

BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the

TRANSPORT & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Berkhamsted

On Monday 19 August 2019 at 7.30 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors: Cllr G Corry
Cllr R Freedman
Cllr P White

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

TE 47/19 To receive **apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr M Hardinge, Cllr A Peeler and Cllr P de Hoest.

TE 48/19 To receive **Declarations of Interest regarding items on the agenda**

Cllr S Cloughton declared a personal interest in item 53/19 (i) because he is a Bridgewater Road resident.

TE 49/19 To approve the **minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2019**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2019 **were approved as a correct record** subject for the substitution of the words “had held” for “was proposing to hold...” after the words “...the government...” at item TE42/19 e) (i).
The Town Clerk made this amendment by hand and the minutes were then signed as a correct record by the Chair.

TE 50/19 Actions taken following the 17 June 2019 meeting not covered elsewhere on the agenda as set out below were **noted:**

TE 36/19 (iv) Why Not Water Affinity Water Manifesto – website suitable material was not available. However, the information was added to the AMT agenda on 8 July 2019;

TE 39/19 (ii) Clean Air Day 2019 - Publicity material was posted on Town Council notice boards and website.

TE 41/19 Items raised by members of the public – All actions listed have been undertaken.

TE 43/19 Footpath Application – Chesham Playing Fields, DAC/155/MOD Right of Way Appeal – The Town Clerk had drafted a response to the Planning Inspectorate supporting the original application. This was approved at the Town Planning Committee on 19 July and then sent to the Planning Inspectorate who have confirmed receipt.

TE 51/19 Chair's Communications

- (i) Berkhamsted Chamber, Summer Networking Lunch - Tuesday 20th August 2019
- (ii) Notification from DBC that arising from the Public Spaces Protection Order (Dogs) signage is now being installed. at locations in Berkhamsted.
- (iii) BDCC Parking Survey
- (iv) Public Health eNews - a newsletter from Hertfordshire's Public Health Service
- (v) Tree Charter Woodland Trust Newsletter – Plan Greener Communities in July
- (vi) NALC newsletter 17 July 2019 dated 17 July 2019
- (vii) Berkhamsted Citizens Association Newsletter July 2019
- (viii) NALC Newsletter 19 July 2019
- (ix) Chiltern Society Events - Summer Holidays 2019
- (x) Latest news from Chiltern Countryside Group on HS2, London Luton & Heathrow airports
- (xi) Invitation: Hertfordshire Forward Conference 2019 | Reshaping our town centres: fit for the future | 10 October.

It was **noted** that this event could be of great relevance to Town Councillors given recent Town Council initiatives. Any Councillor wishing to attend should book a place with HCC.

- (xii) NALC Chief Executive bulletin
- (xiii) Herts Year of Culture 2020 - Information Event

TE 52/19 Public Participation

The Chair suspended Standing Orders so that **members of the public might speak.**

- (i) Mr G Bluck, a Bridgewater Road resident, referred to the recent yellow lining that had been installed by HCC to deter commuters from parking in the road. He advised that the lines were incomplete because of parked cars being in situ when the painting took place. Although some more painting had taken place reducing the “dash” effect there were still several spaces where yellow lining was still needed. This was unsatisfactory and he looked forward to hearing from Hertfordshire County Councillor I Reay under item TE 53/19 below about how this problem would be resolved.
- (ii) Mr L Constable, a Charles Street resident, referred to the ever worsening parking situation for residents seeking to park near their homes. Mondays – Saturdays were particularly problematic with people parking to walk to the station or the High Street. He explained that he strongly supported the High Street and would want to see it continuing to thrive, however, a balance should be found between jeopardising people’s life styles and adequate parking provision. The area has a high proportion of elderly people and those with young families. The parking problems mean that many are having to park hundreds of yards from their home whilst struggling with, for example, heavy shopping and/or buggies. He would therefore wish to see consideration of various options which might remedy the situation, such as Controlled Parking Zones or additional yellow lining that might prohibit parking at certain times of the day.

