



**Minutes of a meeting of the FULL COUNCIL
Held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, BANSONS, BANSONS WAY, ONGAR
19th September 2019 commencing at 8 P.M.**

330/19 Those present and apologies for absence

Chairman Cllr Birch

Councillors Azzopardi, Browning, Feetham, Freeman, Reynolds, Piggott from minute 338/19

Also present The Locum Clerk. Two members of the public attended for 332/19.

Resolved. Apologies were received from Cllr Battersby, Cole, Dadd, Mendoza and Vaz. Proposed Cllr Reynolds seconded Cllr Browning and carried unanimously.

331/19 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

There were no declarations of interest made.

332/19 Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda previously notified to the Clerk.

Although the matter was not on the agenda, it was agreed to hear a statement from a resident who asked for the Town Council to co-ordinate efforts to return the Ongar Retained Fire station to seven-day-a-week operations. The resident pointed-out that community was unaware that the fire station was not open at weekends. Following another serious fire in the town, concern was expressed that the fire service took so long to attend when there was a tender standing-by but unusable for want of volunteer staff. The Council noted the concern and agreed to make representation to the Essex Fire Service asking how the service can be improved and what the community can do to help.

Action. The Clerk will write to Roger Hirst, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner requesting that action be taken to reinstate Ongar Fire Station to full-time availability and to ask what support the Town Council and local community can offer.

A resident raised concern about the damage to Acres Avenue which was addressed in minute 347/19.

Resolved. Agenda item 338/19 will be moved forward to be considered next. Proposed Cllr Birch and carried unanimously.

333/19 Correspondence

The bus shelter at Four Wantz.

The Councillors noted that the shelter was due to be replaced as part of works to the roundabout but later thought that the work had been cancelled. If the shelter is not to be replaced as part of a wider scheme, the Council can revert to their original decision to replace or refurbish the existing shelter.

Action. Before committing to any work, the Clerk will ask for confirmation of cancellation or rescheduling.

Heritage centre.

The correspondence was noted, and the Council was advised that there may be an opportunity to make more use of the castle grounds in future but discussions were at an early and tentative stage.

Castle Street development.

Following concerns expressed about the scale of building work at the site, the Planning authority have confirmed that development is compliant with the plans.

Cycleway.

Proposals for additional leisure facilities will be considered as part of the neighbourhood plan.

Parking in Sainsbury's car park.

Following a complaint about being charged to park in the supermarket car park, the resident was assured that the shop did refund ticket price for purchases over £5.

Essex Highways annual plan – email only

The Plan was noted.

334/19 Consultations

Policy Consultation E-Briefing 09/19 - Independent Review into Local Government Audit –email only.

Traffic restriction orders –email only.

Green Walk

Stanley Place

The Street.

The consultations were noted and no comments were made.

335/19 Reports from District and County Councillors

There were no District and County Councillors present.

336/19 To agree the Full Council meeting minutes of 15th August 2019

Resolved. The minutes of Full Council Meeting held on are approved as a true record. Proposed Cllr Browning seconded Cllr Azzopardi and carried with two abstentions from Councillors who were not present at that meeting.

337/19 To agree the Full Council meeting minutes of 20th August 2019

Resolved. The minutes of Full Council Meeting held on are approved as a true record. Proposed Cllr Reynolds seconded Cllr Browning and carried unanimously with two abstentions from Councillors who were not present at that meeting.

338/19 To receive application for co-option from Mr. Piggott.

Resolved. In compliance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of next item. Proposed Cllr Feetham seconded Cllr Browning and carried unanimously.

Mr. Piggott made a brief introduction and summarised his involvement in the community. The Council noted his Curriculum Vitae and Mr. Piggott withdrew.

Resolved. The Council accepts the application for co-option from Mr. Piggott. Proposed Cllr Browning seconded by Cllr Azzopardi and carried unanimously.

Cllr Piggott signed the declaration of acceptance which was witnessed by the Locum Clerk.

339/19 Finance Reporting.

a. The list of all payments up to the end of August 2019 was noted.

b. The list of budgetary information on all accounts was noted.

Resolved. The Council approves the budgetary information for June and notes the account balance of £59,282.72 agrees with the reconciliation. Proposed Cllr Reynolds seconded Cllr Feetham and carried unanimously.

340/19 Action report

The actions due on current tasks and projects were noted. It was confirmed that the bin referred to in action 1.9 referred to a dog waste bin.

341/19 To note Essex County Council's decision to resurface the high street.

It was confirmed that the work is scheduled to start in the current year and finish by March 2020, weather permitting. The proposed work will include the laying of an impressed paviour pattern on those areas that are currently covered by paviments. In the light of previous decisions by the Council in December 2018 (157/18) and August 2019 (328/19), the laying of impressed tarmac would not be consistent with the Council's decisions.

