

BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the

TRANSPORT & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Berkhamsted

On Monday 24 September 2018 at 7.30 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors: G Corry
G Stevens

Officer: J Mason – Town Clerk

22 members of the public

OPENING MATTERS

TE 81/18 To receive **apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr S Bateman

TE 82/18 To receive **Declarations of Interest** regarding items on the agenda

None

TE 83/18 To approve the **minutes of the meeting** held on 13 August 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 August 2018 were approved as a correct record and were duly signed as such by the Chair.

TE 84/18 Actions taken following the 13 August meeting.

The Town Clerk reported verbally as follows:

TE 70/18 (TE58/18) – Plastic Free Berko: Cllr Newton had agreed to attend the monthly steering group meetings on behalf of the Town Council. An item would be included on the next Full Council agenda seeking ratification of this nomination.

TE 70/18 (TE59/18) – Play area at Normandy Drive/Dellfield: The installation of the new play equipment had been completed shortly before the end of the school summer holidays. Feedback from residents has been very good.

TE 73/18 (ii) Play Streets: The opinion of local residents would be sought in the forthcoming issue of the Town Council newsletter.

TE 85/18 Chair's Communications

- (i) Minutes of the Dacorum Environmental Forum meeting on 6 September 2018.
- (ii) Berkhamsted Raiders: Membership in local schools and the local community – 7 September e-mail from Keith Pollard, Club Chairman, Berkhamsted Raiders CFC. Attention is drawn to the long waiting list due to lack of pitches.

The Committee considered whether the issues raised should be discussed as a separate agenda item at the next meeting or at a separate meeting with Mr Pollard. During discussion this matter was identified as a long standing issue which could come to the fore in future discussion within the planning committee as developers' proposals for sites come forward. The shortage of public open space, recently referred to during recent Town Planning Committee meetings in the context of parking on The Moor was also raised. Additionally, it was noted that there had been a letter in the Gazette that week from a director of Berkhamsted Football Club whose views differed from those expressed by Mr Pollard.

It was **RESOLVED** that should a representative of either of the football clubs wish to meet with Cllr Ritchie to discuss their respective concerns he would be happy so to do.

Action Town Clerk

- (iii) E-mail correspondence dated 16 September 2018 from Mr J Battye re Dacorum Borough Council's Tree Policy in the context of recent DBC planning decisions that will result in tree removal.

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the issues raised by Mr Battye should be discussed as a separate agenda item at a future meeting.

Action Town Clerk

TE 86/18 Public Participation

It was **Resolved** that standing orders should be suspended during the course of the meeting so that members of the public might speak.

ENVIRONMENT

TE 87/18 Disused football changing room in Gossoms End

- (i) To **receive** feedback from Cllr D Collins following his enquiries made of DBC officers. (TE 74/18 (i) and (ii) refer.)
- (ii) In the light of the above, to **consider** and agree further steps that might be taken to improve the building and its surrounds.

Cllr D Collins advised that he was still in discussion with officers regarding this and it was agreed to refer this item to the next meeting of the committee.

Action: Cllr D Collins

TRANSPORT

TE 88/18 Parking Forum Issues

Multi storey Car Park project update.

The Chair then suspended standing orders. Members of the public explained that although they were not a group as such they all shared concerns regarding the building of the multi storey car park and in particular, in the context of this meeting and discussions under TE 85/18 (iii) above, the impact of the temporary parking arrangements at The Moor. Mr J Bell, a Berkhamsted resident, was invited to speak. He advised the committee that many people were against the use of The Moor for parking which is a valued green public open space. Additionally, three trees would be felled at the access point and it was hoped that this could be prevented and the trees retained. Indeed, an on-line petition had been launched in the last 24 hours and well over 1,000 signatures had been obtained so far. He sought the Committee's help in putting concerned residents in touch with the appropriate people at DBC to discuss how the tree felling could be avoided. He also pointed out that although the County Council had identified the proposed access points because of the line of sight offered to motorists, this decision was based on Mill Street being a 30 mph road. However, the traffic calming humps mean that in reality speeds in the road were much lower and therefore another access point could surely be considered that did not necessitate any tree felling?

Mr A Tyrer, a Berkhamsted resident, stated that no one supported the removal of trees or the temporary loss of The Moor as amenity space. There were concerns that the space would never revert to green open space. He questioned the need for more car parking and in any event, The Moor was not the right place.