During a discussion Councillors advised that a working party had been established to look at travel around the town and that the Parking Forum’s brief also covered such matters. It was understood that there was a long waiting list for Controlled Parking Zones and it was unlikely that such a scheme could be considered in the near future.

- (iii) Ms A Reid-Davies, a partner at Home and Colonial, spoke about the serious lack of parking in the town since work had started on the multi storey car park. The business had started over 22 years ago and during the last year had seen a dramatic downturn in revenue which was compounded by increases in business rates and lack of customer parking in the town. She had recently set up a petition asking customers for their views on parking in the town and over 120 responses, collected in the course of ten days, cited the reduced parking availability, the reduction in parking at Water Lane from four to two hours as reasons why it was now easier to go to Chesham or Tring. The Moor temporary

car park was either a mud bath or closed and she referred to a recent incident when she had been unable to park in any car park and as a result her business could not open until after 10 am. She hoped that four hour parking would be restored at Water Lane and that the improvements to The Moor surface would be maintained. Christmas was approaching and the outlook for businesses in the town was bleak if changes to parking availability was not improved pending completion of the multi storey car park. The entire project had been poorly thought through.

Cllr G Stevens advised that he was chair of the Parking Forum and had indeed asked if the parking at Water Lane could be increased to four hours. Dacorum Borough Council had advised that this would not be possible on the grounds of procedural costs given that the new car park would be open in the spring. He further advised that both The Moor, St John's Well and Canal Fields car parks offered four hour parking although he concurred that The Moor in a 27 week period had been closed for 9 weeks. Recent work to the surface at The Moor should see improved stability, which had been demonstrated during recent wet weather.

Thanking members of the public for their contributions the Chair reinstated standing orders and advised that there would be further discussion on parking under item TE 55/19 below.

REPORTS FROM OTHER BODIES

TE 53/19 Hertfordshire County Councillor I Reay

- (i) The Chair suspended standing orders to **receive an update report** on HCC issues from Cllr Reay

Cllr I Reay circulated copies of the HCC 2019/20 Integrated Works Programme Monthly August Bulletin for Division 7 (Berkhamsted). The programme was prepared at the start of each civic year and itemised jobs such as resurfacing, drainage and other repairs and maintenance to be undertaken by the County Council.

Cllr Reay also circulated a schedule of anticipated works that would be funded from his localities budget for Berkhamsted. He drew attention to the signs and lines for the extended 20 mph zone which it had been anticipated would be installed during 2018 -19 but which had now been rescheduled for the current year.

Turning to the incomplete yellow lining in Bridgewater Road (see TE 52/19 (i)) he hoped that the lining would be completed soon and advised that parked cars had hampered the work and the team had to come out in the evenings in attempts to complete the job. Nonetheless, once the signage was installed parking would be illegal even if the lines were incomplete. Before and after surveys of the impact of the changes on Bridgewater Road and adjacent streets would inform the consideration of

possibly extending the restrictions. Such an extension would require a further full consultation process.

The flooding on paths around Victoria School had been the subject of further meetings and discussions with the school. One cause of the problem had been identified, namely, water flowing from Kings Road into Butts Meadow. Reinforced kerbing and a gulley to divert water was being costed. Similarly, work to alleviate flooding to footpath 36, between Bridgewater Road and Station Road was being costed.

In conclusion, Cllr Reay advised that footpath improvements, previously discussed together with other matters at a site meeting on 16 April 2019, attended by HCC and Town Council representatives, had been costed. The proposal was to undertake footway reconstruction work on Station Road between Gravel Path and the Crystal Palace. If such work was extended to Bridgewater Road the additional cost would be £39k. He suggested that if the Town Council was willing to pay some of this additional amount from CIL monies he might be able to part fund the cost from his localities budget.

Thanking Cllr Reay for his valued and informative contribution the Chair reinstated standing orders.

