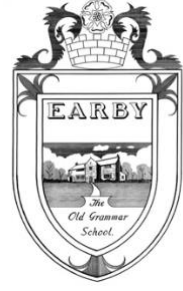




EARBY TOWN COUNCIL



Chair: Cllr T. Hardman
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Meeting of Earby Town Council
Monday 29th April 2024
The Parish Rooms, Victoria Road, Earby

MINUTES

1. Welcome

The Chair, Councillor Hardman welcomed all to the meeting at 7.30pm.

2. Attendance, Apologies, and non-attendance

The attendance of members was recorded: Cllrs T. Hardman, J. Myers, A. Inman, D. Anderson, V. Cocker, N. Goodman, and Cllr R. Robinson. Cllr D. Haigh was not in attendance.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest notified on the agenda.

4. Exclusion of the public and press

There were no relevant matters identified as meeting the criteria for exclusion on the agenda.

5. Public Participation

Mr M. Cunliffe, YourCad Ltd, introduced members of council to the local company's new premises on Skipton Road and outlined his proposal for a planning application to be submitted to Pendle Borough Council in the near future. Council thanked him for his input and taking the time to give advance notice of the proposal.

A resident of Brookfield Way was in attendance and outlined his concerns and objection to the full planning application ([24/0094/FUL](#)) to build 39 houses on Colne Road, Earby at its boundary with Sough. The developers had also submitted an outline planning application for 31 houses in Sough at the adjoining site. The Town Manager identified that the matter was scheduled for debate at the next full council meeting on Monday 20th May 2024 at 7.30pm

6. Minutes

It was resolved to accept and approve the minutes of the last meeting on [Monday 26th February 2024](#) as an accurate record (Proposed VC, 2nd AI).

7. Update of ongoing issues from previous Minutes

The Town Manager provided an update to members on the progress made against the following ongoing issues.

7.1 A summary of maintenance tasks carried out since the last meeting was presented. This included work inside the community rooms – the former fire station – to prepare the upstairs room for a new ceiling and heating. To replace the kitchenette and refurbish the toilets and staircase. The condition of the windows and external stonework was identified as in need of repair this summer. Boundary work on allotments had also been carried out this month. The general condition of the playgrounds was good, all required a thorough cleaning and the entrance gate to Cemetery Road had been renewed. Birley Playing Fields playground was the oldest equipment and the first to require renewal.

7.2 The creation of a community orchard had been successfully delivered prior to the end of March deadline, led by Cllr Inman, and funded through a grant from the King's Coronation Orchard Fund. Once the area was sufficiently established and additional planting and seating was in place, wider communication would take place.

7.3 The ongoing issues with the OPUS Energy company in overcharging for electricity at the Hill Top Recreation ground had been escalated to a manager on their Care Team. In the meantime, the account was frozen and no more direct debits were authorised, it was assessed that the account was significantly overpaid and a reimbursement and change of supplier was urgently sought.

It had also come to light that the maintenance of the drainage system at the site had fallen short of a scheduled plan which would be addressed as a matter of urgency.

7.4 The dispute with Yorkshire Water regarding overcharging at Colne Road WC has now been resolved, with the £3,800 invoice being reduced to £58 and settled.

8. Pendle Croquet Club

Council received an input from the Town Manager regarding proposed enhancements and potential funding opportunity for the site on Cemetery Road leased to Pendle Croquet Club.

8.1 Council resolved to approve an area of temporary car parking and widening of an access gate to facilitate re-orientation of the pitches and alleviate visitor parking congestion on match days (Proposed JM, 2nd VC).

8.2 Council resolved to approve a letter from the Town Council to the Croquet Association indicating, without prejudice, an intention to renew and extend the Croquet Club's tenancy arrangements beyond its end date in September 2028 (Proposed AI, 2nd TH).

9. Pool Table

Council considered the donation of a pool table to Council from a local church and resolved to accept the same with thanks with the intention of using it for youth provision in the future (Proposed DA, 2nd TH).

10. Allotments

Council was updated on the management of the allotments and the current position regarding two outstanding payments of the annual invoices issued in 2023.

10.1 Council resolved to approve the keeping of bees on a plot by a tenant with previous experience of keeping bees (Proposed VC, 2nd JM).

10.2 Council noted the change in HM Gov legislation from the Autumn, requiring notification of the keeping of birds outside, regardless of the number. The information would be relayed to the tenants at Rostle Top who would be responsible for their notifications to DEFRA.

