

**ALTON TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2025 AT 7.00PM AT THE TOWN HALL**

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**Present:        Councillor    Annette Eyre (Town Mayor)  
                                 Matthew Bayliss  
                                 John Chubb  
                                 Don Hammond  
                                 Graham Hill  
                                 Matthew Kellermann  
                                 Janice Treacher  
                                 Jonathan Waugh**

**In attendance:        Pat Harris                                -        Town Clerk  
                                 Hayley Carter                           -        Deputy Clerk  
                                 11 Members of the public  
                                 County Councillor Andrew Joy  
                                 District Councillor Emily Young**

**108    Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors Mark Boyce-Churn, Nick O'Brien, Doug Richards, Barbara Tansey, and Peter Wadman.

**109    Town Mayor's Announcements**

1. The Town Mayor welcomed both councillors and members of the public to the meeting and reminded the meeting that the Council's Pancake Race would be held on 18<sup>th</sup> February in the Public Gardens, and everyone would be welcome to come along and support the event.
2. The Town Mayor then reminded all those attending that in accordance with the Council's published Recording of Meetings Policy, as displayed on the doors and the table at the back of the hall, anyone wishing to make any recording of a meeting must let the Chair of the meeting know prior to or at the start of the meeting.  
If anyone does not wish to be recorded, they must make the Chair of the meeting aware. No filming of any member of the public is allowed without their consent, or of any child or vulnerable person without the consent of them and their parent, guardian or carer.  
In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12 paragraph 41 (1) only the official signed minutes of the council and its committees will be recognised as the formal, statutory and legally binding record of a meeting.

**110    Minutes of the Full Council Meetings held on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

Councillor Hill commented that as usual it was an excellent set of minutes.

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

**RESOLVED**  
**to APPROVE the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Chubb, Hammond, Hill, Treacher and Waugh

Against: Councillor Kellermann

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

No Declarations of Interest were noted.

112 **Correspondence Received and Questions to the Council**

The Town Mayor invited members of the public to speak.

112.1 Sarah Gulliford from ACAN thanked Alton Town Council for all their support over the past years and spoke about their current activities and how they were keen to maintain and expand these and continue the relationship with the Town Council.

113 **Alton Neighbourhood Plan**

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

**RESOLVED**  
**To approve the recommendation to pursue Option 3b and continue with a Neighbourhood Plan, with council being more hands-on and leading on it themselves**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Chubb, Hammond, Hill, Treacher and Waugh

Against: Councillor Kellermann

113.2 On the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

**RESOLVED**  
**To approve the appointment of new consultants to provide professional planning advice**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

113.3 Councillor Hill proposed an amendment: to remove the words ‘Steering Group’ from the recommendation. This was seconded by Councillor Kellermann and all voted in favour, thus the amendment was carried.

Councillor Kellermann proposed a further amendment that any and all meetings of the Task & Finish Group be held in public in the manner of a committee. Councillors Hammond and Bayliss asserted that while they were not in any way against this, it should be a matter for the Terms of Reference of the Task & Finish Group, not this resolution. Councillor Kellermann was satisfied with this and withdrew his proposed amendment.

Thus, on the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Kellermann, it was

**RESOLVED**

**To agree in principle with the establishing of a new Task & Finish Group to draft an Alton Neighbourhood Plan 3 and to seek Expressions of Interest from individuals who wish to be considered to sit on the newly formed group**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

**114 County and District Councillor Quarterly Reports**

County Councillor Andrew Joy provided a detailed verbal update on Hampshire County Council’s unsuccessful request to Central Government to raise Council Tax by 15% and Cabinet’s decision not to therefore take it to a referendum. He then went on to speak about devolution and the postponement of the elections which had just been confirmed that day by the Government.

