

Ongar

Town Council

Bansons Way, CM5 9AS
01277 365348



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www.ongartowncouncil.gov.uk

Minutes of a meeting of the full Town Council held on 16th January 2024 at 8pm Held at the Council Offices, Bansons Way, Ongar CM5 9AS

MINUTES

01.25 PRESENT & APOLOGIES

Present: Cllr Gunn (Chairman), Cllr Walton, Cllr Barrell, Cllr Mendoza, Cllr Eydmann, Cllr Feetham, Cllr Reay, Cllr Vaz, Cllr Roberts, Cllr Eydmann
Also Present: Debra Murray Town Clerk

Press (0), Public (0)

Apologies: Cllr Cole, Cllr O'Neill

Motion. To accept the apologies given

Proposed: Cllr Walton **Seconded:** Cllr Eydmann

Apologies received from District Councillor Dadd, and to say nothing new to report following her report to the Planning Committee on 15th January 25.

02.25 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Motion: To **AGREE** the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 19th December 2024

Resolved: The Minutes of the Full Town Council are approved a true record of 19th December 2024

Proposed: Cllr Walton **Seconded:** Cllr Eydmann

03.25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

04.25 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC & PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None Present.

05.25 CLERKS REPORT/CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence

Since returning after the Christmas break, I received an email from a resident whose husband had died unfortunately, he has a cardiac arrest and she was advised to go and get the defib from the telephone box outside Senners. Her son went to get the defibrillator however it was missing. As you will imagine this was very distressful for the family.

The resident emailed me to let me know this had happened but mostly to ensure it doesn't happen again. This set me off on an investigation, I approached the British Heart Foundation and East of England Ambulance Service to see if I could get to the bottom of the situation. This week I received a call from the Ambulance Service who confirmed the following the defib is not in situ however it was put into service on 12th December but was missing when required on 16th December. There is a guardian for the defib in town but due to GDPR laws they were unable to supply a name.

I received an update from Les Hawkins with regards to the Special Constable situation but unfortunately it was no movement on the vacancy.

A Thank You was received following the donation to St Johns Ambulance for their assistance at Remembrance Sunday.

IT

All systems are moving forwards and staff laptops have been moved to professional accounts at a cost of £120 each. They now can access the data and their emails. An encrypted download of historic data is now in the safe and the old data will be deleted from the old portal.

Streetlights

I have obtained a quotation to have an inspection and testing survey on the streetlights we have carried out £2,625.00. I cannot find evidence of this previously being carried out as our provider who repairs out lights is not able to offer this service.

Public Toilets High Street

Following calls from residents regarding the toilet refurbishment in the high street. It appears that although it should have been for 2 day closure there is an issue with the new steel door. From what I have been told there is a nib on the inside of the door which when shut could mean that you cannot open the door, hence trapping you in the toilet. EFDC are looking for a remedy.

Meetings

I was involved with a meeting with Cllr Gunn and Cath Honeywell this week regarding May Festival. Cllr Gunn will report on this.

MOP Correspondence

Marden Ash resident has requested a replacement to a broken signage

44 Moreton Road No Update

I have also received an email from the resident at Love Lane regarding the tree overhanging into his garden, further to the council meeting in November I am still waiting for another 2 quotes which I will be chasing up.

JPP Tree work still awaiting additional quotes.

Leases no update from solicitors as yet.

Training undertaken this month no paid course, self teaching the cemetery part of Rialtas. Memorial Topple Testing has been booked for April.

06.25 REPORTS & MEMBERS REPORTS

-Chairmans Report

Chairmans line management meeting with Town Clerk to review the first 3-month probation period

I am pleased to report that I met with Debbie the Town Clerk on Wednesday 8th January to complete the first probation review. A detailed discussion took place recording the evidence of progress towards the initial goals set, Debbie has now passed her 3-month probationary period. Signed copies of the paperwork have been stored securely. The next stage will be in April, a date and time to be agreed.

Debbie has made a real positive impact on operational matters, and I would like to personally congratulate her on all her hard work.

Cllr Gunn chairman and Cllr Walton meeting with district councillor Cllr Mary Dadd

The Chairman and chair of the planning committee met with Cllr Mary Dadd on Monday 6th January 2025 for an informal meeting at the district councillor's request in the town council offices, to improve communication and partnership.

