

## Minutes of the Full Council Meeting

held in the Council Chamber, Emersons Green Town Council,

1900hrs on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> of July 2023.

**Present:** Councillors James Hunt (Mayor), Dave Somers (Deputy Mayor), Colin Hunt, Rachael Hunt, Bobbie Sunderland, and Alka Mehta-Graham.

**Absent:** None.

**In attendance:** Town Clerk, Ian Lyons, and Deputy Clerk, Jane Wray.

**Apologies:** Councillors Pat Morgan and Simon Budd.

**Public:** Ten members of the public attended the meeting. Graham Hutter, Bob O'Brien (Lyde Green Community Association), Michael Waive and Hannah Panes (Creative Youth Network - CYN), Michelle Sparano (Emersons Green Village Hall - EGVH), PCSO 7121 and 9061 (Avon and Somerset Police), Isra Ahmed (Sudafest Artist), Meryem Akin (Cardiff University Lecturer), Mohamed Sharaf (Sudafest Managing Director).

**Notes:** The meeting began at 1900hrs. All resolutions are passed with a majority vote, by a show of hands, unless otherwise stated.

### **FC\_2023.071 Welcome and Introductions.**

**Minutes:** The Mayor welcomed everyone present at the meeting and explained the emergency procedures.

### **FC\_2023.072 Declaration of Interest – Localism Act 2011.**

**Minutes:** The Mayor reminded members of the requirement to declare an interest. No interests were declared.

### **FC\_2023.073 Public Participation.**

**Minutes:** Ten members of the public were present. At the discretion of the Mayor, it was agreed that members of the public would be invited to address the Council during the appropriate agenda item on this occasion.

## COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION

### FC\_2023.074 Minutes.

**Motion:** It was moved by Cllr James Hunt, supported by Cllr Colin Hunt, and resolved that:

**Resolved:** The *Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2023*, copies having been circulated, be approved as a correct record, and signed by the Mayor.

**Minutes:** The minutes were signed at the meeting by Cllr James Hunt.

### FC\_2023.075 Outstanding items.

**Minutes:** At the invitation of the Mayor, the Town Clerk delivered a summary of the work undertaken as a result of the resolutions and action points from the previous meetings. Details can be found in the *Clerk's Report* at Annex A.

## CO-OPTION

### FC\_2023.076 Applications for Co-option

- To receive applications from members of the public.
- To invite the applicants to address the Council for a maximum of 5 minutes.

**Minutes:** To start with, the Council received three applications for co-option: Graham Hutter (Emersons Green Ward), Kelly Allen (Badminton Ward), and Neil Willmott (Emersons Green Ward).

At the invitation of the Mayor, Graham Hutter was then invited to address the Council.

To start with, Graham delivered a personal introduction speech and answered questions from Councillors. After this, the Town Clerk announced that Kelly Allen had given apologies by email. The Mayor decided that the application would be deferred to Full Council Meeting in September. Neil Willmott was absent but a deferral would be allowed.

**Action:** Clerk to follow up Neil Willmott's application, no apologies received.

### FC\_2023.077 Co-option to the vacant positions

To vote on the co-option of new Councillors.

**Motion:** It was moved by Cllr Colin Hunt, seconded by Cllr James Hunt, and resolved that:

**Resolved:** The Council co-opts Graham Hutter to the vacant position in Emersons Green Ward.

**FC\_2023.078 Declarations of Office**

For new Councillors to sign and deliver the *Acceptance of Office forms*.

**Minutes:** Graham Hutter signed and delivered the *Declaration of Acceptance of Office* and *Register of Members' Interests* forms.

### **INTEL & CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**FC\_2023.079 Crime Update.**

- To receive a report from Avon and Somerset Police.
- To receive a report from Creative Youth Network.

**Minutes:** At the invitation of the Mayor, the Police were invited to update the Council. The Council received the circulated document: *Emersons Green Update Parish Council Report*, and a brief summary was delivered by PCSO 9061.