District Councillor Emily Young provided District Council updates as follows:

- the pressing need to progress the Local Plan as quickly as possible – while Alton is somewhat protected because of their current Neighbourhood Plan, places elsewhere within the district are experiencing high levels of speculative development.
- Acknowledged the issues with the new planning system software which EHDC has installed, advising that it has caused a lot of problems for EHDC officers as well as the Town Council and other statutory consultees, and informed the meeting that they have set up a Task Force to try to resolve the problems.
- In noting the increased fees in car parks advised that Alton’s District Councillors are trying gain agreement to ensure that the revenue generated from parking fees is invested back into the car parks, sorting out surfaces and so on, particularly in Lady Place.
- There was continuing concern regarding the issues residents are experiencing with Customer Service at EHDC and their inability to contact the District Council. She had been instrumental in trying to get EHDC to provide a presence in Alton but was told that the new virtual system that they are rolling out would be available from March and they would like to see how that goes first.

- Spoke briefly about how devolution would affect EHDC.

The Town Clerk asked two questions:

1. Why was the planning system implemented without rigorous testing, especially considering the system was taken offline for a significant period at the end of last year.
2. Why are people still being sent letters asking them to present their proof of ID to EHDC when there is nowhere for them to present it. The Town Council is inundated with people trying to present it to someone in their offices when they actually need to take it into Petersfield. Many of the people have no way of getting to the offices in Petersfield and it is not fair that these letters are being sent to people asking them to do this when EHDC are refusing to provide a presence in the town.

Councillor Young said she was unaware of the letters being sent out requesting this and would refer this back to officers.

Councillor Kellermann said that he had personal experience of trying to see someone at the new EHDC offices and that they are incredibly hostile to anyone going in without an appointment. He went on to point out that trying to get hold of any EHDC officer on the phone is *hellish* and communications from EHDC are *appalling*.

Councillor Bayliss added that one would assume, with Alton being the largest and only Tier-1 settlement in East Hampshire, that its District Councillors would have some clout, especially if they speak with one voice, but they just seem to keep being batted away. He stressed how important it is that there is some EHDC presence in the town.

Councillor Young reiterated that she has entered a request and proposed a budget amendment to provide this presence, but that she has been told they wish to pursue their new virtual system in the short term.

## 115 **Evaluation of Grant Applications**

### 115.1 **Community Grants**

The Town Clerk reminded the meeting that against a budget of £30,000, twelve applications totalling £84,145.42 had been received. Councillors had therefore been asked to consider the applications very carefully in line with the Grants Policy.

She also reminded Councillors that all grants awarded over £2,000 will be paid in two tranches. In accordance with the Local Government Act (LGA) 1972 S.137A, where a grant more than £2,000 has been provided to an organisation, that organisation must furnish the Council with a statement in writing of those funds had been used. A set of accounts which contains the required information is sufficient. Alton Town Council will request that the information be provided prior to the second tranche being paid.

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote on each item.

1. On the proposal of Councillor Eyre, seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

**RESOLVED**  
**to award no grant to Alton Beer Festival**

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Chubb, Hammond, Hill, Treacher and Waugh  
Against: Councillor Kellermann

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

**RESOLVED**  
**to award a S.137 Community Grant to Alton Climate Action Network (ACAN) in the sum of £3,590 (three thousand, five hundred and ninety pounds)**

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Hammond, Hill, Treacher and Waugh  
Against: Councillor Kellermann  
Abstained: Councillor Chubb

3. On the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

**RESOLVED**  
**to award a S.137 Community Grant to Alton Community Association (CIO) in the sum of £6,000 (six thousand pounds)**

All in favour.

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

**RESOLVED**  
**to award a S.137 Community Grant to Alton Counselling Service for the sum of £1,000 (one thousand pounds)**

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Chubb, Hammond, Kellermann, Treacher and Waugh  
Abstained (as he is a trustee): Councillor Hill

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

**RESOLVED**  
**to award a S.137 Community Grant to Basingstoke & Alton Cardiac Rehab Charity in the sum of £1,778.40 (one thousand, seven hundred and seventy-eight pounds and forty pence)**

All in favour.

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

**RESOLVED**

**to award a S.137 Community Grant to Bushy Leaze Family Support in the sum of £9,000 (nine thousand pounds)**

All in favour.

7. Citizens Advice East Hampshire withdrew their application prior to the meeting.

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

**RESOLVED**

**to award no grant to Dogs for Autism**

All in favour.

