

**ALTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 10th JANUARY 2024 AT 7.00PM AT THE TOWN HALL**

Present: **Councillor** **Annette Eyre (Deputy Mayor) in the Chair**
 Matthew Bayliss
 John Chubb
 Don Hammond
 Graham Hill
 Matthew Kellermann
 Nick O'Brien
 Janice Treacher
 Peter Wadman
 Jonathan Waugh

In attendance: **Pat Harris** - **Town Clerk**
 Hayley Carter - **Deputy Clerk**
 County Councillor Andrew Joy
 7 Members of the press or public

65 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors Ben Hamlin, Barbara Tansey and Mark Boyce-Churn

66 **Town Mayor's Announcements**

The Deputy Mayor welcomed all members of the public and press who were attending the meeting, requested that members remain for a few minutes at the end of the meeting for an announcement, and proposed that the County Councillor's report be moved into Public Questions as he had to leave early. This was agreed.

67 **Minutes of the last meetings held on 1st November 2023**

On the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Hill, it was

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the 1st November 2023

All in favour

68 **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**

No Declarations of Interest were noted.

69 **Questions to the Council**

69.1 Email correspondence from Selborne Parish Council re joint request for help on closure of the B3004 had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting and was duly noted.

- 69.2 Anthony Furnival questioned whether (regarding agenda item 7) Alton Dental, as a profitable organisation, is a good use of public money.
- 69.3 Pat Lerew had comments / questions about agenda items 7 and 11. It was agreed she could ask her question about item 7 at that point in the meeting. Regarding item 11, she stated that she had not been aware that work had previously been agreed on the Assembly Room drains. There was flooding over Christmas and New Year and her staff had had the unpleasant task of having to clean up the mess. She felt that if the work had been done six months ago this would not have happened. The Clerk clarified that some work was done at the time, following a survey on the drains, but that there had been a question over the ownership of the section of drains in which part of the problem was and further problems had arisen since that survey was done, which was why more work was required. The building and drains are old and so problems will inevitably occur from time to time.
- 69.4 County Councillor Andrew Joy reported that Hampshire County Council is facing substantial financial challenges in 2025-26. It has planned two years ahead for some time and this has left it in a much better position than many other councils. A consultation has been launched which outlines potential savings to the budget of £90 million, but actual necessary savings required to balance the books are closer to £132 million, leaving a shortfall of £42 million. This may involve going down almost to statutory duties, of which adults' and children's services and health and social care are the main ones. It therefore looks as though there will be some drastic changes, which can be quite emotive. He invited questions from councillors. Councillor Bayliss asked, as there is a cap on the amount by which council tax can be raised without a referendum; is now the time to hold that referendum? Councillor Joy replied that this is unlikely as not many people will vote to pay more tax, especially at a time when money is so tight. Councillor Chubb asked by how much HCC plan to increase council tax. Councillor Joy replied 5%. Councillor Hill asked, as there has no doubt been a push to increase efficiency within the County Council itself, already, how much scope is there left to cut costs? Councillor Joy replied none – they have some excellent officers who are very resourceful and who are always looking for better, more efficient ways of doing things. The 'elastic limit' has been reached.
- 69.5 County Councillor Andrew Joy added that he had asked that the Town Council be kept informed concerning the B3004 closure.

70 **Community Grants 2024/25 for approval including Event Grants for approval**

A total of 7 applications were received.

1. On the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Hill, it was

RESOLVED

To approve the Community Grant for Alton Community Centre £8000 (eight thousand pounds), payable in two tranches, April and October 2024

2. On the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Eyre, it was

RESOLVED

To approve the Community Grant for Alton Stroke Support Group £500 (five hundred pounds)

3. On the proposal of Councillor O'Brien, seconded by Councillor Hill, it was

RESOLVED

To approve the Community Grant for Bushy Leaze Family Support £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) payable in two tranches, April and October 2024

4. On the proposal of Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor Chubb, it was

RESOLVED

To approve the Community Grant for Home-Start Hampshire (Alton) £5000 (five thousand pounds) payable in two tranches, April and October 2024

5. On the proposal of Councillor Treacher, seconded by Councillor Hill, it was

RESOLVED

To approve the Community Grant for The Friendship Café £1,130 (one thousand one hundred and thirty pounds)

6. On the proposal of Councillor Treacher, seconded by Councillor Wadman, it was

RESOLVED

To approve the Community Grant for Victim Support £100 (one hundred pounds)

7. On the proposal of Councillor Treacher, seconded by Councillor Wadman, it was

RESOLVED

To approve the Event Grant for Jane Austen Regency Week £500 (five hundred pounds)

71 **Neighbourhood CIL Grants for approval**

A total of 11 grant applications had been approved with 4 failing to meet the qualifying criteria as published under the CIL Grant Policy. Pat Lerew acknowledged that Alton Community Centre had wrongly applied for 100% funding but questioned why the work to the Community Centre wall was also refused on the grounds of 'revenue funding' when the grant policy allows for maintenance of infrastructure. She stated that grant applications take a lot of time and effort and they would not want to wrongly resubmit an application. The Town Clerk said she would clarify in writing.

