk is in the process of finding a suitable date for the meeting.

### **TE 89/19 Chair's Communications**

- (i) Chiltern Society information – More Great Walks in the Chilterns – new book now available
- (ii) Minutes of the Dacorum Environmental Forum quarterly meeting on 7 November 2019.
- (iii) Herts Year of Culture Activity Forms – attached to e-mail from DBCs Community Partnerships and Wellbeing Officer. (See also item TE 97/19 below)
- (iv) Rekindling the Spirit of 2012 – request from Herts Sports Partnership for people involved in the 2012 London Olympics. Anyone involved in any way in the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games programme and who might be interested in being invited to the Spirit of 2012 lunch, should contact Kelly Fagan at [k.fagan@herts.ac.uk](mailto:k.fagan@herts.ac.uk).
- (v) Berkhamsted Citizens Association 27 November letter to HCC Director of Children's Services about the shortfall of places at Ashlyns School.
- (vi) To **note** recent e-mail correspondence between Cllr W Conian and Herts County Council's Minerals and Waste Policy Manager. This officer is responsible for coordinating the development of HCC's sustainability strategy and is only too happy to discuss Town Council initiatives and aspirations in this context. Next year she hopes to arrange a meeting with local councils and other stakeholders to facilitate further engagement and cooperation.

### **TE 90/19 Public Participation**

To suspend Standing Orders so that **members of the public might speak**.

The Chair **suspended standing** orders to enable Cllr Reay to present his report under item TE 91/19 below.

## REPORTS FROM OTHER BODIES

TE 91/19 Hertfordshire County Councillor I Reay

(i) To **receive an update report** on HCC issues from Cllr Reay

- The meeting on 9 December to **discuss dropped kerbs** around the **station**, with Cllr Reay and Mr P Wright from HCC, had been attended by Cllr S Cloughton and Cllr G Corry from the Town Council together with a member of the public. Some possible proposal had been discussed and the costs for improvements in the area were being revised as a result; the original estimate had been in the region of £30,000. Cllr Reay advised that the Town Council would need to make a decision about any contribution to such costs in the next couple of months.

### **Action CIL Working Group/Town Council**

- The implementation of the **20 mph zone** should have taken place in June of this year and Cllr Reay advised that it may be delayed until the next financial year. Funding would be from s106 monies allocated to support sustainable transport. He would investigate further and report back. In the meantime the Town Clerk would circulate a map showing the roads covered by the order to councillors.

### **Action Cllr I Reay/ Town Clerk**

- The second survey, to assess the impact of displacement parking following the introduction of **commuter parking restrictions** in **Bridgewater Road** would take place in the New Year. The results would provide “before and after” data and would also inform consideration of any extension to the restrictions.
- Regarding **flooding around Victoria School**, HCC had now completed remedial measures as previously advised. Any further adjustments to the paths around the school would be the responsibility of Dacorum Borough Council.
- At the request of **Berkhamsted Castle Trust**, **self-seeded saplings** and trees **growing out of the flint wall** adjacent to the Castle and railway would be removed soon.
- Ongoing complaints from members of the public about **the state of the pedestrian diversionary route between Lower Kings Road and Waitrose** whilst the Multi Story Car Park was being constructed was raised by Town Council members. This had been the subject of an e-mail exchange with the Town Clerk earlier that day. DBC’s project manager had reiterated that this was an issue for HCC to remedy. Cllr Reay advised that the landowner should rectify matters. Cllr G Stevens stated that action needed to be taken because the poor lighting and uneven surface were a difficult combination for pedestrians. **Action Cllr I Reay**
- In conclusion, Cllr Reay reported that the tree work at Ashlyns School had been completed and the new fence is being erected. 400 replacement saplings will be planted to replace the trees that were removed.

- (ii) To **consider** any proposals arising

The Chair reinstated standing orders. All actions agreed are included, for ease of reference, in (i) above. Cllr Reay was thanked for his valuable contribution and he then left the meeting.

**TE 92/19** Berkhamsted Castle Trust

No matters were reported.

## **TRANSPORT**

**TE 93/19** **Parking**

- (i) Parking Forum (Cllr Stevens)

- (a) To review the minutes of the Parking Forum held on 19 November 2019

These had been circulated to Councillors. Cllr Stevens reported that two matters arising would be considered at Town Planning on 23 December 2019. First, the operational plans for the car park and, secondly, the TRO setting out the proposed charges. Discussions about long term use of the top two decks for season ticket holders continue. To date only 16 expressions of interest regarding such spaces had been received with a total of 78 being available. On Saturdays the maximum parking time was limited to 4 hours. Some members of the Parking Forum felt that this should be extended.

