

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 6th SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 7.00PM AT THE TOWN HALL

Present: **Councillor** **Ben Hamlin (Mayor)**
 Annette Eyre (Deputy Mayor)
 Matthew Bayliss
 John Chubb
 Mark Boyce-Churn
 Don Hammond
 Graham Hill
 Matthew Kellermann
 Nick O'Brien
 Barbara Tansey
 Janice Treacher

In attendance: **Leah Coney** - **Town Clerk**
 Pat Harris - **Finance & Admin Manager**
 County Councillor Andrew Joy
 11 Members of the public

23 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Jonathan Waugh.

24 Town Mayor's Announcements

The Town Mayor welcomed all members of the public who were attending the meeting.

25 Minutes of the last meetings held on 14th June 2023

Cllr Kellermann wished to dispute the minutes citing omissions made in the representations made by both the public and Councillors. Councillor Hill noted that minutes are a record of decisions made not verbatim notes.

A recorded vote was requested by Cllr Kellermann.

On the proposal of Councillor Graham Hill, seconded by Councillor John Chubb, it was

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the 14th June,

In favour: Councillor Bayliss, Chubb, Hamlin, Hill, Treacher, O'Brien,
Hammond, Tansey, Eyre, Boyce-Churn

Against: Councillor Kellermann

26 Questions to the Council

26.1 Former Town Mayor and Town Guide, Allan Chick spoke about the Town Guides grant application for consideration later in the agenda.

26.2 County Councillor Andrew Joy apologised for being late to the meeting and explained whilst he could not remain throughout was happy to take any questions. No questions were raised. He briefly addressed Members to urge the council to be very careful in the issuing of a lease for the Assembly Rooms for seven years to an organisation with no previous experience of running a building or event management.

26.3 Andrew Joy, in a personal capacity, spoke of his strong association with the Air Cadets whose headquarters are at Anstey Park and requested that the Council be cognisant that no disadvantage to the activities of the cadets arises in respect of any new lease arrangements for Edgar Hall.

27 **Co-option to the Council**

Further to the publication of the Agenda, Matt Donnelly (Labour) had withdrawn his application. The Council, therefore, considered the three remaining candidates who had put themselves forward to be Co-opted to the Ashdell ward seat. Each candidate was given the opportunity to make representation to Council following which nominations were requested:

David Dodd (Ind): Received no proposer

Pandora Kellermann (Ind): Proposed by Annette Eyre, seconded by Matthew Kellermann

Councillor Chubb asked the Town Clerk whether any Member should have declared a prejudicial interest in this item. The Town Clerk responded that yes, a declaration was appropriate but it was not for an officer to require a councillor to declare and as such no declaration was made.

Peter Wadman (Ind): Proposed by Don Hammond, seconded by Councillor Graham Hill

Thus Pandora Kellermann and Peter Wadman were taken forward to the vote.

Pandora Kellermann received 2 votes – Councillors Matthew Kellermann and Annette Eyre

Peter Wadman received 9 votes - Councillors Ben Hamlin, Matthew Bayliss, John Chubb, Mark Boyce-Church, Don Hammond, Graham Hill, Nick O'Brien, Barbara Tansey and Janice Treacher.

Therefore, with receiving over 50% of the votes of those present and voting it was

RESOLVED to appoint

Peter Wadman as the Town Councillor for Ashdell Ward

28 **Landlord Consent for Installation of Air Source Heat Pump – Kings Arms**

Members were invited to consider the application for Landlord's Consent for the heat pump and solar panels for the roof of the King's Arms Youth Centre on Vicarage Hill.

A recorded vote was requested.

On the proposal of Councillor Nick O'Brien, seconded by Councillor John Chubb, it was

RESOLVED

To grant Landlord's Consent for the installation of a Heat Pump and Solar Panels for the roof of the King's Arms building on Vicarage Hill subject to any necessary planning approvals required

In favour : Councillors Ben Hamlin, Matthew Bayliss, John Chubb, Mark Boyce-Church, Don Hammond, Graham Hill, Nick O'Brien, Barbara Tansey and Janice Treacher.

Against : Councillor Matthew Kellermann

29 **Event/Project Grant Applications**

Three applications were received and considered: Alton Town Guides, Creating Crafts & Blooms and the Friendship Café.

On the proposal of Councillor Matthew Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Annette Eyre, it was

RESOLVED

To approve grant funding to the following organisations:

1. Alton Town Guides £350.00
2. Creating Crafts & Blooms £250.00
3. The Friendship Café £584.43

All in favour

30 **Meet the Councillor Sessions**

Following a trial over the summer organised by the Mayor, Members considered the continuation of the Meet the Councillor monthly sessions monthly, with the following dates to the end of 2023.

Thursday 7th September a.m. & p.m.

Saturday 9th September a.m.

Thursday 5th October a.m. & p.m.

Saturday 7th October a.m.

Thursday 2nd November a.m. & p.m.

Saturday 4th November a.m.

To be held at Edgar Hall, with two councillors in attendance per session.

Councillor Kellermann had suggested additional sessions, at least six times a year, be held more centrally in the town centre on a Tuesday (market day) citing the unit under the Town Hall, Community Centre, or Assembly Rooms as potential central location for the purpose of providing an additional opportunity for the public to meet with councillors in an informal setting whilst in town. Such surgeries to be divided into "windows" of 15 minutes (or

similar) to ensure proper functioning as Councillors Barbara Tansey & Matthew Kellermann raised concerns that confidentiality was unable to be maintained at Edgar Hall.