Councillors then considered the remaining 7 qualifying grants.

1. On the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Hill, it was

RESOLVED

To approve the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Grant to:

Applicant A Wooteys School Campus – Electric Gates £10,000 (ten thousand pounds)

2. On the proposal of Councillor O'Brien, seconded by Councillor Treacher, it was

RESOLVED

To approve the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Grant to:

Applicant B Amery Hill Residents Association – Brewery Heritage Trail £22,000 (twenty two thousand pounds)

3. On the proposal of Councillor Chubb, seconded by Councillor Hill, it was

RESOLVED

To approve the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Grant to:

Applicant C Alton Cricket Club – Carpeting of cricket nets £8,000 (eight thousand pounds)

4. On the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Hill, it was

RESOLVED

To defer the decision on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Grant for Applicant F, Alton Dental – Expansion of dental practice £20,000, to the February meeting, in order for the Town Clerk to prepare wording for a condition to be attached to the grant.

5. On the proposal of Councillor Kellerman, seconded by Councillor Wadman, it was

RESOLVED

To approve the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Grant to:

Applicant G Allen Gallery & Garden – Expansion of gallery offering & upgrade of garden £15,000 (fifteen thousand pounds) and subject to the granting of planning permission

6. On the proposal of Councillor O'Brien, seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

RESOLVED

To approve the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Grant to:

Applicant I Alton Town Council – Development of a community office/meeting space £5,900 (five thousand, nine hundred pounds)

7. On the proposal of Councillor Chubb, seconded by Councillor Eyre, it was

RESOLVED

To approve the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Grant to:
Applicant J Treloars – Purchase of an electric bus £10,000 (ten thousand pounds)

72 **Budget and Precept 2024/25**

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

RESOLVED to

1. Approve the budget and precept request for 2024/25 in the sum of £851,976.11 (eight hundred and fifty-one thousand, nine hundred and seventy six pounds and eleven pence) representing a 3% increase
2. Approve the revised budget for 2023/2024 to enable the appropriate virements to be actioned.

The vote was carried unanimously.

73 **Auto Speed Watch**

On the proposal of Councillor Hill, seconded by Councillor O'Brien, it was

RESOLVED to

1. Retrospectively approve the submission of the application to EHDC for two high-tech speed cameras
2. The location for the fixed devices on the Basingstoke Road between its junction with Pertuis Avenue and the roundabout at New Odiham Road/Lenten Street as endorsed by Hampshire Police – lamp posts 32 and 51
3. Subject to evaluation as to the effectiveness of the devices at the end of the first year, Alton Town Council would assume responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of the devices

All in favour

74 **Account to 31st December 2023, Internal Audit Reports and Updates to Financial Regulations**

On the proposal of Councillor Don Hammond, seconded by Councillor Peter Wadman, it was

RESOLVED to approve

1. The balance sheet dated 31st December 2023
2. The Income and Expenditure account to 31st December 2023
3. The bank reconciliations for the Unity Account and the CCLA Deposit Account
4. The Payments over £500 covering 30th September to 31st December 2023

All in favour

75 **Assembly Rooms Drainage**

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

RESOLVED to approve the additional spend of £1,250 for drainage works at the Assembly Rooms to be undertaken by Metro Rod.

Committee also authorised the Town Clerk to make a ‘thank-you’ payment to those who had been involved with cleaning up the flooding over the Christmas and New Year period.

76 **Landlords Consent: Alton F.C.**

On the proposal of Councillor Chubb, seconded by Councillor Kellerman, it was

RESOLVED to grant Landlord’s Consent to Alton FC for the purpose of submitting a grant application to the Howdens Kitchens & England Football Grassroots Clubs Programme

77 **To receive a report from and ask questions of the County Councillor & District Councillor Representatives**

NOTED

78 **To receive a report from the Kings Arms**

NOTED

79 **To receive the Minutes from the Climate Change Committee**

The Minutes from the Climate Change Committee of 18th October were duly noted.

NOTED

The meeting closed at 20.20.