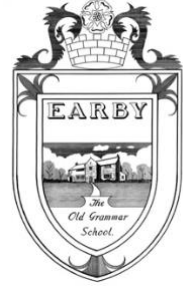




# EARBY TOWN COUNCIL



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**Meeting** of Earby Town Council  
Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2025  
The Parish Rooms, Victoria Road, Earby

## MINUTES

### 1. Welcome

Councillor Hardman, Chair of the Council, welcomed all present to the meeting at 7.30pm.

### 2. Attendance, Apologies, and non-attendance

The attendance of members was recorded: Cllr. T. Hardman, Cllrs J. Myers, A. Inman, D. Anderson, V. Cocker, Cllr. N. Goodman and T. Dickinson were present. Apologies were received and accepted from 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

There was no representation made from members of the public. Two members of the public observed the proceedings.

### 6. Minutes

Council resolved to accept and approve the minutes of the last meeting on [Monday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024](#) as an accurate record (Proposed TH, 2<sup>nd</sup> VC).

Council was informed of new information in relation to item 13 Litter Bins in Playgrounds of the November meeting in that the chargeable service of £2,303pa quoted by Pendle Borough Council was to also include waste collection from the dog waste bins located in Town Council owned play areas. This being particularly relevant to Birley Playing Fields. Council considered that this position therefore represented value for money and resolved to overturn the previous resolution to bring litter bin emptying in-house. Pendle BC to be requested to resume litter and dog waste bin collection on Town Council owned playground and MUGA areas from 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025. Upgrades to the bins would continue in the meantime (Proposed TH, 2<sup>nd</sup> JM).

(Item 13 below was debated here, out of sequence, to benefit members of the public present who left afterwards.)

## **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, which included repairs to and cleaning of playgrounds, specifically Rushton Avenue which had suffered vandalism. A repair to a hazardous pothole at Birley Playing Fields and waste removal had been carried out. The upstairs community room had further work carried out to be readied for a replacement ceiling and windows.

7.2 The Public Toilets were operating correctly and without incident. Access has finally been set up by the installer to monitor the card payment system regarding access demand.

7.3 The new festive lighting installation at Aspen Lane Green has been turned off for the season, consideration was given to installing dawn to dusk switching however this was not considered appropriate for the Xmas period when 24 hour lights were desired.

7.4 Following another water leak in the loft area at Hill Top Pavilion, additional access hatches have been cut into the ceilings and a thorough examination of the plumbing installation carried out. It was found that the insulation fitted to all the pipework there was of the wrong size and specification, rendering it inadequate. The system has been shut down until such time that new, correctly specified insulation is fitted to all exposed plumbing in the building.

The Town Manager reported he had contacted the owners of two dog walking companies which had been using the dog exercise area to the detriment of, and occasional intimidation of residents and adversely impacting on the condition of the site. Both had agreed to refrain from using the area, avoiding further action being taken.

7.5 The Croquet Club have notified Council of their start of work to implement a hardstanding area for temporary event parking within the grounds of the club to alleviate parking on nearby streets.

7.6 Council were informed that the supplier of the plants for the hanging baskets had once again met the same price point as last year and the quality of the product had been maintained. It was noted that the baskets would occupy the same locations as last season, with enhancements made to those previously placed on the floor at the town's boundary entrance stones. The town marker entrance stones were considered to be of an inappropriate design, resembling headstones, and the Town Manager was tasked with contacting the Engineering Manager at Pendle BC with a view to their removal. Council expressed a wish to adopt the adjacent town entrance signs from Pendle with a view to cleaning and painting them this month and potentially upgrading them in the future. A dog waste bin installed at the Welcome to Earby sign was to be sought to be relocated.

## **8. Crime Prevention/Anti-Social Behaviour**

Following the attendance of Police Inspector Rob Grey, Pendle & Ribble Valley Neighbourhood Policing Team to the previous meeting, the Town Manager reported that communication had continued, and a meeting had taken place with PCSO Rich Riley who was newly allocated to the area.

PCSO Riley has been provided with 24hr access to the welfare room of the council offices in support of an increased presence in Earby on patrol. Enquiries were to be made in supporting the Neighbourhood Team with possible match-funding provision of a cycle.

## **9. Allotments**

Council was updated on the management of the Council's five allotment sites. Tenants at Cemetery Road had quickly and efficiently removed an unsightly, large amount of woodchip that had been tipped without request on Cemetery Road near to the entrance to the Cemetery. Investigations were ongoing to identify those responsible to deter the practice. Any future pre-arranged deliveries were to be removed immediately into the site to avoid encroaching onto the highway.

## **10. Correspondence**

Members were informed of a communication received from Pendle Borough Council in relation to the acquisition and storage of sandbags to be used in a flood event. It was resolved that the Town Council would no longer purchase sandbags as this was the remit of LCC as the lead flood authority. An existing stock of sandbags held would be divided to the four flood equipment shipping containers around town, out-of-hours access to which is co-ordinated by the Earby Flood Warden Community Flood Scheme run by local volunteers (Proposed TH, 2<sup>nd</sup> AI).