- (ii) To **consider** any actions arising from the report

It was **agreed** that the Integrated Works Programme Monthly August Bulletin for Division 7 (Berkhamsted) should be posted on the Town Council website. **Action Town Clerk**

Furthermore, the part funding of an extension to the footpath reconstruction to Bridgewater Road should be referred to the CIL Working Group. **Action Town Clerk**

TE 54/19 Berkhamsted Castle Trust

The Chair suspended standing orders to receive **an update report** from Mr P Matthews, Trustee, Berkhamsted Castle Trust.

Although Mr Matthews' report had been circulated to committee members in advance of the meeting, he wished to draw particular attention to a number of points. First, he was delighted to report that the working relationship between English Heritage and the Trust was excellent and this was thanks to the previous hard work of members of the former Castle Liaison Group, in particular members of the Berkhamsted Local History and Museum Society and initiatives from the Town Council, particularly those led by Cllr P Gibbs.

English Heritage's CEO and management team had recently visited the site and were very pleased with the evolving plans for the Trust's involvement with managing some aspects of the site. RSK Geophysics were making good progress with surveying the site and it was anticipated that the Conservation Management Plan would be signed off in September. The agreement between EH and the Trust would obviate the need to renew annually the Visitor Room

licence and the Trust were receiving payment for opening and closing the site. Visitor numbers had been good over the summer and had included the Castle Studies Group and the Richard III Society. It was hoped that future events at the site might include open air cinema and other attractions of a similar nature. Councillors were referred to the Trust's very informative website for details of Trust personnel and forthcoming events.

Reinstating standing orders the Chair thanked Mr Matthews for the contribution he had made as Chair of the Castle Liaison Group and for agreeing to undertake the position of Trustee. She looked forward to receiving further reports on a regular basis in the future.

TRANSPORT

TE 55/19 Parking

(i) Parking Forum

The minutes of the 12 June 2019 meeting of the Parking Forum were **received, reviewed and adopted**. It was **noted** in particular that DBC representatives attending the meeting had agreed that the preliminary draft parking charges, regime and operational plan for the multi storey car park would be put to the Parking Forum for consideration before going for public consultation.

(ii) Multi storey car park project

Cllr G Stevens advised that on completion of the gas diversion works drilling rigs had arrived on site following which the prefabricated core stair cases had been delivered which were now being installed. The project, as councillors were aware, had slipped a year and completion would be in early 2020. A further consultation on the charging regime would be conducted and the Town Council's views would be sought (see above also). In this respect, the Berkhamsted and District Chamber of Commerce had undertaken a survey of business parking needs with a view to identifying, amongst other things, what would be required to encourage their personnel to use the new car park. The results had shown that around 85 spaces could be required by such employees which represented an entire deck of the car park.

The planning permission for the use of The Moor as a temporary car park is valid until the end of November and DBC plan to renew the application. On the issue of extending Water Lane car park from 2 to 4 hours parking, DBC considered that there was ample 4 hour parking at other locations.

(iii) Parking standards consultations

Following discussions at the Town Planning Committee on 5 August, it had decided to set up a working group in order to draft a response to Dacorum's draft parking standards document for sign off at the next Town Planning meeting on 27 August. The deadline for responses to

the Borough is 30 August. An invitation had been extended to any members of the T&E Committee who would wish to join this group. Cllr G Stevens had circulated a draft response and asked that any comments be sent to him as a matter of urgency.

Action Town Councillors

- (iv) Impact of current, temporary parking arrangement at The Moor on businesses and others during the construction of the MSCP
- (a) The committee **noted and considered representations** from the proprietor of Home and Colonial, made on behalf of businesses in the Town, regarding the adverse effect of the current temporary parking regime on business.
- (b) In conjunction with these concerns the committee also **noted and considered communications** from members of the public expressing dissatisfaction with the temporary arrangements. These covered a broad spectrum including people who had been averse to use of The Moor but who had resigned themselves to the fact that such use was temporary pending the construction of the car park. A common factor amongst complainants was the fact The Moor car park was not regularly open and had been closed for a number of weeks.
- (c) In the light of the foregoing the committee considered a **Motion** before Cllr P White that “This council believes that the placement of a temporary car park on Berkhamsted Moor was a poor solution to the temporary reduction in parking availability, which has resulted in the significant loss of amenity, and is considered an eyesore by many local residents. Furthermore, the temporary car park has not been effective in providing adequate facilities for those wishing to visit Berkhamsted town centre during the construction of the multi storey car park. This Council believes that any future strategies for enabling visitors to Berkhamsted town centre should include the provision for alternative modes of transport, and shared transport services.”

