
**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 13 MAY 2026 AT 7.00PM AT THE TOWN HALL**

Present: **Councillor** **Annette Eyre (Town Mayor)**
 Matthew Bayliss
 Graham Hill
 Barbara Tansey
 Lorna Woodcroft

In attendance: **Tom Horwood (Town Clerk)**
 Hayley Carter (Deputy Clerk)

6 members of the public and press

185 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Chris Botten, Mark Boyce-Churn, Don Hammond, Matthew Kellermann, Nick O'Brien and John Quincey.

186 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation

No declarations of interest were received.

187 Town Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for coming.

She announced that her and Samantha Brown's abseiling down the Spinnaker Tower in Portsmouth on Saturday has so far raised over £1,700 for St Michael's Hospice and the link to donate is still open if anyone else wishes to support them.

188 Written Representations from the Public

Correspondence was received in advance of the meeting from District Councillor Ginny Boxall, Carol Palmer and Dr Jannine Stoodley, all regarding agenda item 3.1: Planning application EHDC-26-0331-CONVR. It was circulated to councillors on 11 May and published under supplementary papers on the Council website.

The Mayor invited those present to speak should they wish to add anything or answer any questions from councillors.

District Councillor Ginny Boxall said that she just needed to emphasise the rarity of this landscape. The South Downs National Park have gone to great lengths and great

expense to try to replicate what is found naturally on this site. She had sent in photos of the huge piles of earth which have been removed from the building site and piled up, which the Deputy Clerk had printed and circulated during the meeting for councillors to see. She added that when Selbourne Park was built the developer had removed the soil as they went and it was unfortunate that Crest had neglected to do the same.

Carol Palmer said she was not sure whether it was an enforcement issue as restricted access to the site meant that it was difficult to see exactly where the soil was piled.

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

RESOLVED

To note the written representations from the public.

All councillors voted in favour.

189 Questions and Statements by the Public

189.1 Regarding agenda item 3.1 (Planning application EHDC-26-0331-CONVR), Simon Sherborne said he had the impression that the meadow was already built on. He said he has been watching mountains of soil being moved from A to B and back to A over and over and he believes damage has already been done to this land. He said that he believes Crest should be held to the original plan as the only benefit to changing it seemed to be to save the developer money. Any disruption to new residents with the lorry movements would be a short-term thing and would be beneficial in the long-run. The disruption to existing residents has been significant for years.

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

RESOLVED

To note the questions and statements by the public.

All councillors voted in favour.

190 Planning Applications

190.1 EHDC-26-0331-CONVR, Land at Lord Mayor Treloar Hospital Site Chawton Park Road, Alton, Hampshire

Councillor Eyre proposed that the Deputy Clerk be allowed to pull together appropriate responses to the application after listening to councillors' comments. This was seconded by Councillor Hill.

There was extensive discussion on the application, and the following comments were recorded from Councillors:

- Changing this condition to allow the spreading of soil over the site would be highly detrimental to the ecology
- It is a unique site with environmental sensitivity and importance
- It is important to preserve as much of the chalk landscape as possible with the development that has been permitted
- Spreading soil over the landscape would destroy it and is not compatible with protecting it
- It is a site of nature conservation which campaigners fought hard to save twelve years ago
- It is a very special place and to even consider covering it with top soil is completely inappropriate and has everything to do with cost and nothing to do with any other genuine benefits
- The Council should object strongly to this
- There has already been a big compromise between the development and preserving this site of special interest and we need to put in the strongest possible objection to this variation
- Part of our job is to highlight to EHDC that we regard this land as being environmentally very important and that the protection of this landscape is paramount
- Mental health is an important factor for people who use this public open space
- It is one of the 'Six Hills of Alton'
- There is a balance to be struck between the public use of the site as an open space and the preservation of the chalk grassland
- The Council recognises the impact of noise on mental health and so this soil needs to be dealt with quickly when removing it from site so the lorry movements do not go on over an excessive amount of time

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

RESOLVED

To authorise the Deputy Clerk to respond to East Hampshire District Council on planning application EHDC-26-0331-CONVR, Land at Lord Mayor Treloar Hospital Site Chawton Park Road, Alton, Hampshire, reflecting the points raised in the debate.

All councillors voted in favour.

190.2 EHDC-26-0339-FUL, Proposed Retirement Complex, Courage Avenue, Alton, Hampshire

Councillor Eyre proposed that the Deputy Clerk be allowed to pull together appropriate responses to the application after listening to councillors' comments. This was seconded by Councillor Bayliss.

There was extensive discussion on the application, where the following comments were recorded from Councillors:

- There does not appear to be adequate parking for the nursery as there are only eighteen, of which it says fifteen are for staff, leaving only three for parents at pick up and drop off time and other visitors
- Details of the walkway across to Drayman's Way seem to be missing. It is difficult to see what it will look like
- Early years provision is greatly needed and it is more important to get this facility in the centre of town; as the site is constrained it is better to use the space for this than for additional parking when there are other town centre car parks nearby
- With active travel and better public transport there should be less need for parking in the future
- Lots of young families would be walking there. If you think about where it is in the context of the town there should be plenty of people able to do so
- Parking is not a reason to reject this application but we do need to flag if it is non-compliant with parking policy and make the development the best it can be
- Overall it is a good proposal for the site and should be welcomed
- It is particularly good to have the assisted living

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

RESOLVED

To authorise the Deputy Clerk to respond to East Hampshire District Council on planning application EHDC-26-0339-FUL, Proposed Retirement Complex, Courage Avenue, Alton, Hampshire, reflecting the points raised in the debate.

All councillors voted in favour.

The meeting adjourned for five minutes for a comfort break.

190.3 EHDC-26-0413-FUL, Barclays Bank Plc High Street, Alton, Hampshire

Councillor Eyre proposed that the Deputy Clerk be allowed to pull together appropriate responses to the application after listening to councillors' comments. This was seconded by Councillor Hill.

There was discussion on the application, with councillors agreeing that this is a good local business. The majority present wished to support the application and there were no objections.

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

RESOLVED

To authorise the Deputy Clerk to respond to East Hampshire District Council on planning application EHDC-26-0413-FUL, Barclays Bank Plc High Street, Alton, Hampshire, reflecting the points raised in the debate.

All councillors voted in favour.

191 **Extinguishment of Highway Rights – Land at Neatham Grange, Lower Neatham Mill Lane, Alton GU34 4NP – 21796432**

Councillor Hill proposed that the Council authorise the Town Clerk to submit an appropriate response to the Extinguishment of Highway Rights application 21796432, based on the points made by councillors.

This was seconded by Councillor Bayliss. No objections to the application were raised. It was

RESOLVED to

Authorise the Town Clerk to submit an appropriate response to the Extinguishment of Highway Rights application 21796432, based on the points made by councillors.

All councillors voted in favour.

192 **Appointment of Climate Change Consultant**

Councillor Tansey proposed that the Council approve the appointment of the independent consultant recommended by the Climate Change Committee to undertake an audit and review of its carbon footprint and of the Climate Change Strategy Action Plan.

This was seconded by Councillor Woodcroft, and it was

RESOLVED to

approve the appointment of the independent consultant Alan Williams, recommended by the Climate Change Committee, to undertake an audit and review of its carbon footprint and of the Climate Change Strategy Action Plan at a cost of £1,800.

All councillors voted in favour.

The meeting closed at 8.05pm