Ms M Frankel, a Berkhamsted resident, questioned why trees had to be felled when the spaces between were adequate to accommodate vehicles. Indeed, the fun fair vehicles managed to access The Moor with no difficulty. She also suggested that Mill Street should temporarily be made one way to ease sight lines.

Ms W Conian, a Berkhamsted resident, requested that as discussions progress the committee should think outside the box in its efforts to act in response to these representations. Even though the application for temporary parking had been approved, there was surely a chance to do things a bit differently.

Thanking members of the public for their comments the Chair reinstated standing orders.

Cllr D Collins, who is also the DBC portfolio holder as well as a Town Councillor, gave an update on the timescales for the overall multi storey car park project. The car park at Lower Kings Road will remain open until the New Year. Construction of the new MSCP is planned for January 2019, once the utilities companies have completed their diversionary works. Proposed changes to other car parks in town will be implemented when the construction commences on the MSCP. During the construction period the Lower Kings Road car park will close and customers will be asked to utilise the alternative parking available in town, including the temporary car park on the Moor, which is due to open in November. The new MSCP car park which will provide 327 parking spaces is expected to be operational by early autumn 2019.

He explained that planning conditions for the MSCP included the requirement to seek alternative and temporary parking provision during construction. 12 Sites had been considered and DBC had deemed The Moor as the most suitable. Regarding the trees, he stated that at least one was diseased and had been recommended for felling by the tree officer. Replacement trees would be planted.

During the following discussion, it was emphasised that the temporary arrangements would be just that and once the MSCP came into use the site would be reinstated as a green open space. To alleviate parking problems in the town, Water Lane car park would be limited to 2 hour parking and at St Johns Well car park the regulations would no longer differentiate between long and short stay parking. The maximum stay would be 10 hours. Parking on The Moor would be for a maximum of 2 hours. Turning to the felling of the trees, the committee members could appreciate the concerns. Indeed, at the 28 August meeting of the Town Planning Committee, which had been attended by 21 members of the public, the Town Council had listed a number of conditions that should be applied to the planning permission for the use of The Moor for temporary parking, including the replanting of 4 trees. It was clarified that HCC, a statutory consultee, had advised that the trees should be removed for road safety reasons. To ignore such advice had to be supported by clearly stated reasons. In this context the speed of the traffic in Mill Street was discussed and whether the HCC advice had been skewed by the 30 mph status of the road when the reality was that the speed humps resulted in much lower speeds. The fact that the fair managed to access the site through the existing gaps between trees was raised. Whilst acknowledging that planning permission had been granted, it was suggested that perhaps HCC could be asked to reconsider the access arrangements and suggest an alternative. The ability of Mill Street to cope with the increased traffic movement was also a raised.

Following further discussion it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr T Ritchie would seek a meeting the MSCP project team as a matter of urgency to put to them the view that perhaps the removal of the trees might not be necessary and to raise concerns about traffic movements. He also asked Mr J Bell to provide him with the detail of the petition referred to above. **Action: Cllr T Ritchie**

TE 89/18 Parking in disabled bays by market stall holders

- (i) The committee **reviewed** the information received from S Barnes, Parking Manager, Parking Services Team Leader, DBC in his 15 August e-mail to Cllr D Collins regarding the above and enforcement measures (circulated to councillors 140918);
- (ii) It was **agreed** that the Town Clerk should contact Mr Barnes and ask that enforcement measures be taken against stall holders parking in disabled bays after the unloading and loading period, as set out in his e-mail. However, she would also contact the Chair of the Market Trust and ask him to advise stall holders that abusive behaviour towards enforcement staff referred to by Mr Barnes would not be acceptable;
Action Town Clerk
- (iii) It was **noted** that the meeting between two councillors and Mr C Witt referred to in TE 78/18 (130818) has still to be actioned.
Action Cllr I Reay and Cllr F Earl

It was **agreed** that Cllr Reay would raise the problem of market stall holders parking in disabled bays at the Town Hall Trust AGM.

Action Cllr I Reay

TE 90/18 Displays of produce and goods outside premises in the High Street

It was **noted** that the actions referred to in TE 78/18 have still to be pursued. It was noted on Cllr Reay's advice that the Market Fund collects dues The Town Clerk will report back to a future meeting.

TE 91/18 Close of meeting

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

Signed.....

Date.....