Crucially, the Police were currently investigating an incident on the 10<sup>th</sup> of July 2023, which took place at the Youth Club but were unable to provide details of an ongoing investigation. However, it was reported that the Police are supporting Creative Youth Network to resolve the issues, and advised the Council to focus on the positives.

At the invitation of the Mayor, CYN were then invited to update the Council. Hannah Panes (CYN) introduced herself and her colleague – Mike Waine who leads the Youth Club. A quarterly report addressing the challenges and reporting good news would be circulated shortly.

After this, Cllr Dave Somers raised concerns about the Police response to an alleged incident, and the constitution of the Youth Club. In reply, the Police agreed to feedback comments, and Hannah Paynes (CYN) updated the Council on the diverse funding and membership arrangements of the Youth Club.

In conclusion, Cllr Rachael Hunt thanked CYN for their work and the valuable contribution to the meeting.

### **GRANT APPLICATION**

**FC\_2023.080 Emersons Green Village Hall**

To consider a grant application from the Emersons Green Village Hall charity for £10,300 towards the cost of a renovation project.

**Minutes:** To begin with, at the invitation of the Mayor, the Town Clerk provided advice from the *Clerk's Report*, which can be found at Annex A.

At the invitation of the Mayor, Michelle Sparano provided a summary and background to the grant application. The project would include floor repairs, new fire doors, and redecorations in the main hall.

To start with, Cllr Dave Somers raised a question about using Council reserves, and enquired about the reserves of EGVH. In reply, Cllr James Hunt confirmed that due to revenue savings, a transfer from Town Council reserves should not be necessary. Following this, Michelle Sparano explained that EGVH reserves were earmarked for essential contingencies.

**Motion:** It was moved by Cllr Rachael Hunt, seconded by Cllr Colin Hunt, and resolved that:

**Resolved:** The Council approves a grant to Emersons Green Village Hall for £10,300 towards the cost of a renovation project.

**FC\_2023.081 Green Community Travel.**

To consider a grant application from the registered society: Green Community Travel Ltd for £550 towards the cost of an advertisement.

**Minutes:** To begin with, at the invitation of the Mayor, the Town Clerk provided advice from the *Clerk's Report*, which can be found at Annex A.

After this, Cllr Alka Mehta Graham expressed a preference to defer. However, Cllr Bobbie Sunderland disagreed that a delay was necessary. Likewise, Cllr Rachael Hunt supported this view, and voiced positive personal experiences with the organisation, which would help families with the cost of living.

**Motion:** Then, it was moved by Cllr Alka Mehta Graham, supported by Cllr Graham Hutter, that: The Council defer the grant application.

**Failed:** This motion failed.

**Motion:** Then, it was moved by Cllr Rachael Hunt, supported by Cllr Colin Hunt, and resolved that:

**Resolved:** The Council approves a grant to the registered society: 'Green Community Travel Ltd' for £550 towards the cost of a community transport advertisement.

**FC\_2023.082 Lyde Green Community Association.**

To consider a grant application from Lyde Green Community Association charity for £5,000 toward the cost of a 'Community Connector' project.

**Minutes:** To begin with, at the invitation of the Mayor, Bob O'Brien of Lyde Green Community Association provided an overview and background for the grant.

To start with, Cllr Bobbie Sunderland enquired about working hours for the new employee. In reply, Bob O'Brien confirmed this would be 3 days per week.

After this, Cllr Rachael Hunt spoke in favour of the project which would help the Town Council achieve several strategic aims and support the community in Lyde Green.

Next, Cllr James Hunt asked about the sustainability of this role and funding. In reply, Bob O'Brien from Lyde Green Community Association reassured the Council around the role and its sustainability.

Then, at the invitation of the Mayor, the Town Clerk provided advice from the *Clerk's Report*, which can be found at Annex A.

