



**Minutes of the FULL COUNCIL meeting
Held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, BANSONS, BANSONS WAY, ONGAR
on 20th February 2020**

22/20 Those present and apologies for absence

Chairman Cllr Birch

Councillors Azzopardi, Battersby, Dadd, Feetham, Freeman, Mendoza, Piggott, Reynolds, Vaz.

Also present The Locum Clerk, Locum Burial Clerk, two members of the public.

Resolved. The council to accept apologies for absence from Cllrs Browning and Cole. Proposed Cllr Mendoza seconded Cllr Feetham and carried unanimously.

23/20 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

Cllr Reynolds declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda items 33 and 39.

Cllr Freeman declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 26, Croft Cottage.

24/20 Public participation.

There were two members of the public present who did not wish to speak.

25/20 To consider grant applications

Ongar United Reformed Church.

A resident reminded the Council that the National Association of Local Councils has issued guidance advising that the Local Government Act 1895 does not grant any power under which a Town Council may contribute to matters 'relating to affairs of the church or to ecclesiastical charities.' With this in mind, the Council deferred the decision until more information could be presented.

26/20 Correspondence

New prices for SOX lamps

The Council noted the price increase and reaffirmed their intention to replace SOX with LED. The Clerk will get a price for upgrading the whole stock. Cllr Dadd requested more information about wildlife friendly and light pollution reducing lighting. It was also asked if the Town Council could participate in the part-night lighting programme.

Ongar Leisure Centre closure.

The Correspondence was noted, and it was confirmed that neither the District or Town Councillors had any knowledge of impending closure and had good evidence that it was to continue for the foreseeable future.

Invitation from Ongar Academy to attend the Futures Academy programme.

It was noted that the Chairman will attend.

Compliance regarding the building work outside Croft Cottage

The correspondence was noted and it was confirmed that the District Council Planning Department was monitoring the work.

The Council have been advised that MP Architects LLP will put in a planning application for the changing rooms at Jubilee Park. This was noted as a courtesy; there is no formal application yet.

A Letter of acknowledgement for Twinning Association grant was noted.

Considering the letter and briefing note from Bloor Homes. The Council were advised that the developer Bloor Homes has acknowledged that the flyer was misleading. It was an early version with limited circulation, and it will be rewritten.

27/20 Consultations

The Statement of Principles under The Gambling Act 2005 was noted.

28/20 Reports from District and County Councillors

To receive reports from District and County Councillors on matters relating to Ongar.

Following question about the approval for six council houses to be built in Queensway and Millfield on the site of old garages. It was confirmed that the Town Council had already objected to the development.

Action. The Clerk will request information about the new council housing to be built.

29/20 To agree the Full Council meeting minutes of 16th January 2020

Resolved. The minutes of Full Council Meeting held on are approved as a true record. Proposed Cllr Mendoza seconded Cllr Reynolds and carried one abstention who was not present at that meeting.

30/20 To agree the Full Council meeting minutes of 11th February 2020

Resolved. The minutes of Full Council Meeting held on are approved as a true record. Propose Cllr Piggott seconded Cllr Mendoza and carried with four abstentions who were not present at that meeting.

31/20 Finance Reporting.

a. The list of all payments up to the end of January 2020 were noted.

b. The budgetary information on all accounts was noted.

Resolved. The Council notes the budgetary information for January and confirms that the account balance of £45,076.49 agrees with the reconciliation. Proposed Cllr Reynolds seconded Cllr Piggott and carried unanimously.

32/20 To consider an amended Policy, Rules & Regulations and Fees for Ongar Cemetery.

The Council considered a report from the Locum Burial Clerk which presented a revised and updated set of documents to manage the cemetery. The report was noted, and the Burial Clerk was thanked for the work.

Resolved. The Fees, Policy, Rules and Regulations for Cemetery management were approved for adoption from April 1st, 2020. Proposed Cllr Piggott seconded Cllr Dadd and carried unanimously.

33/20 To consider future use of disabled allotment plot and grant money.

Cllr Reynolds suggested making the plot into a parking area, removing the rubber surfacing from Plot 4 and re-designating it as parking. The Clerk will request scrapings from High Street for improvements.

Resolved. The Council will create parking in front half of plot two and return a half plot to cultivation. Dispose of existing surface on plot 4 extend parking to the front and reform the bins for compost. Use the scrapings to improve infrastructure. Contractors will be engaged to do the work. Proposed Cllr Reynolds seconded Cllr Freeman and carried unanimously.

34/20 To consider a quotation for refurbishing bus shelters.