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

**RESOLVED**

**to award a S.137 Community Grant to Home-Start Hampshire in the sum of £5,000 (five thousand pounds)**

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Chubb, Hill, Kellermann, Treacher and Waugh

Abstained: Councillor Hammond

10. On the proposal of Councillor Kellermann, seconded by Councillor Hill, it was

**RESOLVED**

**to award no grant to Miniland Farm**

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Chubb, Hammond, Hill, Kellermann and Waugh

Abstained: Councillor Treacher

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

**RESOLVED**

**to award a S.137 Community Grant to OpenSight (Hampshire Association for the care of the blind) in the sum of £1,000 (one thousand pounds)**

All in favour.

12. On the proposal of Councillor Kellermann, seconded by Councillor Bayliss, it was

**RESOLVED**

**to award a S.137 Community Grant to The Friendship Café for the sum of £1,402.50 (one thousand, four hundred and two pounds and fifty pence)**

All in favour.

**115.2 Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Applications**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote on each item.

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

**RESOLVED**

**to award £15,000 (fifteen thousand pounds) to Alton Town Council to assist with its public engagement programme with particular emphasis on King's Pond – the way forward, and the Alton Neighbourhood Plan, against a project cost of £20,000**

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Chubb, Hammond, Hill, Treacher and Waugh

Against: Councillor Kellermann

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

**RESOLVED**

**to award £2,540 (two thousand, five hundred and forty pounds) to Holybourne Theatre to assist in the purchase of new fire doors, against a project cost of £3,840**

All in favour.

3. On the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

**RESOLVED**

**to award Alton Town Council £80,617 (eighty thousand, six hundred and seventeen pounds) to retrofit ATC properties: the Town Hall, against a project cost of £109,616**

All in favour.

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

**RESOLVED**

**to award Alton Town Council £14,294 (fourteen thousand, two hundred and ninety-four pounds) to install an all-weather surface for the Community Canopy in the Public Gardens, against a project cost of £41,652**

All in favour.

5. On the proposal of Councillor Kellermann, seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

**RESOLVED**

**to award Alton Town Council £14,353 (fourteen thousand, three hundred and fifty-three pounds) to install retractable privacy screens in Unit 16, Market Square, against a project cost of £16,403**

All in favour.

6. The application from ACAN did not meet the criteria required, thus on the proposal of Councillor Kellermann, seconded by Councillor Eyre, it was

**RESOLVED**

**not to award Neighbourhood CIL to ACAN for this project**

All in favour.

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

**RESOLVED**

**to award £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) to the Allen Gallery towards the major refurbishment costs, against a project cost of £2,402,652**

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Chubb, Hill, Kellermann, Treacher and Waugh

Abstained: Councillor Hammond

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

**RESOLVED**

**to award £9,100 (nine thousand, one hundred pounds) to Treloar College for a hoist replacement project, against a project cost of £137,410**

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Chubb, Hill, Treacher and Waugh

Against: Councillor Kellermann

Abstained: Councillor Hammond



**115.3 Event Grant Application**

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

**RESOLVED**

**To award an S137 Event Grant to Alton Lions for the sum of £400 (four hundred pounds)**

All in favour.

**116 Evaluation of Invitation to Tender for Tree Works and to approve contractor**

On the proposal of Councillor Hammond, seconded by Councillor Treacher, it was

**RESOLVED to**

**Appoint Contractor C (Green Frontiers) at a cost of £17,743.50**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

**117 Legal Agreements**

117.1 Licence to Occupy to trade from the Kiosk in the Public Gardens and from the Horse Box in Anstey Park.

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

**RESOLVED**

**to approve a 3-year Licence to Occupy to Mr. & Mrs Saltiel trading as Capra Espresso from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2028 with a review to be undertaken at the end of the Year 1.**

All in favour.