**Motion:** Finally, it was moved by Cllr Rachael Hunt, supported by Cllr Bobbie Sunderland, and resolved that:

**Resolved:** The Council approves a grant to the Lyde Green Community Association charity for £5,000 towards the cost of a 'Community Connector' project.

**FC\_2023.083 Sudafest.**

To consider a grant application from Sudafest CIC for £6,650 towards the cost of an environmental art project for young people.

**Minutes:** To begin with, at the invitation of the Mayor, Isra Ahmed from Sudafest CIC provided an overview and background for the grant application.

After this, Cllr Alka Mehta-Graham questioned how long the project had been taking place in Emersons Green. In reply, Isra explained that the project was entirely new to the area. In support, Mohamed Sharaf (Sudafest Managing Director) recommended the artist from previous experience. In addition, Meryem Akin (Cardiff University Lecturer) advised the Council that an impact study would be carried out in relation to the project on a voluntary basis.

Next, at the invitation of the Mayor, the Town Clerk provided advice from the *Clerk's Report*, which can be found at Annex A, clarifying that due diligence had been carried out for the company and the artist.

Then, Cllr Graham Hutter asked for a breakdown of the costs. It was agreed for this to be delivered after the meeting. However, it was confirmed that the public would not be charged a fee to take part.

Finally, Cllr Rachael Hunt asked several questions to clarify details in the application, and the Town Clerk displayed a presentation on the projector screen.

**Motion:** Then, it was moved by Cllr James Hunt, supported by Cllr Rachael Hunt, and resolved that:

**Resolved:** The Council approves a grant to Sudafest CIC for £6,650 towards the cost of an environmental art project for young people.

**Action:** Mohamed Sharaf (Sudafest Managing Director) to provide a breakdown of costs to Councillors.

## OPERATIONS

**FC\_2023.084 To note any updates from Committees.**

**Minutes:** To start with, at the invitation of the Mayor, Cllr Dave Somers provided a summary, as Chair of the Open Spaces Committee and the **Planning Committee**.

Cllr Dave Somers indicated that planning activity was quiet, perhaps as a reflection of the economy. Furthermore, no controversial applications had been considered for some time. For info, it was reported that the procedure for committee meetings had become more formal, to comply with Standing Orders.

**Open Spaces Committee** completed the allotment judging, overall standard was fantastic.

**FC\_2023.085 To note any updates from Working Groups.**

**Climate and Nature (CAN).**

**Minutes:** To begin with, at the invitation of the Mayor, Cllr Bobbie Sunderland gave a short verbal summary on the activities of the working group, and highlighted a circulated document, detailing the group's financial activity. The full report can be found at Annex B.

**FC\_2023.086 To note any reports from external bodies.**

**Minutes:** The Town Clerk directed attention to the circulated minutes of the **Bristol East Fringe Cycling and Walking Group**, which currently has no representation from the Council.

**FC\_2023.087 To appoint Councillors to Committee vacancies.**

**Minutes:** To begin with, the Town Clerk displayed a list of the current vacancies and highlighted the opportunities to Councillors. Graham Hutter volunteered to join the Planning and Open Spaces Committees. After this,

**Motion:** It was moved by Cllr Colin Hunt, supported by Cllr Alka Mehta-Graham, and resolved that:

**Resolved:** The Council appoints Graham Hutter to the Planning and Open Spaces Committees.

## PLANNING & STRATEGY

### FC\_2023.088 Strategic Plan Update.

**Minutes:** At the invitation of the Mayor, the Town Clerk delivered a short update on the progress of the Strategic Plan, circulating a progress chart with the meeting documents. Notably, Cllr James Hunt expressed satisfaction that so many items were coded green, indicating a positive level of progress towards the Council's goals.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### FC\_2023.089 Correspondence.