11. Crime Prevention

There were no crime issues reported requiring action by council.

12. Correspondence

12.1 Council noted communication copied to the Town Council by residents opposing the annual Council Tax bill issued by the local authority.

12.2 Council resolved to approve a request for use of Aspen Lane Green for a Family Fun Day Fundraiser, subject to the necessary risk assessment, and insurance policy being in place (Proposed TH 2nd JM).

13. Public Toilets

Council received an update from the Town Manager on the work scheduled to re-open the public toilets at the Town Council Offices by the Bus Station which have been closed the past year due to repeated vandalism.

13.1 Council resolved to set the cost of accessing the refurbished public toilets by contactless card payment at 40p (TH/RR), together with opening times of 5.30am to 10.30pm each day (Proposed TH 2nd JM).

14. Cemetery Road Car Park

Council received an update on recent enforcement action relating to abandoned vehicles left on the car park on Cemetery Road.

14.1 Council approved the introduction and funding of bollards around the perimeter of the grassed verge entrance to the car park, to prevent damage to the surface by inconsiderate residents and visitors parking on the grass (Proposed TH 2nd VC).

15. Planning Applications

Due to the timing of receipt, full planning application ([24/0094/FUL](#)) to build 39 houses on Colne Road, Earby at its boundary with Sough will be debated at the next full meeting.

16. Reports from meetings with other organisations

16.1 Cllr Inman provided a summary of issues covered at the most recent West Craven District Committee meeting of Pendle Borough Council.

16.2 Cllr Anderson provided an update on the activities and plans of the independent Earby Events Group, which she also Chairs. The next event 'War of the Roses', was this weekend on Sunday 5th May on the green at Aspen Lane and all were welcome to this family fun event. The Group's events would continue to be advertised through social media, and the community website funded by the Town Council at <https://earby.info>

16.3 Cllr Anderson provided a summary of her attendance at the InSitu Steering Group meeting to members and the benefit of the links to the town council.

16.4 The public consultation of the Earby Masterplan concluded on the 11th March and the next stage in the process was awaiting Pendle Borough Council action.

16.5 Cllr Robinson was awaiting contact from the Beat The Streets team and details of the next Steering Group meeting to represent Earby in the game originally intended for May 2024.

17. The 2023/2024 Annual Internal Audit Report

Council received and noted the annual report from the [Internal Auditor](#), in which the Town Council was noted as operating at a High Standard. Issues identified refer to work already planned for review in the new year.

18. The 2023/2024 Annual Governance Statement (AGAR Sect 1)

Council resolved to approve the [Annual Governance Statement for 2023/24](#) (page 4 of Appendix B) (Proposed JM, 2nd VC).

19. The 2023/2024 Accounting Statements (AGAR Sect 2)

Council resolved to approve the [Accounting Statements for 2023/24](#) prepared by the Responsible Financial Officer for the year ended 31 March 2024 as an accurate representation of the financial position of this authority (page 5 of Appendix B) (Proposed JM, 2nd VC).

20. Period for the Exercise of Public Rights

Council noted the proposed period of exercise of the public right to access and review the council's unaudited accounts will be Monday 10th June to Friday 19th July 2024. The [relevant notice](#) will be displayed in notice boards and published to the council's website on Wednesday 1st May 2024.

21. The Annual Town Meeting (public meeting)

Councillors noted the requirement to set a date for the Annual Town Meeting at a local venue, where attendees will receive the Chair's Report of council activity in the previous year, forthcoming plans, and residents and local business owners will have the opportunity to raise issues relating to town council services, local policing, or other community matters.

22. Finance

22.1 Council resolved to approve the Payment List, as circulated (Proposed TH 2nd AI).

22.2 Council noted the latest (Year to Date) Payments & Receipts document and the Council's current Earmarked Reserve funds.

22.3 Council received a presentation from the RFO on the end of year performance - spending against budget and notable variations to be reported to the external auditor.

22.4 Council noted receipt of the bi-annual VAT reclaim for the six months ending 31st March 2024.

22.5 Council noted this month's bank reconciliation with the accounting software, and the Chair signed the document.

23. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will take place on **Monday 20th May 2024** which will be the Annual Meeting of the Town Council.

24. Meeting Close

The meeting was closed at 21.20 hrs and the Chair thanked all present for their attendance and contribution.