

AMERSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF

THE TOWN COUNCIL

HELD AT FLINT BARN COURT, CHURCH STREET, AMERSHAM
ON MONDAY 18 MARCH 2024

PRESENT: Councillor E Shepherd (Town Mayor)
Councillor D Pinkney (Deputy Town Mayor)
Councillor J Barnes
Councillor R Dineley
Councillor M Dormer
Councillor M Flys
Councillor A Lamont
Councillor H Maitland-Jones
Councillor P Milliner
Councillor M Roberts
Councillor S Woodhead

IN ATTENDANCE: Elizabeth Richardson (Town Clerk Finance & Policy)
Steve Catanach (Town Clerk Community Services & Engagement)

73. APOLOGIES: Councillor V Head
Councillor C Jones
Councillor J Keeler

74. ABSENT: Councillor S Scott-James

75. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:
There were no declarations of interest.

76. MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS –27 NOVEMBER 2023 TO 22 JANUARY 2024:
The list of engagements was noted.

77. COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MINUTES:

a) Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 22 January 2024

Subject to the following amendment, it was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 22 January 2024 be confirmed as a true record and to be signed by the Chair.

i) Alteration requested by Cllr Dineley to Minute 67

It was	Proposed	Councillor S Woodhead
	Seconded	Councillor J Barnes

RESOLVED to alter the wording “*agreed that the council would contribute*” to “*agreed that the council would offer to contribute...*”

- ii) Alteration requested by Cllr Flys to Minute 66
Cllr Flys requested that the minutes be amended to state that Cllr Pinkney had agreed to write a report on the success of the Visit Amersham initiative. After discussion,

It was RESOLVED by a vote of 7 to 0 not to amend Minute 66.

b) Planning and Footpaths Minutes –29 January & 19 February 2024

It was	Proposed	Councillor H Maitland-Jones
	Seconded	Councillor S Woodhead

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Planning and Footpaths Working Group Meetings held on 29 January & 19 February 2024 be accepted, and the recommendations therein be adopted.

c) Finance & General Purposes Minutes – 26 February 2024

It was	Proposed	Councillor D Pinkney
	Seconded	Councillor J Barnes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 26 February 2024 be accepted and the recommendations therein be adopted.

d) Community Services & Engagement – 4 March 2024

It was	Proposed	Councillor D Pinkney
	Seconded	Councillor R Dineley

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Community Services & Engagement Committee meeting held on 4 March 2024 be accepted and the recommendations therein be adopted.

e) Climate Action Working Group Minutes – 16 February 2024

It was	Proposed	Councillor J Barnes
	Seconded	Councillor R Dineley

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Climate Action Working Group meeting held on 16 February 2024 be accepted and the recommendations therein be adopted.

78. MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES:

a) Adoption of Bio-diversity Policy

Following the recommendation made at the Community Services & Engagement Committee meeting held on 4 March, the Council was asked to formally adopt the new Bio-diversity Policy.

It was	Proposed	Councillor R Dineley
	Seconded	Councillor S Woodhead

RESOLVED to adopt the policy as previously drafted by the Town Clerk Steve Catanach.

a) Finance Committee minutes

Following discussion at the F & GP meeting held on 26 February, the Clerk reported on a phone call received from the Chair of the Amersham Society relating to the future use of Market Hall. It is understood the Society may be formulating a proposal for consideration by the Town Council in the near future.

79. CHANGE OF COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP:

After brief discussion

It was	Proposed	Councillor D Pinkney
	Seconded	Councillor S Woodhead

RESOLVED to accept a request from Councillor Head and Councillor Roberts to swap their respective membership of the Planning Committee and Community Services Committee, so that Councillor Head will stand down from the Community Services Committee to join the Planning Committee and Councillor Roberts will stand down from the Planning Committee to join the Community Services and Engagement Committee.

80. PAYMENT OF GRANT TO COMMUNITY YOUTH VENTURES:

It was noted that Community Youth Ventures had now signed the lease for the youth club building and that the legal department at Buckinghamshire Council had given the go-ahead for ATC to release the remaining funds being held on behalf of Chiltern District Council.

It was	Proposed	Councillor D Pinkney
	Seconded	Councillor R Dineley

RESOLVED to pay the remaining £24,000 grant to Community Youth Ventures, this being the combined value of the two final years of the residual grant.

81. E-MAIL DOMAINS:

Members noted the reminder from the Bucks Association of Local Councils that councillors using personal email addresses for town council correspondence does not meet the recommended standards of security for a public authority. Those ATC Councillors still using personal email addresses are asked to reconsider switching to the amersham.tc.gov.uk domain.

82. PORTABLE TOILETS AT BARN MEADOW & HERVINES PARK:

After brief discussion

It was	Proposed	Councillor D Pinkney
	Seconded	Councillor J Barnes

RESOLVED to lease portable toilets for public use over the summer at Barn Meadow and Hervines Park at a cost of £835 per site.

83. UPDATE ON ALTOGETHER AMERSHAM – 6th JULY 2024:

Councillor Dineley reported on the progress with planning for the event. Confirmation is still awaited on a number of items, but should be forthcoming within the next couple of weeks.

84. CLERK'S ECO-AUDIT:

The Clerks end of year eco-audit with an update on the council's actions and expenditure on eco-measures had been circulated prior to the meeting.

84. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL MATTERS:

i) Devolution Agreement

It was noted that the Devolution Agreement from the Bucks Highways Department includes an increased workload, though only a fractional uplift in the sum to be paid. This means that Amersham Town Council's costs are no longer covered by the value of the contract. It was also noted that the revised maps drawn up by Bucks showing the grass verges to be cut are still inaccurate and will need correction. After discussion,

It was	Proposed	Councillor M Roberts
	Seconded	Councillor S Woodhead

RESOLVED to accept the contract for Devolved Services for 2024/25, though the Clerk was asked to write to Bucks Highways, expressing disappointment that the value of the contract does not cover the extra workload and that the mapped information provided had been sub-standard. These issues would need to be addressed before ATC could commit to continue the devolved work beyond the 2024/25 contract.

85. MATTERS FOR REPORT:

a) Staff Policies

The Clerk reported that the Staff Handbook would be amended to incorporate the forthcoming changes in employment legislation, relating to flexible working, paternity leave and unpaid carer's leave.

b) Twinning

The Mayor reported on an email received from the Chesham Town Twinning Association, who are trying to revive interest and strengthen links with their twin town in Germany, which apparently is close to Amersham's twin town of Bensheim. They had enquired about the possibility of joint activities with Amersham's Twinning Group. It was decided to discuss this matter further at the next Community Services Meeting. It was noted that delegates from Bensheim had been invited to Amersham for the weekend of 6/7 July to coincide with the Altogether Amersham event. Meanwhile, an invitation had been received from Bensheim for Amersham delegates to attend the Bensheim Winzerfest on 30 August - 2 September. Consideration will be given on who will be attending this event on behalf of Amersham Town Council.

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.

86. UPDATES SINCE PREVIOUS ESTABLISHMENT SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING:
The Clerk reported on an update relating to a member of staff who had been on long-term sick leave.

87. APOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION OFFICER:
After brief discussion

It was	Proposed	Councillor M Roberts
	Seconded	Councillor S Woodhead

RESOLVED to appoint the internal candidate to the role of Administration Officer with effect from 1 April 2024.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Chairman Date