On the proposal of Councillor Boyce Churn, seconded by Councillor Janice Treacher, it was

RESOLVED to approve:

- 1. The dates for the Meet the Councillor sessions initiative at Edgar Hall, to be reviewed in early 2024 as follows:**

Thursday 7th September a.m. & p.m.

Saturday 9th September a.m.

Thursday 5th October a.m. & p.m.

Saturday 7th October a.m.

Thursday 2nd November a.m. & p.m.

Saturday 4th November a.m.

In favour: Councillors Ben Hamlin, Matthew Bayliss, John Chubb, Mark Boyce-Church, Don Hammond, Graham Hill, Nick O'Brien, Janice Treacher & Matthew Kellerman

Against : Councillor Barbara Tansey

On the proposal of Councillor Matthew Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Annette Eyre it was

RESOLVED to approve:

- 2. The hosting of additional sessions at a central location, six times a year, on a Tuesday or Saturday morning with a venue to be confirmed**

In favour: Councillors, Matthew Bayliss, John Chubb, Mark Boyce-Church, Don Hammond, Graham Hill, Nick O'Brien, Barbara Tansey, Matthew Kellermann and Janice Treacher)

Against: Councillor Ben Hamlin

31 CALA Community Building

Members attended a briefing session in relation to the progress of both the lease agreement and the physical construction of the community building on the former Molson Coor Brewery Site, on the 23rd August and full details published in Agenda papers.

Members wished to acknowledge and formally thank the Town Clerk for her contribution and participation in the project.

On the proposal of Councillor Graham Hill, seconded by Councillor Annette Eyre it was

RESOLVED to

Approve Alton Town Council's withdrawal from the project, advising EHDC that it can no longer pursue the transfer of the Alton Community hub, citing the continued delays to the delivery of the project which will continue to add to the overall cost of the hub and the unresolved legal issues.

All in favour

The meeting was adjourned at 7.55 p.m. for a short recess given the very hot conditions in the Chamber. The meeting resumed at 8.05 p.m.

32 Statement of Accounts to 30th June 2023 including Internal Auditors Report

On the proposal of Councillor Annette Eyre, seconded by Councillor Mark Boyce-Churn it was

RESOLVED to approve:

1. The balance sheet dated 30th June 2023
2. The Income and Expenditure account to 30th June 2023
3. The bank reconciliations for the Unity Account and the CCLA Deposit Account
4. The Payments over £500 covering 1st April 2023 to 30th June 2023
5. The Internal Audit Report to 30th June 2023

All in favour

33 Extension of Licence to Occupy Mens Shed and Dementia Friendly Alton

At the Full Council meeting held on 22nd March 2023 approval was given to a temporary Licence to Occupy for Edgar Hall to enable occupation by Mens Shed and Dementia Friendly Alton, pending the finalising of a longer-term lease. Due to issues which have arisen with the planning application to alter the building, Members are requested to extend this licence to occupy for a further six months to 31st March 2024.

On the proposal of Councillor Matthew Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Nick O'Brien it was

RESOLVED to confirm their approval of an extension to the current licence to occupy for Mens Shed and Dementia Friendly Alton at Edgar Hall to 31st March 2024.

All in favour

34 Alton Assembly Rooms Lease

Following discussion Councillors wished to amend the Recommendation before Council as they wished to be in possession of a Management Plan for the facility to demonstrate how Dementia Friendly Alton intend to run the facility, including how it would be proposed to manage existing bookings at the Assembly Rooms. Therefore, a motion was put forward to defer this item until the next meeting of Full Council on 4th October to allow both parties to agree and produce a Management Plan.

On the proposal of Councillor Graham Hill, seconded by Councillor Don Hammond it was

RESOLVED to amend the recommendation to DEFER this item to the next meeting of Full Council on 4th October.

All in favour

Thus, on the amended recommendation and on the proposal of Councillor Graham Hill, seconded by Councillor Matthew Kellerman, it was

RESOLVED to amend the recommendation to DEFER this item to the next Full Council meeting on 4th October.

All in favour

35 **ATC updated Investment Strategy**

Members were requested to review and approve the updated Investment Strategy included in Members bundles. Members felt that professional and independent financial advice should be sought to enable Councillors to make an informed decision on an updated Investment Strategy for the Council. Members requested the Town Clerk to seek guidance from the Council's internal auditors in obtaining three quotes for independent financial advice to bring back to Council once available.

On the proposal of Councillor Graham Hill, seconded by Councillor Don Hammond it was

RESOLVED to defer a decision on the updated Investment Strategy as tabled

36 **ATC updated Financial Regulations**

With the agreement of the Council's Internal Auditor it is proposed that the financial regulation 4.1 be amended to read as follows:

FR 4.1. Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:

- The Full Council for items over £10,000; or
- The Town Clerk together with the Chair of the council or the relevant committee for all items over £5,000
- The Town Clerk for any items below £5,000.

Such authority is to be evidenced by a minute or by an authorisation slip for all items over £1,000, duly signed by the RFO or the Finance and Administration Manager and, where necessary, also by the appropriate Chair Contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these regulations

On the proposal of Councillor Matthew Bayliss, seconded by Councillor John Chubb it was

RESOLVED to confirm their approval of the amendment to Financial Regulation 4.1 as detailed above.

All in favour

37 **District Councillor Report – Councillor Ginny Boxall**

District Councillor Ginny Boxall had submitted a written report which had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. The Council thanked Councillor Boxall for her submission.

NOTED

The meeting finished at 8.38 pm.