- (b) To receive and adopt the minutes.

Following a discussion the minutes were **received and adopted**.

- (ii) To **receive any other updates** on the multi storey car park project (Cllr Stevens).

Completion date is scheduled for 18 February 2020.

- (iii) Parking in Three Close Lane – to **note and consider** a further complaint from a member of the public about difficult and dangerous access and egress to and from properties caused by cars parking in the lane.

The Town Clerk advised that she had previously raised this matter with HCC and had also asked the neighbourhood policing team to take action against drivers causing an obstruction. It was, however, beyond their resources to have an officer patrolling the area on a daily basis.

Following a discussion about the problem, it was **agreed** that the matter should be raised with Cllr Ian Reay at a meeting with Cllr W Conian and the Town Clerk to be arranged with him in the New Year, to include also a number of other matters.

**Action Town Clerk**

## TE 94/19 (A) White Lining

- (i) To **note** that on 20 November 2019 e-mail correspondence was forwarded by the Clerk to Councillors from Cllr I Reay at HCC, asking for any suggestions of faded road markings that need to be refreshed in Berkhamsted. The intention was that a list would be drawn up to be sent to HCC.
- (ii) To **review and agree** such a list as appropriate.

It was **agreed** that the locations identified by both the Town Warden and Mr P Crosland of the Berkhamsted Citizens should be forwarded to Cllr Reay. The Town Clerk had thanked Mr Crosland for the Citizens' valuable input.

**Action Town Clerk**

## ENVIRONMENT

### TE 94/19 (B) Air quality monitoring – trial diffusion tubes

- (i) It was **noted** that the Town Clerk has had a number of helpful exchanges with DBC's Group Manager, Environmental and Community Protection who had forwarded a number of background policy documents. It was apparent from reading the documentation that the air quality monitoring process was highly regulated and proposals to augment DBC's existing arrangements would not be possible.
- (ii) In the light of these discussions **to consider** options.

Following a discussion it was **agreed** that the Town Clerk should continue to research specialist organisations that might be able to provide the desired monitoring to appropriate standards. She would also investigate the feasibility and cost of hand held portable monitoring devices. Finally, she would also contact the member of the public mentioned by Cllr Conian who had already undertaken some research into the related matters.

**Action Town Clerk**

### TE 95/19 Meeting with DBC Officers Tree issues in Berkhamsted 13 November 2019

To **receive** an update (notes from meeting were circulated 6-12-19) and **consider** further actions.

Cllr S Claughton reported that the meeting had been very useful. The action points agreed were as follows:

- a. Town Council to make proposals for tree planting on public open space in Berkhamsted to RC at the Borough Council;
- b. CT to consider with Cllr Anderson the possibility of devolving responsibility for some tree planting to the Town Council;

- c. DBC's LJ to provide a draft list of locations where the Borough would be planting street trees in Berkhamsted this season;
- d. Town Council to discuss with Cllr Reay proposals for sowing wild flowers on verges and the possibility of the taking on some tree-planting responsibilities from the County Council (para. 7);
- e. CT to consider whether the Borough Council could issue a policy statement or statements, in place of formal Tree Preservation Orders, for trees on its own land in order to reassure residents, if this was an issue (para. 8);
- f. Wendy Conian to ensure that CT, LJ and RC received minutes of the Habitats Working Group (para. 10).

Following a discussion it was agreed that item d. sowing of wild flowers in verges should be raised with Cllr Reay at the meeting to be arranged referred to in item TE 93/19 above.

**Action Town Clerk**

The final list of trees referred to in item c had still to be received. It was likely that the Town Council could be disappointed by the low proportion of street planting.

**Action Cllr S Claughton**

In conclusion, regarding the planting of two replacement trees when one is removed, it was agreed that the Portfolio holder should be asked what checks took place to audit and verify this requirement.

**Action Cllr S Claughton**

## **TE 96/19 Climate Change Steering Group and Working Groups**

- (i) The Committee **received, considered and approved** as appropriate notes of recent meetings of the CCSG Working Groups set out below:
  - (a) Energy Working Group - 22 10-19 and 12-11-19 (circulated to councillors 6-12-19)

Much of the work going forward into 2020 will be around initiatives focussed on raising and enhancing public awareness. In this respect the acquisition of a thermal imaging camera for use by householders could be extremely useful. In the meantime, the possibility of borrowing Tring's device would be considered.

