

AMERSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF

THE TOWN COUNCIL

HELD AT FLINT BARN COURT, CHURCH STREET, AMERSHAM
ON MONDAY 22 JANUARY 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 J Keeler
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)

61. APOLOGIES: Councillor V Head
Councillor C Jones
Councillor S Scott-James

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

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

64. COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MINUTES:

a) Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 27 November 2023

It was	Proposed	Councillor H Maitland-Jones
	Seconded	Councillor R Dineley

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 27 November 2023 be confirmed as a true record and to be signed by the Chair.

b) Planning and Footpaths Minutes –20 Nov, 11 Dec 2023 & 8 Jan 2024

It was	Proposed	Councillor H Maitland-Jones
	Seconded	Councillor R Dineley

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Planning and Footpaths Working Group Meetings held on 20 November, 11 December 2023 and 8 January 2024 be accepted, and the recommendations therein be adopted.

c) **Finance & General Purposes Minutes – 18 December 2023**

It was	Proposed	Councillor D Pinkney
	Seconded	Councillor J Barnes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 18 December 2023 be accepted and the recommendations therein be adopted.

d) **Climate Action Working Group Minutes – 4 January 2024**

It was	Proposed	Councillor J Barnes
	Seconded	Councillor R Dineley

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Climate Action Working Group meeting held on 4 January 2024 be accepted and the recommendations therein be adopted.

65. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES:**

a) Finance Committee minutes

Following the decision made at the Finance Meeting held on 18 December to decline the Amersham Society's request for funding towards a public survey and architectural survey of Market Hall, the Clerk had received a request from representative of the society for further discussion on the matter with the Mayor and Clerk. On the basis the Mayor and Clerk cannot add any further comment on the matter, it was suggested that the Amersham Society's representatives should be asked to attend the F & GP meeting in April, once the current internal renovation work on the hall has been completed, to address the committee.

66. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL'S BUDGET AND PRECEPT REQUEST FOR 2024/25:**

The Town Clerk's reports had been circulated prior to the meeting. The revised budget figures were noted, based on the recommendation of the Finance Committee and subsequent budget reductions on some cost centres, as well as a correction of the overall precept support grant figure stated at the Budget Briefing held in November. After much discussion, two proposals were made and voted on as follows:

Proposal 1 made by the Mayor – to increase the precept from £967,302 to £1,029,865 for 2024/25, representing an increase of £8.97 per annum (6.47%) for a Band D equivalent property. This would be achieved by reducing the capital provision from the recommended sum of £100,000 to £50,000 and supplementing the shortfall with the expected budget surplus on the 2023/24 overrun.

A formal vote was taken on the proposal. Those in favour (6) those against (4) abstention (1)

Proposal 2 made by Cllrs M Flys and M Dormer – to stop the Council's 'Visit Amersham' initiative, including the redundancy of the Sponsorship and Marketing Co-ordinator and other costs, offering an anticipated overall saving of approximately £40,000 for 2024/25. The

resultant saving would be used to supplement the capital provision to £85,000 for 2024/25, with any remainder going to reserves and would enable a precept increase for a Band D property of 4.99%, (£6.92 per annum) - total precept of £1,015,600.

A formal recorded vote was taken on the proposal:

<u>Those in favour</u>	Cllrs M Flys, M Dormer, P Milliner & A Lamont
<u>Those against</u>	D Pinkney, J Barnes, R Dineley, J Keeler, H Maitland-Jones, M Roberts, S Woodhead
<u>Abstentions</u>	Cllr E Shepherd

Proposal 1 was therefore carried.

67. CONTRIBUTION TO REPAIRS OF THE PLATT ACCESS ROAD:

A request had been received from a resident of The Platt for the Town Council to make a 50% contribution to the repairs/ resurfacing of a section of the Platt access road. Two quotes had been forwarded by the resident for consideration. The recommendation of the Depot & Facilities Manager, was to proceed with the quote for £20,247 + VAT as this includes installation of a soakaway to address the issue of flooding. It was also noted in the report that the Depot & Facilities Manager is of the opinion that the damage to the road surface is more likely caused by vehicles turning slowly in and out of the properties on the upper untarmacked section of the road, rather than vehicles driving in a straight line up to the cemetery.

It was	Proposed	Councillor E Shepherd
	Seconded	Councillor P Milliner

AGREED that the Council would contribute £1,841 +VAT, representing 1/11th of the total cost of repairs. This sum is based on there being 11 properties who have access to the Platt and is the same proportion as contributed by the council for re-surfacing repairs in 2018.

68. CHANGE OF DATES FOR COMMITTEE MEETINGS IN JUNE 2024:

The Clerk reported that the change of dates for June meetings was no longer necessary, as Derek Kemp has altered his diary to attend the Finance Meeting on 17th June. Dates will therefore remain as previous scheduled, ie Planning Meeting on 10th June and the F & GP and Extra-ordinary Council meetings on 17th June.

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

Councillor Dineley reported that progress has been made in planning for the event, with the expected final programme for the day being ready by the beginning of February. The Amersham School is still keen to be involved in the event.

70. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL MATTERS:

There were no matters for report.

71. MATTERS FOR REPORT:

a) Update on Market Hall renovation

The Clerk reported that the depot staff are making good progress with the internal renovation of the hall, though the work entailed has been more involved than anticipated. The project should be completed by the end of March. It is planned that the 3rd party contract will resume their work on external redecoration hopefully in May.

b) Funding for Community Youth Ventures

It is understood from the administrators of Community Youth Ventures that they are expecting to sign the lease with Bucks Council for their youth club building very soon, after which the Town Council can release the next tranche of funds being held on behalf of Chiltern District 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.

72. LEASE FOR RENTAL OF REAR GARDEN AT 146.148 STATION ROAD:

The Clerk reported that preparation of the draft lease had been delayed due to illness of the ATC solicitor, but was now being progressed by one of his colleagues.

73. REQUEST FROM TENANT OF 146 STATION ROAD TO PURCHASE THE PROPERTY:

The Clerk reported that the tenant had submitted a further request to purchase the property following his previous request two years ago. The Council's stance is unchanged in its view that it has no wish to sell the property in the foreseeable future.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Chairman Date