Cllr S Cloughton seconded the motion. Following a discussion the **motion was supported unanimously**. It was **agreed** that a meeting should be called, to be attended by interested parties, to discuss the issues, gain a better understanding of each other’s perspectives and the extended use of The Moor. Those attending could include business owners/members of the Chamber of Commerce, members of interest groups such as Save Our Moor and DBC officers and councillors plus town councillors.

Action Cllr S Cloughton

TE 56/19 Community Bus Service (WC)

To **receive** an update report from the 15 July meeting

Cllr Conian advised that the meeting notes would be circulated shortly. In the meantime she advised that the group hoped to conduct a survey to obtain data

on the proposals which would then inform decisions on matters such as the level of service, the fare structure and the use of volunteers or paid drivers. At this stage it was anticipated that Community Action Dacorum mini buses would be utilised. The data obtained from the survey would be an essential foundation for future decisions.

Following a discussion the committee **agreed** that such a survey was a sensible way forward and that a draft should be circulated to the Town Clerk to review issues such as GDPR compliance. **Action Cllr W Conian/Town Clerk**

TE 57/19 Phasing of Traffic Lights at Kind Road/High Street/Lower Kings Road

To **receive** an update following the meeting with Hertfordshire County Council representatives on 14 August and **to consider and agree** any future action as appropriate.

Cllr W Conian was very pleased to report that the meeting had gone well and that HCC representatives were very willing to continue the dialogue with the Town Council. Rupert Thacker, Head of Highways Strategy and Implementation, would look forward to receiving an invitation to attend the Travel Working Group (a sub-group of the Climate Change Steering Group - see item TE 64/19 below). This had been confirmed in an e-mail received that morning from Andrew Freeman, Strategy and Programme Manager, HCC. He had also confirmed in his e-mail that the £22,000 s106 agreement monies are for the optimisation of the current signals at the junction and the contribution is linked to the works required to mitigate the impact of the new multi storey car park. He recommends that the current equipment be upgraded to a "Puffin" operation which will enable minor adjustments to be made to timings and operations to maximise junction efficiency. He explained that the £22k was not sufficient on its own to deliver any significant changes to the junction, however, the upgrade would deliver improvements for vehicles and pedestrians alike. Any shared aspiration for major junction or town wide highway modifications could then be discussed as part on the longer term discussion referred to above.

The Committee considered the above proposals and **agreed** that the Town Clerk should write to Mr Freeman confirming agreement to his proposals for longer term dialogue and implementation of the £22,000 project to upgrade the lights to Puffin operation. He would also be asked to ensure that work to implement the Road Traffic Order to progress changes in Lower Kings Road (waiting restrictions and a mini roundabout) be accelerated.

Action Town Clerk

ENVIRONMENT

TE 58/19 Air quality monitoring and Clean Air Day (WC)

It was **reported** that a response to the Town Clerk's 25 June 2019 e-mail to DBC's Chief Executive Sally Marshall had been received from DBC's Group Manager, Environmental and Community Engagement. This response had confirmed that the northings and eastings issue had been corrected and the draft report for 2018 had been forwarded.

An undertaking had also been given to contact the Town Council to discuss plans for DBC's promotion of Clean Air Day 2020. However, no mention had been made of the Town Council's invitation for the Borough to conduct a 12 month trial whereby diffusion tubes are mounted in tandem pairs with one at head height in addition to the existing tubes. This point will be raised again with DBC.

