



EVESHAM

TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF EVESHAM TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 11th MARCH 2024
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, EVESHAM TOWN HALL AT 6:30PM

- PRESENT:** Councillor: A. Booth, Mayor
- Councillors: Mrs S. Schaathun (Deputy Mayor), Mrs S. Amor, S. Brotherton, J. Campbell-Muir, J. Clatworthy, M. Goodge, Mrs M. Griffiths, Mrs J. Haines, T. Haines, R. Hale, Mrs C. Kimberley, W. Kimberley, Ms A. Lyon, Mrs E. Nishigaki, R. Raphael, Mrs E. Stokes and Mrs J. Tucker
- OFFICERS PRESENT:** Mrs J. Adams, Town Clerk; Ms A. Jayes, Almonry Manager
- ALSO PRESENT:** The Mayor's Chaplain Revd C. Green; District Cllr C. Homer; 2 representatives of Love Evesham; 2 members of the public

Prayers were led by the Mayor's Chaplain.

118. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs P. Scurfield, A. Dyke and Mrs C. Smith.

119. Declarations of pecuniary or other interest

Declarations of interest were declared as follows:

Cllr Brotherton, item 11 Festival Grants, as stallholder at the Battle of Evesham.

Cllr Campbell Muir, item 11 Festival Grants, as stallholder at the Battle of Evesham.

Cllr Campbell Muir, item 11 Festival Grants, as volunteer for the Festival of Brass.

Cllr Raphael, item 11 Festival Grants, as a volunteer for the Festival of Brass.

Cllr J. Haines

Cllr T. Haines

120. Announcements by the Town Mayor

The Mayor reported that the date of his Civic service had been changed to the 7th April. As part of the service, the laying up of the RBL Standard would take place.

121. Updates from District and County Councillor

District Cllr C. Homer reported from Wychavon District Council.

Wychavon Council Tax: The council tax for Wychavon had been increased by 4.2%, representing an extra £5 a year on a band D property.

Business Front Improvement: There was still time for small to medium-sized businesses along the High Street and Merstow Green to apply for funding towards improvements to their shop-fronts.



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Community Network Conference: The event aimed to support voluntary, community and social enterprise groups across the district with their digital community engagement. The conference would take place on the 28th March.

Local issues: The area at the bottom of Bridge Street had been extensively cleaned and cleared by FCC at the district council's expense following complaints. The location had been subject to ongoing problems of anti-social behaviour and drinking. Discussions were ongoing about how best to tackle the issue, and consideration had been given to blocking access.

Round House: The restoration project at the building, currently occupied by NatWest, had run into delays. One of the major contractors had left the project and further issues with the building had been discovered. Works would take longer than anticipated. Cllr Homer has asked if better communication could be established to update the community on the project.

Cycle Path from the Evesham to the Valley: Cllr Homer continued to lobby for progress on the project.

122. Clerks Report

- The Evesham Adventure Playground Expression of Interest had been successful and a public consultation was underway. A full application would then be made.
- The public consultation into the loan for the Almonry matchfund had also commenced and forms were available to take away. Volunteers were needed for a stand at the market and supermarket to promote the consultation.
- The Hall noticeboard renovation was in progress.
- A date was awaited for Phase 1 of the resurfacing of paths in All Saints churchyard.
- A litter pick organised by Anti-litter Evesham would take place on the 17th March.
- The two old co-op bank accounts had been closed and all balances transferred.
- Allotment invoices will be going out in the next few weeks in readiness for the new financial year.

123. Reports from Outside Bodies

Cllr Campbell Muir reported from the Evesham Residents Association. Following reports to the Environment Agency of the release of chicken manure into the River Avon, the agency had carried out a site visit.

Cllr Goodge reported as a trustee of the Samuel Wallace Smedley Trust. The accounts had been fully signed off and sent to the Charity Commission within the correct timescales. This now enabled the Trust to apply for grants to carry out their work. Work was progressing on plans to improve the shop front on the High Street and the Trust would be making decisions on how to proceed on the 1st floor High Street part of the property. More trustees were needed.



124. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Minutes of the meeting of the 12th February 2024 had been circulated and were agreed and adopted as a true record.