## **11. Spring Mill housing development – adoption of land proposal**

Council noted communication received on behalf of Pearl Together Ltd (a joint venture between Together Housing, Barnfield Construction and Pendle Borough Council) and resolved to decline a proposal for transfer of ownership and subsequent adoption of the land to the north of the Spring Mill building site, alongside Stoneybank Road, as outlined in the accompanying plan (Proposed TH, 2<sup>nd</sup> JM).

## **12. Wentcliffe Drive flooding**

Council noted correspondence received from Pendle Borough Council outlining a request for a meeting to identify parties affected by groundwater issues and flooding in the Wentcliffe Drive area, with a view to pursuing action against the third parties deemed responsible.

Whilst members expressed empathy with the residents affected, Council considered that any groundwater impact on their assets was minor and did not warrant seeking redress, it was not within Council's remit nor financial capacity to justify pursuing formal legal action. Council resolved not to engage in the process (Proposed TH, 2<sup>nd</sup> DA).

## **13. Sough Park Funding FY 2025/2026**

Council debated the content of correspondence received from Pendle Borough Council seeking a commitment to match-fund the maintenance costs of Sough Park in the next financial year (a contribution of ~£6-7K per organisation).

Council resolved not to match-fund the maintenance of the park, commenting that the information and position had not changed since their last resolution on the issue last summer (item 12 of [24<sup>th</sup> June 2024 meeting](#)). The park is viewed as wholly the responsibility of the Borough Council. The Town Council was not satisfied that continuing this voluntary expenditure was an appropriate use of their annual precept, given the need to fund their own land and property maintenance commitments. There was no information as to other funding streams having been sought before approaching the town and parish councils, which members considered would result in double taxation of Earby residents for maintenance of the Borough's own asset.

The proposed course of action to wholly divert the Earby allocation of funds (~£7,800) made available to the West Craven Committee by PBC Finance — intended to fund independent local groups and initiatives — and to use it for the maintenance of the park was considered inappropriate. Members felt strongly that Earby community group's ability to seek support from the WCDC, should not be prevented from accessing such funds, because of the monies effectively being withdrawn and diverted back to PBC to maintain its own park.

The Town Council committed to reviewing its position each financial year ahead of it setting its annual budget (Proposed TH, 2<sup>nd</sup> JM).

#### **14. Planning Applications**

There were no new planning applications received and circulated since the previous meeting that Members sought to debate.

#### **15. Reports from meetings with other organisations**

15.1 Cllr Inman was unable to attend the last meeting of the West Craven District Committee meeting of Pendle Borough Council.

15.2 Cllr Myers provided an update on the activities of the Earby Events Group who were busy planning three events for the year ahead.

15.3 The final version of the Earby Masterplan is now published and can be downloaded here: [https://www.pendle.gov.uk/downloads/file/11960/earby\\_town\\_centre\\_masterplan](https://www.pendle.gov.uk/downloads/file/11960/earby_town_centre_masterplan)

#### **16. Budget 2025/26**

16.1 Council received an input from the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) on the end of Q3 actual spend against budget for the current financial year. Income and expenditure were on track against budget due to savings in several areas offsetting unexpected costs due to water bursts and vandalism to playgrounds.

16.2 Council received a presentation from the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) on the proposed Budget for 2025/2026, and resolved to approve the same (Proposed TH, 2<sup>nd</sup> VC).

16.3 Council considered and approved the recommendation from the RFO on the Precept amount required for the 2025/2026 Financial Year for the Council to meet its service delivery obligations and achieve its objectives as outlined in the Budget forecast.

The Chair and two Members signed the Precept Demand for 2025/2026 which will be submitted to PBC for the sum of **£136,986** representing a 0% increase for the fourth consecutive year despite rising costs. Robust financial controls would continue to be implemented, savings sought, whilst delivery continues at the highest level possible with the available resources.

#### **17. Finance**

17.1 Council resolved to approve the Payment List, as circulated (Proposed AI, 2<sup>nd</sup> VC).

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

17.3 Council resolved to approve expenditure of ~£675 to Pendle Leisure Trust in support of the annual free swimming passes for all primary school age children at Springfield Primary School, and other primary school age children residing in Earby, during the school holidays (Proposed TH, 2<sup>nd</sup> AI).

17.4 Council resolved to approve ad hoc expenditure on third party labour provision on a trial basis in support of the Lengthsman's tasks which require two operatives present e.g. installation of hanging baskets, working at height and the movement of heavy items (Proposed VC, 2<sup>nd</sup> JM).

17.5 Council resolved to approve expenditure of ~£600 to provide additional folding tables for use at events in the Community Rooms (Proposed VC, 2<sup>nd</sup> AI).

17.6 To note, and the Chair to sign, this and last month's bank account reconciliation reports with the Council's accounting software.

## **18. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting will take place on **Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

An agenda will be published in advance of the meeting to confirm.

## **19. Meeting Close**

The meeting was closed at 21.29 hrs and the Chair thanked all present for their attendance and contribution.