Chairman Cllr Gunn attended the monthly Ongar Wine Circle meeting

I visited the Ongar Wine Circle on Tuesday 14th January as part of meeting groups and societies in Ongar on behalf of Ongar Town Council, my thanks go to Cllr Chris Reay for this introduction. It was a pleasure to meet the people from the Wine Circle, learn more about the group and take part in the activities, my thanks also go to the committee members Linda Clark, Phillippa Giles, Leonie Harvey, Melissa Jackson and Barbara Stock for making me feel so welcome. The circle meets on the second Tuesday of the month in the united Reform church Hall, Ongar Wine Circle is a friendly club established over 50 years ago with around forty members who enjoy trying new wines and finding out more about the world of wine. A typical evening would include presentations and tasting of 4 or 5 wines based on a theme such as a specific wine area or grape variety. A letter of thanks has gone to the committee on behalf of the Town council, via the chairman of the council.

Chairman and Ongar Town Council Clerk meet with Cath Honeywell (Chair of Ongar Town Festival Steering Group)

Both the chairman and town clerk met with Cath Honeywell on Monday 13th January in the Town Council offices. This informal meeting was for Cath to outline her proposals for this year's summer festival, a report has previously been sent to the town clerk as requested to help with planning the budget and precept for 2025/26.

On behalf of Ongar Town Council, we would like to thank her for her time and update. Cath will be formally meeting with the council during the year to update on plans.

Articles submitted for the February Edition of The Ongar News:

Ongar News – February 2024 Edition

Play areas

As a town council we are keen to ensure that all our play areas are used appropriately and are a benefit for all our residents. We are starting to make progress in upgrading and repairing some of our outdoor play equipment and would like to ensure that they remain fit for purpose for all to enjoy. We would therefore encourage our residents to look after these and report any issues to our town clerk.

Ongar Town Council Report 2024 and 'Who does what'

For those residents that were unable to attend last year's Annual Town Assembly a copy of the report can be found on our website. This also includes a useful 'who does what', this document outlines the roles and responsibilities for Ongar Town Council, Epping Forest District Council and Essex County Council. It is important that residents know who to go to if they have questions and we would encourage you to read this and contact the appropriate organisation.

Community Engagement with Ongar Town Council

As a council we would like to engage more with our community partners, continuing with one of our pledges in the Annual Town Assembly event in May 2024 and our Annual Report and value organisations that provide services to our community.

We would be very interested in meeting with our community groups to learn more about what you do and or perhaps an event.

We would firstly welcome an introductory meeting with any of our clubs/society's and organisations and look at how we can work more together in a more collaborative and friendly partnership.

If, you would like to book some time with the chairman, please email the Ongar Town Clerk on clerk@ongartowncouncil.gov.uk or alternatively call 01277 365348, as they hold my diary.

As reminder for updates, consultations and information on the Town Council can be found on our website :

<http://www.ongartowncouncil.gov.uk/>

Our Contact information is as follows:

Address: Ongar Town Council, Basons, Basons Way, Chipping Ongar, Essex, CM5 9AS
Telephone: 01277 365348 Email: clerk@ongartowncouncil.gov.uk

The office is normally open on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but it is best to call ahead to make sure there is someone there to meet you.

-District and County Councillors

Reports received from District Councillors – District Cllr Dadd stated that she had no further report to give other than what she gave to the Planning Committee on 15th January 2025.

07.24 FINANCIAL REPORTS

Finance reporting

- Members noted the receipts and payments up to the end of December 2024
- Members noted the list of budgetary information on all accounts

Motion: To approve receipts & payments up to the end of December 2024

Proposed: Cllr Roberts

Seconded: Cllr Barrell

08.25 Budget for 2025/26

Resolved. The Council approves a balanced budget of £343,025 with a £328,025 general expenditure plus £15,000 available to transfer to earmarked reserves. Proposed Cllr Mendoza
Seconded Walton Unanimous

Chairman **proposes** to suspend Standing Orders so allow the meeting to continue. **Seconded**
Cllr Eydmann

09.25 To approve a precept demand for 2025/26

Resolved. The council sets a precept demand of £313,275 being a 0.40% increase based on a tax base of 2,864 and representing a £0.31 increase per year on a Band D house. **Proposed** Cllr Barrell **Seconded** Cllr Reay Unanimous

10.25 Police Report

A report has been submitted and Noted from PC Shepherd updating the Council on year on year figures. He also stated that due to working shift patterns he will be unable to attend any 2025 meeting in person. The Chairman requested the Clerk to see if anyone could step in his place for the meetings. Clerk to advise Council.

128.24 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

In the event that the agenda contains Exempt (pink) pages.

There were NO items to be considered

113.24 ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Emergency Plan

Various Leases*

Disability Access – Look at Lease and Contact EFDC*

Revised Grant Guidance Form and Amount

VE Day Activity on the actual day Thursday 8th May

Twinning

- **Clerk is aware of these**

Meeting closed at 22:14