- (b) Habitats Working Group – 25-11-19

Cllr Conian advised that she had had interesting discussions with representatives of the Boxmoor Trust who had indicated that, subject to funding, there was a possibility of extending the project to reintroduce water voles Westwards to Berkhamsted. Success in such a project would of course be dependent on the removal of any mink in the area so anyone who does spot them along the canal or river is encouraged to report sightings to the Trust. [www.boxmoortrust.org.uk](http://www.boxmoortrust.org.uk). Cllr Conian would also be in conversation with the Environment Agency and Affinity

Water regarding water supply and maintenance at the Northchurch pumping station. DBC's open spaces officer had also indicated areas at Canal Fields where he might be open to suggestions regarding the planting of native hedging and wildflowers.

(c) Travel Working Group 2 October – notes to follow.

A further meeting would be held soon and, again, much of the work would be around raising awareness. Cllr N Taylor also referred to the suggestion that trial days should be held to enable residents to test out electric bikes. Cllr Conian reminded the Committee that HCC's Highways Strategy & Implementation Group Manager had also offered support in developing a sustainable transport strategy for the Town and she was optimistic that other initiatives proposed by the Working Group could be incorporated into this wider project.

## **TE 97/19 2020 Hertfordshire Year of Culture**

- (i) To **receive feedback** from a meeting on 9 December with the coordinator of this initiative for the Borough (Cllr W Conian)

Cllr Conian reported that projects would fall into two categories; Health & Wellbeing and Culture & Arts. The aim is to draw together existing initiatives under this banner and also to encourage expansion of projects throughout the year. Advice on funding for groups involved was also available and had been circulated.

- (ii) To **consider** any action required on the part of the Town Council.

It was **agreed** that the Town Council would help to promote the project and it was **noted** that the information pack had been circulated by the Town Clerk to a number of groups in the Town, some of whom were already involved eg Open Door and the Rectory Lane Project. A Youth Forum was also planned for the end of March involving debating skills. Cllr Stevens undertook to put the coordinator in touch with Berkhamsted Rotary who already organised a debating tournament.

**Action Town Clerk/Cllr G Stevens**

## **TE 99/19 ColneCAN (Catchment Action Network) Conference 29 November 2019**

Cllr S Cloughton had attended this event, sponsored by Affinity Water. Other attendees included the Environment Agency, HCC and DBC. The issues discussed had been wide ranging and one key theme had been chalk streams in crisis, focussing on abstraction, the reductions in water flow, restoration and catchment management. Affinity representatives gave a presentation on the company's 5 year water resource management plan. It was emphasised that the Chilterns has the highest use of domestic water supply in the country. Increased storage is needed and there are plans for a new reservoir, however, completion of this project could take twenty years. In the meantime the emphasis had to be on reducing both usage and leakages. In conclusion Cllr Cloughton undertook to circulate his notes of the meeting to councillors.

**Action Cllr S Cloughton**

Following a discussion it was noted that the newly reenergised Canal and Riverside Partnership Working Group would comment on and make recommendations to assist locally with the protection of our chalk streams. It was **agreed** that Cllr W Conian should also attend CARP meetings in view of the importance of the issues that would be under discussion.

## **BUDGET PREPARATION**

**TE 99/19** It was **noted** that Cllr W Conian and Cllr N Taylor met with the Town Mayor and Town Clerk on 29 November 2019 to put forward project proposals and associated costs for consideration by F & P and Full Council during budget and precept discussion.

On the basis of the above, the Town Clerk had prepared her first rough workings of the likely impact of projects put forward by the Climate Emergency Working Groups on the precept. This would be significant. A paper prepared that day by Cllr W Conian setting out the research into, consultation on and proposals for the Community Bus six month trial was also presented and discussed. The Committee was very supportive of this trial subject to some fine tuning of the detail. The Town Clerk would therefore include costings for the trial in next year's budget.

**Action Town Clerk**

It was **agreed** that a number of projects would have to be researched further and subject to a wider consultation, the latter was particularly important if CIL funding was being considered. Therefore, some projects would not be included in the 20-21 budget proposals but could be included for consideration in the forward plan for following years. Other costings could be phased over a three year period. The Town Clerk advised that the discussion had been very helpful and would crystallise her thoughts in preparing papers for the next F & P meeting to be held on 6 January 2020.

**Action Town Clerk**

## **TE 100/19 Close of Meeting**

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm.

Signed.....

Date.....