117.2 S106 Deed of Variation Agreement in respect of Land to the east of Will Hall Farm.

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

**RESOLVED to**

- (i) Approve Council signing the S106 Deed of Variation required in order that EHDC release the sum of £285,309.95 which is to be placed to an Earmarked Reserve for the specific purpose of Refurbishment of the two pavilions (Harry Baker & Charles Read) at the Jubilee Playing Fields site**
- (ii) Approve the “up front” payment of all parties’ legal feeds in the sum of £5,173 plus any additional disbursements as notified and agreed, prior to receipt of the sum to be released by EHDC**

- (iii) **Approve the Town Clerk to actively continue negotiations in seeking any potential claim of interest accrued on the principle sum for the time that EHDC have held these funds**

All in favour.

- 117.3 Legal Agreement with Crest Nicholson to allow a sewer connection pipe across Alton Town Council land at Treloar Heights.

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

**RESOLVED**

**to approve entering into a Legal Agreement with Crest Nicholson to allow a sewer connection pipe across its land in return for a compensation figure of £20,000.**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

- 117.4 Licence to Occupy with South East Water to permit a structure housing a booster pump on Town Council land at Treloar Heights.

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

**RESOLVED**

**to agree to a Licence to Occupy that part of Alton Town Council owned land at the entrance to the Treloar Heights site to South East Water to permit the erection of a permanent metal structure for the purpose of housing a booster pump at Treloar Heights and authorise the Town Clerk to seek the best possible financial benefit for the Council.**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

- 117.5 The Town Clerk provided a verbal update on a request from Citizens Advice to renew their current lease for a further period. Details are still being worked through and will be brought back to Full Council at a future date.

118 **AutoSpeedWatch System: Continuation of permanent placement of the devices on Basingstoke Road**

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

**RESOLVED**

**To extend the Licence to use the two cameras on the Basingstoke Road for a further period of 12 months at a total cost of £396**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

119 **Non-Financial Risk Assessment Report and Internal Review of Health & Safety Files**

Councillors extended their thanks to Councillors Graham Hill and Janice Treacher for undertaking the inspection of the Councils files. On the proposal of Councillor Hammond, seconded by Councillor Bayliss, it was

**RESOLVED to**

- (i) Approve the Non-Financial Risk Assessment Report as tabled**
- (ii) Note the inspection that was carried out and the report raised on the Council's Health & Safety files as undertaken by Councillors Graham Hill & Janice Treacher on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

120 **Statement of Accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025 & Internal Auditors Report (3<sup>rd</sup> report of 4 for 2024/25 Financial Year)**

The reports were circulated prior to the meeting as always for councillors' consideration. In particular, Members attention was drawn to the comments on the Internal Audit report relating to:

1. **Impartiality of the External Auditor. The internal auditor wrote:** *I have noted with some surprise the comment in the Minutes regarding a councillor being unable to "approve the external auditors report" on the basis of they could "not be sure of their impartiality". Please note that the external auditor is independently appointed by SAA (Small Authority Appointment Ltd). SAA is the sector lead limited company appointed by the Department of Communities & Local Government as the "specified person to, procure and appoint external auditors to smaller authorities in England, to perform the functions set out in the relevant legislation, and monitor delivery on the on-going audit contracts.*

*I can assure Council that the externally appointed auditor is independent of the decision making of the council, it is not under any influence of the council, it is not reliant on the individual fees of the council and is not influenced by the opinion it gives, i.e. its position*

*as auditor is not under threat of termination by issuing a qualified report. On this basis the external auditor can be considered impartial in its decision making.*

2. **Allotments – the internal auditor has raised the comment:** *the cost budget 320/4141 is over budget by £3984. I understand that council is given income & expenditure reports on a monthly basis and will have sight of this. However, I recommend that for avoidance of doubt that the Minutes show that council has been made aware of this and the implications. IN addition to this, the Minutes would show that council gives approval for continued spending, otherwise it could be argued that further spending would be against financial regulations.*

*I have just done a quick calculation, and it looks like £6,395 has been collected in allotment rents for 2025 of which 75% (£4,796) will be transferred into 2025/26. This reduces the total income to £8,536 but this is still greater than the expenditure of £7,875 so Allotment (320) is in the black by £661.*

Councillor Kellermann advised that he had not questioned the impartiality of the auditor, but he had merely said that he could not be sure that he had no relationship with the Town Clerk. The Deputy Clerk clarified that Councillor Kellermann had previously made that comment about the Internal Auditor, but this statement was about his comments concerning the External Auditor. The Town Clerk clarified for the record, and asked that it be minuted, that she has no relationship whatsoever outside of work with the Internal Auditor.