The Clerk reported that the Council had just received a letter from Essex County Council with a proposal that they take-over all the bus shelters as part of a programme to improve public transport facilities. It was agreed to wait and see what was being propose and when before spending on shelters. The decision will be deferred until the timescale is made clear.

35/20 To discuss purchasing the land east of Ongar for sports and recreation purposes.

With reference to this item, Cirrus Land Limited, on behalf of the Buxton's and L&Q, have made the following statement: *We have been in contact with OTC with respect to opportunities for the land east of Ongar and will continue to do so however the land is not for sale.*

Cllr Mendoza pointed out that the Recreation Ground and Jubilee Park need more land and he would like to encourage the Council to seek funding and attempt to purchase. The land can be designated as public green space, tree planting and additional public footpaths along the Roding.

Cllr Dadd suggested that Sport England assessment criteria should be used to evaluate current and future needs. Some existing parks have not been adequately maintained and could be better used. Alternative sites should be considered, and site selections made through the Neighbourhood Plan by vigorous lobbying with supporting evidence when housing is proposed.

Epping Forest District Council has evaluated the future requirements and identified a deficit in sport space and the community should enforce or encourage this through the Neighbourhood Plan. It was suggested that the Planning Committee be reinstated to consider such matters. A desire to acquire private land may not be the most appropriate way to proceed, and the preferred solution might be to negotiate access to the land by arrangement with the owner. It was thought that some land could be opened for civic uses on ten days a year.

It was agreed that further research is needed, and the matter can be reconsidered after the NP is published.

36/20 Update for the Community Special Constable.

The Clerk reported that although the Police are actively recruiting special constables, the Local Council programme is on hold for want of local volunteers. On an unrelated matter, it was suggested that the town would benefit from a new flag for the police station.

37/20 To confirm the date of completion for the bridge at the Nature Reserve.

The Clerk confirmed that no replacement date has been offered. The twelve-week lead time is up at the end of March after which time the Council will have to consider replacing at their own expense to meet the Town Show date.

38/20 Shelley Park playground.

The Contract has been published on Contract Finder and five companies have already expressed interest. It was agreed that the residents should continue to be involved.

39/20 Extractor fan at Jubilee Park

The Charity has received a complaint about cooking smells from the Jubilee Park Café, and it has been confirmed that the equipment was not installed correctly. To rectify the matter, the charity has been quoted £7,700 plus cost of additional electrical works to re-site the wiring.

So far, there has only been one complaint to the Charity, and none have been made to the enforcement officer at Epping Forest District Council's Environmental Health Department.

It was confirmed that the Trust accepted the building as-is, so the council is not liable but would be prepared to consider remedial actions when better information is available, and costings have been received.

40/20 CCTV contract update.

BT have had problems installing the final broadband connection at Love Lane, but confirmation was received on 20th February that another site visit has been programmed. Onsite will commission the equipment and install a booster aerial to link the existing cameras around the Love Lane Office.

41/20 Action report and council chasing list.

The Council noted the actions due on current tasks and projects.

Concern was expressed about the state of the town's footpaths. It was noted that County Councillor Mrs McEwen has invited the highways engineers to meet and propose a solution, but they declined to attend. The Member of Parliament, Alex Burghart has taken an interest in the matter of footpaths and will be persuading the County Council to take action. There is no update on the fencing by Ongar Bridge but the Council makes the point that the repair is a matter of improving safety as much as the look of the town.

The Council thanked the Groundsman for painting the cemetery gates.

42/20 Car Parking Working Group.

No developments this month – awaiting Epping Forest District Council's review

43/20 Neighbourhood Plan

There are no developments this month. The policies are in draft form, the consultant is reviewing the evidence and the Working Group will be submitting aspirations and evidence.

44/20 Climate Change working party update

A report from the opening meeting was considered. The group would like more community involvement and would like non-councillors on the group. The group's activities should be publicised as widely as possible.

The top matters are mitigation of flooding, planting trees to stop flooding and providing shade. For example, the group would like to encourage the planting of indigenous hedges around Jubilee Park. Ask councillors to identify spaces that will be enhanced by trees and hedges provided they can be maintained and do not damage buildings. There will be a report to follow.

Resolved. The Council will amend the terms of reference to allow non- councillors to the working group and involve the community in the work. Proposed Cllr Dadd seconded Cllr Azzopardi and carried unanimously

Resolved. The Council authorises the working group to communicate directly through media, with the Clerk moderating the publications. Proposed Cllr Dadd seconded Cllr Mendoza and carried unanimously.

45/20 Items for next agenda.

Air Ambulance – buy a brick
Grant funding policy
Standing orders
Car parking space
Issues concerning Jubilee Park

Meeting closed 9.38