125. Committee Minutes

- Planning & Estates – 26 February 2024

It was resolved to approve the minutes including the committee's recommendations for the above meeting.

126. Finance: Payments and Receipts January and February 2024

The reports were noted and it was resolved that the payments for January and February 2024 be approved.

127. Evesham Ambassador Programme

The item was deferred.

128. Festival Grants

The following grants were agreed:

Battle of Evesham	£8,000
River Festival	£3,000
Wychavon Festival of Brass	£2,000
Love Evesham	£2,000

129. MEND Update

a) Update

The Almonry Manager provided a verbal update on the findings of the recent Enabling works.

b) Emergency works

During the week of the 19th February, the Enabling works, and detailed inspections of the roof were carried out at the Almonry. The works were made possible by grant funds from £50,000 from the UKSPF fund and £16,000 from Historic England.

A specialist roofer was engaged to carry out the investigations and his findings were shared with Historic England. The report revealed that some parts of the roof were



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at current risk of catastrophic failure. In addition, a heritage specialist identified that some of the infill panels on one of the gables were a safety risk.

Historic England was sufficiently concerned to have agreed to provide a further emergency grant of £48,000 to strip the dangerous section of roof and other works. A temporary roof covering would be installed over this section of the Almonry roof.

The council was resolved that the works be carried out by the specialist team as soon as practicable.

130. **Boundary Review Response**

Cllrs Tucker, Goodge and Stokes had put together a draft response which had been circulated. It was resolved to submit this response, which is attached to these minutes.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.35pm.

Public Questions

A local businessman attended to ask about the Town Council's procedures concerning planning breaches reported to them. It was explained that planning issues would be reported to Wychavon District Council.

Cllr Alan Booth
Mayor



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Evesham Town Council Response to Local Government Boundary Commission Review for Worcestershire

Evesham Town Council does not support the proposed boundary changes and their effect on Evesham town centre.

The plan to include Evesham town centre in Harvington Division in no way reflects the community interests or identity of Evesham.

The proposed new boundary of Harvington Division will include the commercial and recreational heart of Evesham, including the primary retail area, the town centre parks and gardens and the town's key historic sites and buildings.

While neither the retailers, the monuments nor the parks form part of the electorate, they nonetheless require effective representation at county level.

The town centre of Evesham is an area with significant issues for which the county council, as highway authority, is responsible. It is also an area where all three of Evesham's local authorities, the town, district and county councils, need to work effectively in partnership.

Placing the town centre within a division which is otherwise primarily rural, and extends some considerable distance from Evesham, will inevitably dilute the effectiveness of this cooperation.

Although the Commission reported that Harvington and Norton have links to Evesham this is only really in terms of facilities provided by Evesham. The town does not have the same reciprocal links or working relationship with those villages. The needs of the rural community are very different to the town.

The county councillors who currently represent Evesham town centre, and have represented it in the past, represent divisions which are focussed entirely on Evesham. They have expended a considerable amount of time and effort working for improvements to the town centre, with significant success. They have also effectively liaised with other authorities and local community groups to ensure that the county council provides effective support to the events which are a key part of the town's calendar.

The Harvington division, by contrast, is focussed primarily on the villages and rural area to the north of the town. It is difficult to see how a county councillor with such a different focus could effectively represent the residents and businesses of Evesham town centre and play a significant role in working with other local authorities covering Evesham.

Geographically and culturally, the urban heart of Evesham has little in common with the rural area of the county further north. Inkberrow, at the far end of the proposed division, has no natural links with Evesham. The smaller villages of The Lenches in the centre of

the proposed division have a rural environment and culture which also differs significantly from the market town environment and culture of Evesham.



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Evesham Town Council also notes that the Commission was content with an electoral variance of 11% in the Bredon, Broadway and Littletons Division and 14% in the Pershore and Upton Snodsbury Division during the review.

The Council feels that the variances for the Evesham area should be accepted as the proposed change would not reflect community identity or support effective and convenient local government.

For these reasons, we would urge the LGBCE to reconsider the draft proposals and ensure that Evesham town centre continues to be represented by a councillor who is focussed solely on Evesham.

Draft