



EMERSONS GREEN
TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting

Thursday 19th May 2022

Held at 1900hrs in the Council Chamber, Emersons Green Town Council

- Present:** Councillors Roberta Sunderland, Sadik Al-Hassan, Rachael Hunt, Matthew Palmer, and Simon Jones.
- Absent:** Not Applicable.
- In attendance:** Ian Lyons, Town Clerk, and Donna Simmons, Assistant Clerk. Also, PC 2093 Green, and PC7937 Morris.
- Public attendance:** Two members of the Public.
- Apologies:** Councillors Sally Hill, David Somers, Caroline Johnson, Patricia Morgan, Simon Budd, and Richard Nichols.

- ATM_2022.01** **Introductions and welcome by the Town Mayor or their representative.**
On behalf of the Mayor, Cllr Sunderland opened the meeting at 1900hrs, welcomed everyone, and delivered a short speech. Cllr Sunderland spoke about the work of the Council, including the recent establishment of a Climate Emergency Working Group, and encouraged residents to join. Similarly, Cllr Sunderland informed the meeting that the Council had commissioned a Youth Work project over the previous 12 months, Youth in Sodbury, and a new contractor was due to start work soon, Creative Youth Network, with a focus on outreach projects. After this, Cllr Sunderland talked about the Council's other responsibilities, including comments on planning applications, and the commitment to biodiversity. For instance, Cllr Sunderland briefly talked about a project involving hedgehog highways and houses. After that, Cllr Sunderland invited everyone to visit the Three Greens Festival, the Ham Farm Festival, and the Mangotsfield Railway Project, which the Council has supported. Sadly, it was reported that a representative from the Mangotsfield Railway project was unable to attend, and this item was removed from the official agenda. However, it was mentioned that a slideshow would be played at the end, during refreshments.
- ATM_2022.02** **To note the minutes of the Annual Parish (Town) Meeting held on 21 March 2019.**
A copy of the previous minutes were displayed on the projector screen and four paper copies were circulated. After this, the minutes were noted.
- ATM_2022.03** **To consider any matter to be raised by a resident of the Parish.**
There were no issues raised at this point in the meeting. In jest, a comment was made about the need to improve the Council's IT, because a projector bulb had turned green.
- ATM_2022.04** **To receive a presentation from Friends of Emersons Green Park.**
Christopher Sunderland delivered a detailed PowerPoint presentation, demonstrating the work of the Friends of Emersons Green Park group, which is available at Annex A. During this presentation, Christopher emphasised the many benefits of community

projects like this, and how important it was to protect the spaces that we have, particularly when so much housing development was taking place for an increasing population.

ATM_2022.05

To receive reports from Councillors.

There were no official reports from Councillors. So, Cllr Sunderland opened the floor to a constructive discussion about how to improve attendance and participation at the 2023 Annual Town Meeting.

Suggestions from the Floor

Cllr Sadik Al-Hassan suggested a survey to 'reach-out' to residents and provide the opportunity to voice their opinion. Similarly, Cllr Matthew Palmer suggested an online survey might also produce results. After this, Cllr Rachael Hunt talked about the need for a more strategic approach questioning, "what is the aim". In another comment, Cllr Rachael Hunt suggested that a controversial hot-topic on the agenda might create more of a buzz. Other suggestions **included** the booking of local musicians from the Ham Farm Festival to play at intervals, and the possibility of 'cross-promotion' through other community-based social-media outlets. Likewise, Cllr Matthew Palmer suggested an idea for '2-minute videos', alongside the possibility of attending the meeting virtually in future. Finally, the Town Clerk raised an idea for a community awards presentation, which has worked well in other areas. After that, the Chair agreed that planning for the next event should begin much earlier.

Report from the Police

At this point, in the absence of Councillors reports, the two Police Officers in attendance were invited by the Chair to address the meeting. To begin with, it was noted that the Police had some difficulty communicating with the Town Council by email.

In reply, the Town Clerk apologised on behalf of the Council. To explain, the Town Clerk went on to say that significant disruption to ordinary business had occurred over the last few months, without a full-time Town Clerk in the post, and during the subsequent handover period. In particular, some I.T. issues had prevented usual business but were now working, and replies would be more expedient in future.

After this, the Police asked the public to remain vigilant to prevent crime. In particular, with regards to the use of social media, and the display of expensive bicycles, which were being targeted by thieves. The audience was encouraged to make greater use of the National Bicycle Database to register the serial numbers on their bicycle frames and share this knowledge with their constituents and social networks.

After that, a notice was given that a 'Beat Surgery' was available for residents to attend and for the Police to listen to their concerns. The event would take place outside of Sainsburys on the 24th of May 2022 between 1100hrs and 1300hrs.

Next, it was reported that a number of Anti-Social Behaviour contracts had been issued in the retail park area, and that compliance had been high. The Police described the issue as "all but gone" and that in general Emersons Green was a nice area to live.

In reply, a member of the public suggested that it is a quiet time of the year, and that problems could easily reoccur. In other comments, a member of the public reported that anti-social riding of motorbikes was a problem. After that, another resident reported that, during the festival last year, some tents had been vandalised, and

requested that Police increase patrols in the area at this year's events. Then, Cllr Racheal Hunt also raised the issue of vandalism at the Beaufort Road play area.

Finally, the Police agreed to take feedback from the meeting to their neighbourhood team, and put the issues on the 'Patrol Priority – Whiteboard'.

The formal business of the meeting closed at 1955 hrs. However, light refreshments and informal discussion took place until 2105hrs.