



AYLESBURY
TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Direct Services Committee of Aylesbury Town Council
held at the Town Hall, 5 Church Street, Aylesbury on Wednesday 13 September 2023
at 7pm**

Present: Cllr W Raja (Chairman)
Cllr A Christensen (substituting for Cllr R Lloyd)
Cllr R King
Cllr P Koya
Cllr S Lambert
Cllr A Morgan
Cllr M Winn

Officers in attendance: Mr K Gray (Town Clerk)
Mrs J Priest (Deputy Town Clerk)

13 members of the public were in attendance.

Two members of the public spoke with regards to the Tring Road allotment gardens.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:16pm

1. Apologies

To note and agree apologies for absence.

Resolved: To unanimously receive and accept apologies for absence from Cllr M Aazam (prior commitment), Cllr R Lloyd (work commitment), Cllr N Hussain (family commitment)

2. Declarations of Interest & Dispensations Requested

To declare and note any personal or prejudicial interests.

No declarations made and no dispensations requested.

3. Minutes

To receive, accept and sign the draft minutes of 7 June 2023.

Resolved: To receive, accept and sign the minutes of 7 June 2023 as a true record.

4. Matters Arising

No matters arising from the minutes.

5. Jonathan Page Play Centre (JPPC)

- a) To note the update report from the Play Centre Manager, which councillors received in advance of the meeting.

Cllr S Lambert thanked the employees at JPPC for arranging the Open Day in July, which he enjoyed attending and meeting children and families who use the service.

Cllr A Christensen asked about the capacity of the centre. The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the summer playscheme was operated at 97% occupancy throughout the summer and that demand was so high that a waitlist system was implemented. The After School Club currently has an attendance of between 45-55 children per day.

- b) To look at the budgetary position of cost centre 702 Jonathan Page Play Centre to July 2023 (month 4).

No questions were raised on the financial reports.

Resolved: The update and financial reports were received, reviewed, and agreed by the committee.

6. Devolved Services and Environment

- a) To receive an update on Devolved Services and Environment from the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk reported from the meeting with other Parish and Town Clerks and officers from Buckinghamshire Council (BC) regarding future Devolved Services agreements and funding. BC Officers will follow-up from the meeting with further updates and the new agreement will then be provided to the Council for a final decision.

The Outdoor Maintenance Team has completed 8 grass cuts of the and are starting the 9th. The team started hedge cutting which will take place throughout September/October.

Resolved: The reports were received and agreed by the committee.

- b) To look at the budgetary position of cost centre 701 Devolved Services and 403 Environment to July 2023 (month 4).

Resolved: Received, reviewed, and accepted with no comments made and no questions asked.

7. Cemetery

- a) To receive an update on cemetery matters from the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk reported on the positive work undertaken by volunteers at the cemetery, which adds to the enhancement of the cemetery. Their work is very much appreciated by the team.

The landscaping of the Snowdrop Garden is taking place. The pathways have been laid and trees will be planted, and benches installed in October. The memorial will be put in place once it has been received.

The cemetery has not been shortlisted for the ICCM Cemetery of the Year, despite achieving an above average score in the category entered. We will continue to make further improvements in line with ICCM guidelines.

Cllr King asked when the Coronation Bench will be re-installed by the chapel now that it has been refurbished. The Town Clerk will follow-up with the cemetery team.

Cllr Lambert thanked Cllr King for the tours of the cemetery during Heritage Open Days.

Resolved: The reports were received and agreed by the committee.

- b) To note the statistics report from the Cemetery Officer

Resolved: The report was received, reviewed, and agreed by the committee.

- c) To consider ceasing pre-purchasing of exclusive rights of burial (EROB).

The Town Clerk provided background information of the various cultural traditions of different communities in terms of pre-purchasing EROBs.

Councillors discussed the pros and cons of ceasing the pre-purchasing of exclusive rights of burial.

Cllr A Christensen proposed, Cllr W Raja seconded to cease pre-purchasing of exclusive rights of burial with immediate effect.

Resolved: Councillors voted 6 For and 1 against to cease pre-purchasing of exclusive rights of burial with immediate effect but to honour those that have reserved graves and have been given a deadline by when payment must be received by, before the plot gets released again.

- d) To look at the budgetary position of cost centre 601 Cemetery to July 2023 (month 4).

Resolved: Received, reviewed, and accepted with no comments made and no questions asked.

8. Cemetery Extension

- a) To receive an update from the Town Clerk on the cemetery extension.

The Town Clerk updated councillors and informed that a Notice to Quit has been issued to tenants at Tring Road allotments. 44 tenants have asked for an extension agreement, 5 tenants have taken plots on other existing allotment sites and 8 have advised that this is their last year.

The Buckinghamshire Council Community Asset team have listed the Tring Road allotments as Asset of Community Value as they received a registration. The Town Clerk explained the process of community asset registrations and advised the council that the registration has no impact, legal or otherwise, on the town council's decision to extend the cemetery. This has been confirmed by Buckinghamshire Council asset team officers.

- b) To receive an update from the Town Clerk on possible land for burials

The Town Clerk has an upcoming meeting with Buckinghamshire Council Planning Officers to discuss future burial grounds and allotment facilities. He is also in discussion with private landowners. Town Clerk will report and update on those discussions at future committee meetings.

Resolved: Received and accepted with no comments made and no questions asked.

9. Allotments

- a) To receive a quarterly update on allotment availability and associated matters.

Resolved: Received, reviewed, and accepted with no comments made and no questions asked.

- b) To receive an update on the budgetary position of cost centre 401 Allotments to July 2023 (month 4)

Resolved: Received, reviewed, and accepted with no comments made and no questions asked.

10. Tring Road allotments

- a) To approve the halting of lettings to new tenants.

Proposed: Cllr A Christensen proposed, and Cllr S Lambert seconded

Resolved: The committee unanimously agreed to halt the letting of vacant allotment plots at Tring Road allotment gardens.

- b) To agree how long to hold free allotment plots for Tring Road allotment holders at the council's other allotment sites.

Proposed: Cllr M Winn proposed, Cllr A Christensen seconded

Resolved: The committee unanimously agreed to continue holding free allotment plots for Tring Road allotment holders at the council's other allotment sites for the time being and for it to be reviewed again at the next committee meeting in December.

11. Town Hall

- a) To receive an update on matters concerning the Town Hall.

The Town Clerk reported that the electricity meters are being changed to smart meters at the request of the electricity supplier. There is no cost to the council.

Asbestos management surveys will be carried out in the coming months as part of regular asbestos management procedures.

Fire Risk Assessment has been carried out awaiting final report.

Some windows require assessment and possible repair.

Resolved: The reports were received and agreed by the committee.

- b) To receive an update on the budgetary position of cost centre 102 Building to July 2023 (month 4)

Resolved: Received and accepted with no comments made and no questions asked.

12. Date of Next Meeting

To note the date of the next meeting for Wednesday 13 December 2023 at 7pm in the Council Chamber.

There being no further business of the Direct Services Committee, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8pm.

Signed: _____
Chairman

Date: _____