

AMERSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF

THE TOWN COUNCIL

HELD AT KING GEORGE V HOUSE, KING GEORGE V ROAD, AMERSHAM,
ON MONDAY 17 JANUARY 2022

PRESENT:

Councillor M Roberts (Town Mayor)
Councillor Mrs J Barnes (Deputy Town Mayor)
Councillor Ms R Dineley
Councillor M Dormer
Councillor M Flys
Councillor Mrs V Head
Councillor Ms C Jones
Councillor J Keeler
Councillor Mrs A Lamont
Councillor H Maitland-Jones
Councillor Mrs P Milliner
Councillor D Pinkney
Councillor Miss S Scott-James
Councillor A Seymour
Councillor S Woodhead

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs E Richardson (Town Clerk Finance & Policy)
Mr S Catanach (Town Clerk – Community Services & Engagement)
Councillor D King (Bucks Councillor Amersham & Chesham Bois)

63. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

There were no declarations of interest.

64. **MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS –22 NOVEMBER 2021 TO 17 JANUARY 2022:**

The list of engagements was noted.

65. **COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MINUTES:**

a) **Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 22 November 2021**

It was	Proposed	Councillor D Pinkney
	Seconded	Councillor Mrs J Barnes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 22 November 2021 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

There were no matters arising.

b) (i) Planning and Footpaths Minutes

It was	Proposed	Councillor H Maitland-Jones
	Seconded	Councillor M Roberts

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Planning and Footpaths Committee Meetings held on 15 November, 6 & 20 December 2021 be accepted and the recommendations therein be adopted.

c) Finance & General Purposes Minutes

It was	Proposed	Councillor D Pinkney
	Seconded	Councillor Mrs J Barnes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 13 December 2021 be accepted and the recommendations therein be adopted.

66. MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES:

There were no matters arising.

67. TO APPROVE TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET & PRECEPT FOR 2022-2023:

The Town Clerk's reports had been circulated prior to the meeting. After lengthy debate on the proposed budget and precept increase, a formal vote was taken for two alternative proposals, with the votes recorded as follows:

- a) Proposed precept increase of 7.9% for Band D equivalent property - (to cover increased cost of running existing council services).

The vote **FAILED** by 7 votes to 8.

Votes for: Councillors M Dormer, M Flys, Ms C Jones, Mrs Lamont, Mrs P Milliner, Miss S Scott-James, A Seymour

Votes against: Councillors M Roberts, Mrs J Barnes, Ms R Dineley, Mrs V Head, J Keeler, H Maitland-Jones, D Pinkney, S Woodhead.

- b) Proposed precept increase of 18.11% (to include enhanced 'Bloom 2' initiatives, as well as increased cost of running existing council services)

The vote was **CARRIED** by 8 votes to 7

Votes for: Councillors Councillors M Roberts, Mrs J Barnes, Ms R Dineley, Mrs V Head, J Keeler, H Maitland-Jones, D Pinkney, S Woodhead

Votes against: Councillors M Dormer, M Flys, Ms C Jones, Mrs Lamont, Mrs P Milliner, Miss S Scott-James, A Seymour

The Clerk will therefore submit a request to Buckinghamshire Council for a precept of £912,602, representing a 18.11% increase on a Band D equivalent property.

68. GRANT REQUEST FROM PLANT BASED 4 GOOD:

Additional information about the Plant Based 4 Good organiser had been circulated prior to the meeting. After discussion, a vote was taken to offer the community group a £500 grant towards their project, with the vote being **CARRIED** by 6 votes to 5, with 4 abstentions.

However, the Clerk was asked to obtain further information from the organiser on the on-going success of the project.

69. APPOINTMENT OF 6 MONTH TEMPORARY CONTRACT TO ASSIST WITH AMERSHAM IN BLOOM 2022:

Based on the Clerk's report which had been circulated prior to the meeting,

After brief discussion

It was
Proposed – Councillor J Keeler
Seconded – Councillor D Pinkney

RESOLVED that a temporary appointment would be made for a 6 month fixed term contract at SCP 19 to assist with the administration for Amersham in Bloom. Given the urgency for the extra admin support, it was agreed that a Job Description and vacancy advert would be prepared, followed by a short recruitment process, with a provisional start date of 7 February. It was also agreed that the Establishment Committee would carry out a review before Council decides whether to recruit for this position on a permanent basis from August 2022.

70. CARBON AUDIT:

The recommendations of the Climate Action Working Group were considered and after discussion

It was
Proposed – Councillor Mrs J Barnes
Seconded – Councillor S Woodhead

RESOLVED to appoint '3 Acorns' to carry out a carbon audit on the council properties and services as detailed in their quotation dated 6 December 2021 for £3,000.

71. TO AGREE CAPITAL PROJECTS FOR £100,000 PWLB LOAN:

The Clerk's report had been circulated prior to the meeting. After discussion

It was
Proposed – Councillor A Seymour
Seconded – Councillor Ms C Jones

RESOLVED to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to apply for a PWLB loan of £100,000 over the borrowing term of 25 years for the extension to the Stanley Hill Cemetery driveway and the replacement of the Council's heritage street lighting lanterns. The half yearly loan repayments will be in the region of £2,280. The shortfall of approximately £9,000 on the combined cost of the two projects would be taken from the Council's capital reserve. It is not intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments.

72. MEMBERSHIP OF THE ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE:

As per Standing Orders, the Establishment Committee membership comprises the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chair of F & GP plus two other Councillors. After volunteers were requested to fill the two vacant positions

It was

Proposed – Councillor Mrs V Head
Seconded – Councillor Mrs R Dineley

RESOLVED that Councillors Jason Keeler and Simon Woodhead be appointed as Members of the Establishment Committee in addition to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chair of F & GP.

73. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL MATTERS:

- a) Approval of Local Council Devolution Agreement with Buckinghamshire Council – 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

After brief discussion,

It was

Proposed – Councillor J Keeler
Seconded – Councillor D Pinkney

RESOLVED to sign the devolution agreement with Buckinghamshire Council for the 2022-2023 financial year.

74. MARKET HALL IMPROVEMENTS:

The Clerk's report had been circulated prior to the meeting with an update on the current clock tower repairs, together with details of a local architect's proposal for a feasibility study to assess possible improvements to the existing access to the hall. After discussion

It was

Proposed – Councillor Mrs J Barnes
Seconded – Councillor Mrs A Lamont

RESOLVED that Brocklehurst Architects be appointed to evaluate the access issues and provide ideas of possible improvements, as detailed in their proposed fees (£400 for preparation of a brief and feasibility study). It was also agreed that depending on the results of the advice, the Council could hold a public exhibition, perhaps with the support of the Amersham Society and Amersham Museum, to gauge public response to any proposals.

75. MATTERS FOR REPORT:

Councillor Mrs Barnes commented that she will be supporting FCC Environment by manning an ATC stall at the repair café at St Michael's Square on Saturday 12 February. Any support from other Town Councillors would be welcomed.

Part 2 CONFIDENTIAL – FOR COUNCILLORS ONLY

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

That under Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admissions to meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they include the likely disclosure of exempt information, stated to be confidential.

62. LEASE OF WESTWOOD LODGE, LITTLE CHALFONT:

It was noted that heads of terms for the new lease of Westwood Lodge had been largely agreed at a meeting held with Little Chalfont Parish Council in December. After brief discussion

It was

Proposed – Councillor D Pinkney

Seconded – Councillor Mrs V Head

RESOLVED to sign the Agreement prepared by the ATC solicitor for a 6 month extension to the existing lease and forward to LCPC for their approval.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Chairman Date

COUNCIL