Action Town Clerk

TE 59/19 CIL Working Group

(i) The CIL Working Group notes of the 26 June 2019 meeting were **received and adopted**;

(ii) The committee **reviewed and considered** actions arising and in particular the following was noted:

Item 7 Project Review. The Group had made a preliminary ranking of proposed projects. They were ranked 1 - 3 with 1 being the highest ranking and on this basis costs for projects scoring one were being sought. It was noted that a wide public consultation would take place on projects under discussion.

(iii) Since the 26 June meeting two more suggestions have been received to be added to the list of possible projects: Additional public toilets in Berkhamsted (suggested by a members of the public to HCC Cllr I Reay) and improvements to the state of the River Bulbourne (suggested by Ms J Jones, Berkhamsted Litter Pickers). The committee agreed that these two items should be added to the list of possible projects.

Action Town Clerk

(iv) It was **noted** that water fountain provision at Butts Meadow is one of the project already put forward for CIL spending and is currently being investigated by staff at the Town Council on the basis of the ranking exercise referred to above. Cllr P White has also suggested asking other organisations to consider such provision outside their properties eg Berkhamsted Station, Waitrose, Tesco and M & S. The committee **agreed** that the list of possible locations be extended as suggested pending the outcome of investigations.

(v) Visit to DBC's CCTV Control Centre. At the meeting DBC officers invited councillors to visit the Control Centre. Councillors should advise the Town Clerk if they would like to attend. A reminder e-mail will be issued.

Action Town Clerk

TE 60/19 Tree issues in Berkhamsted

The meeting with Mr D Austin and a colleague, following the Town Clerk's 1 July e-mail to him, scheduled for 2 pm on Tuesday 19 August, had been postponed. A revised date would be arranged as soon as practical.

Action Town Clerk

TE 61/19 Berkhamsted Heritage Hub Presentation 20 July 2019

The Town Mayor, who had attended the presentation, gave the following update:

With the aid of Heritage Lottery support in 2018 the Project has been working with advisers Fourth Street Place Consultants Ltd to consider a viable strategy to engage more people, and a great range of adults and children, in understanding and enjoying the heritage of the town. Four themes had emerged for the focus of future action: A virtual Hub which would be achieved by cataloguing all heritage artefacts and cataloguing them on a website; a network of interpretation panels; activities and events eg a battle re-enactment and finally a visitor centre at the Castle or St Peter's. A steering group will progress the project.

TE 62/19 Castle Liaison Group Meeting 28 June 2019

The minutes of the final meeting of the Castle Liaison Group were **received and approved**.

TE 63/19 Cotton Reusable Bags (Cllr P White)

- (i) The Committee **noted** that many people are given free cotton bags for free at various events and that many people would like to reduce their use of plastic bags. Therefore, that supporting schemes to recycle and reuse these bags would be beneficial to the Berkhamsted community.
- (ii) The Council discussed and agreed that:
- councillors or Town Council staff should approach charity shops and local retailers, with a view to encouraging the collection and re-sell of cotton bags (a charitable donation could also be considered);
 - the council shall not make any commitments to operating the scheme, but councillors and the council are encouraged to help promote the scheme and any participants;
 - no budget is foreseen, however. participants may return to the council with a motion for financial assistance at a future date if needed.
- Action Cllr P White**

TE 64/19 Climate Change Steering Group

The committee **received, considered and approved** the notes of the inaugural meeting held on 8 July 2019; a further meeting had been scheduled for 14 August 2019.

On 8 July it had been agreed to set up three working groups dealing with Travel; Energy and Mitigation respectively. The draft Terms of Reference for these groups had been prepared for ratification at Full Council on 2 September 2019. A draft press release had also been prepared by Cllr P White and this was passed to the Town Clerk for her to review and pass any comments to Cllr White. It was agreed that the aim would be for the press release to appear during the week commencing 2 September. The script for a video press release was also attached. **Action Town Clerk/Cllr P White**

There would be three councillor members on each group with experts and interested parties from members of the public. The Travel Working Group had its full complement of councillors, however, any councillor wishing to join the Energy or Mitigation Working Groups should advise Cllr Conian. **Action All**

TE 65/19 Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 9.22 pm.

Signed.....

Date.....