A prepared statement was read-out by Cllr Reynolds-

Ringway Jacobs, representing Essex County Council Highways initially contacted Ongar Town Council in February 2018, with the suggestion that imprinted asphalt was used where paving blocks presently exist. A meeting was arranged for the 25th. April when five Town Councillors were present, which included myself. It was purely fact finding for us and for Highways to seek our views. The conclusion was that imprinted asphalt was not appropriate, and the most effective course of action would be to use asphalt throughout. This would eliminate the potholes and be a relatively quick operation, such, that completion by the end of September was feasible. There was also the probability that resurfacing or repair work would be carried out between Basons Lane and the Four Wantz, continuing along the Fyfield Road to the Leisure Centre. However, from September onwards and without any action from ECC, the Ongar Neighbourhood Plan Community Group carried out research on suitable and appropriate materials, and subsequently promoted the use of cobbles where paviments presently exist. At the Full Council meeting held on 19th. December, the Council unanimously agreed that cobbles would be preferred to any other material for three locations. Essex County Council Highways were informed of that decision.

The first response from ECC, apparently sent to ECC councillor Maggie McEwen, was dated the 9th August 2019 where a case was made out for using imprinted asphalt only. There was no reference to cost being a consideration. Full Council met on 20th August, where the only agenda item was to consider using imprinted asphalt. Copies of the ECC communication were provided at that meeting, but it did not influence councillors in rejecting the motion.

ECC were notified of the OTC decision on 22nd August and a reply received on 29th August brought in a cost factor for the first time, which was an unbelievable "Extra Over" cost of £300,000 which roughly equates to the OTC precept.

It is my view that Ongar Town Council's position is that it does not want imprinted asphalt. ECC can oblige by laying plain asphalt throughout. Work will be carried out quicker and at less cost.

It was agreed that Council will advise Essex Highways that the council did not approve the use of impressed tarmac in lieu of cobbles and would prefer a plain surface if it is possible to alter the works at this stage.

Action. The Clerk will write to Essex Highways to inform them of the amendment to their specification.

342/19 To consider objections to development of Delimores Café.

The Council noted and approved the summary of objections prepared forwarded them to the Planning Authority.

343/19 To note submission to deconsecrate the Love Lane Chapel.

The Clerk confirmed that the first step in deconsecration was to get permission to remove the lectern, finial cross and bell. The Diocesan Advisory Committee will consider this in October. If permission is granted the Council will be free to advertise the request to deconsecrate the Chapel.

344/19 To consider funding repairs to Footpath 202/5.

The Council has been asked to authorise expenditure of £200 on the footpath from Love Lane to the Scout Hut. Essex County Council are responsible for maintaining the public right of way, but only for pedestrians. As the

land is owned by the Town Council, it can be managed to any higher standard if needed. Cllr Reynolds advised the Council that the footpath is lower than the surrounding open space and subject to flooding. Should the Council wish to do the work, the Scouts would be advised that any further repairs would be at their expense.

Resolved. The Council will spend £200 to maintain the path. Proposed Cllr Reynolds Seconded Cllr Birch and carried unanimously.

345/19 To consider revisions to the following policies.

- a. Grant funding
- b. CCTV Policy
- c. Environmental sustainability
- d. Health & Safety Policy
- e. Recording of meetings
- f. Records storage and security
- g. Reserves and virement
- h. St Martins Church Yard

Resolved. The procedures are approved as published. Proposed Cllr Birch seconded Cllr Browning and carried unanimously.

346/19 To consider audit programme for 2019 – 20.

The Council has appointed Audit Solutions as their Auditor for the current year, and based on their previous experience on the Town Council and Jubilee Park, have advised that two days auditing are necessary at £550 a day.

Resolved The Council authorizes one day for audit. Proposed Cllr Birch seconded Cllr Freeman and carried unanimously.

347/19 To consider installation of bollards at Acres Avenue.

The Council notes the request and approved the installation provided it meets the needs of residents and utility services.

Action. The Clerk will advise Essex Highways of the Council's approval.

348/19 CCTV contract update.

The Council were advised that the contract has been submitted to three contractors with a return date of Thursday 3rd October.

349/19 Car Parking Working Group.

OTF and OTC Met with EFDC to make the case that Ongar does not have a problem with commuters seeking cheap parking and therefore did not need the same restrictions. Ongar requires a parking policy that promotes the town. A request was made to establish free or discounted parking but it was realised that this would require a significant change in District Policy. The Council would not pursue the idea of adopting the car parks until the District Council had clarified their thoughts.

350/19 Neighbourhood Plan Sub Committee.

The final draft will be ready in September, and Councillors will have sufficient time to consider the paper prior to be scheduled to review the document before it is formally discussed and approved. .

351/19 Items for next agenda.

Formal endorsement of proposals for building alterations to Jubilee Park Pavilion.
Staffing levels and opening times for the Fire Station.