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

**RESOLVED**

**To confirm approval of:**

- 1. The balance sheet dated 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025**
- 2. The Income and Expenditure account to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025**
- 3. The bank reconciliations for the Unity Account and the CCLA Deposit & Property Fund Accounts**
- 4. The Payments over £500 covering 1<sup>st</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> January 2025**
- 5. To note the Internal Auditors Report for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Chubb, Hammond, Hill, Treacher and Waugh

Abstained: Councillor Kellermann

121 **Review of Alton Town Council Policies: Use of Public Open Spaces**

There was some discussion about how difficult the updated charges may be to implement and that it may be better to charge people a fee for running a class and so on for a set period at a set rate, rather than charging by the session. As a result of the discussions, Councillor Kellermann proposed an amendment that the policy be reviewed in six months. This was seconded by Councillor Eyre with all voting in favour, so the amendment was carried.

Thus, on the proposal of Councillor Kellermann, seconded by Councillor Hill, it was

**RESOLVED**

**To APPROVE the updated Use of Public Open Spaces Policy as tabled, with a review of the policy in six months.**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

122 **To receive minutes of the Climate Change Committee meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025**

Councillor Hill commented that they were an excellent set of minutes.

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

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

**RESOLVED**

**To approve the minutes of the Climate Change Committee meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025.**

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Chubb, Hammond, Hill, Treacher and Waugh

Abstained: Councillor Kellermann

123 **Consultations for Noting**

**123.1 Strengthening the Standards and Conduct Framework for local authorities in England' closing date 26th February 2025**

Councillor Bayliss stated that this was a very laborious consultation and was very subjective, and so he could say no way the Council would be able to agree on a unified response. He therefore proposed an amendment to the recommendation; that councillors only submit individual responses with no response going from the council. This was seconded by Councillor Eyre with all voting in favour, the amendment was carried.

Thus, on the proposal of Councillor Bayliss, seconded by Councillor Hammond, it was

**RESOLVED**

**Not to submit a response on behalf of the Town Council, but that councillors submit their own individual responses.**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

**123.2 South Downs National Park – Have your say on the Local Plan Review – 8 week consultation opening on 20<sup>th</sup> January**

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

**RESOLVED**

**To provide a response to the South Downs National Park Local Plan review and in particular comment on the housing numbers proposed therein**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

In favour: Councillors Eyre, Bayliss, Chubb, Hammond, Hill, Treacher and Waugh

Abstained: Councillor Kellermann

The Town Clerk will prepare a draft response for inclusion on the agenda for the 5<sup>th</sup> March meeting.

**124 Service Level Agreement Reports for noting**

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

**RESOLVED**

**to formally acknowledge receipt of:**

- 1. The quarterly Report from The Kings Arms for the period 1<sup>st</sup> September – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024**
- 2. The first annual Report from Dementia Friendly operating out of the Alton Assembly Rooms for the year to January 2025**

Councillor Kellermann requested a recorded vote.

All in favour.

**125 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

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

**RESOLVED**

**That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 section 1, subsection 2, and, as per subsection 3A, where the public are excluded from a meeting of a relevant local government body under subsection (2), the body may also prevent any person from reporting on the meeting using methods- (a) which can be used without that person's presence at the meeting, and**

**(b)which enable persons not present at the meeting to see or hear the proceedings at the meeting as it takes place or later.**

All in favour.

The Deputy Clerk also left the meeting.

## **CONFIDENTIAL SECTION**

### **126 Code of Conduct Complaints**

An update was provided as per the confidential report.

### **127 Recruitment**

A verbal update was provided by the Chair of the Staffing Committee

The meeting closed at 9.15pm