**Minutes:** At the invitation of the Mayor, the Town Clerk directed attention to two circulated documents. Firstly, a letter from National Highways, on the subject of a road closure on the Badminton Road Bridge, which was included at the request of Cllr Rachael Hunt. Secondly, a report from the EarthFest event, which also generated a good news story for the Council website.

After some debate, it was agreed that the road closure at Badminton Road Bridge was exceptionally important and warranted an immediate response from the Council. So,

**Motion:** It was moved by Cllr Colin Hunt, supported by Cllr Dave Somers, and resolved that:

**Resolved:** The Council suspends Standing Orders.

**Motion:** Then, it was moved by Cllr James Hunt, supported by Cllr Alka Mehta-Graham, and resolved that:

**Resolved:** The Council delegates authority to the Town Clerk to write a letter to South Gloucestershire Council to express concerns raised by the Town Council.

**Minutes:** The Mayor declared that Standing Orders were now resumed.

**Action:** Town Clerk to write a letter to Mark King & Nigel Wiggler.

### FC\_2023.090 Advertising.

**Minutes:** At the invitation of the Mayor, the Town Clerk directed attention to flyers and posters advertising the vacancies for Councillors, the Environment Manager, and the Photography Exhibition, which was well received. It was agreed to use this strategy in future adverts. Cllr Bobbie Sunderland highlighted an error with the date on the vacancy for Councillors, which should be corrected.

**Action:** Town Clerk to amend the Councillors Vacancy poster.

## POLICY

### FC\_2023.091 Investment Strategy.

**Minutes:** At the invitation of the Mayor, the Town Clerk provided advice from the *Clerk's Report*, which can be found at Annex A. Then,

**Motion:** It was moved by Cllr James Hunt, supported by Cllr Bobbie Sunderland, and resolved that:

**Resolved:** The Council formally adopts the updated *EGTC Annual Investment Strategy 2023/24*, copies having been circulated.

### FC\_2023.092 Events Policy.

- To review the *Draft EGTC Events Policy (July 23)*, copies have been circulated.

**Minutes:** At the invitation of the Mayor, the Town Clerk delivered a short introduction to the *Draft EGTC Events Policy*.

To begin with, Cllr Bobbie Sunderland raised a concern around bureaucracy and the suitability of the document for smaller events.

Next, Cllr James Hunt re-iterated the importance of health and safety, even at smaller events, and described several examples of unacceptable risks. Likewise, the Town Clerk provided a detailed explanation of how the process could operate, and how it could reduce risks.

After that, Cllr Alka Mehta-Graham expressed support for the policy, which would provide a useful checklist for organising a new event.

Finally, Cllr James Hunt invited amendments to the policy document. There were none. It was then agreed that a motion for the Events Policy would be included on a future agenda.

**Action:** Town Clerk to list the Events Policy as an agenda item at the next available opportunity.

### FC\_2023.093 Avon Pension Fund.

To consider a motion on the agenda.

**Minutes:** At the invitation of the Mayor, the Town Clerk provided the background and overview of the Avon Pension Fund, highlighting a circulated document.

After this, Cllr Bobbie Sunderland raised a concern about the liabilities of the Avon Pension Fund. In reply, the Town Clerk summarised the terms and conditions and provided an explanation of the circumstances, which required the Town Council to provide a pension scheme for existing and future employees. Then,



**Motion:** It was moved by Cllr James Hunt, supported by Cllr Colin Hunt, and resolved that:

**Resolved:** With immediate effect, all current and future employees are designated as eligible to become members of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

### **FINANCE - ROUTINE**

**FC\_2023.094 Bank Reconciliations.**

To review the latest bank reconciliations.

**Minutes:** The committee read the circulated documents and they were signed by the Mayor.

**FC\_2023.095 Monthly Payments & Investments.**

To consider that the monthly payments and investments list, copies having been circulated, be approved, and signed by the Mayor.

**Minutes:** To begin with, Cllr James Hunt highlighted an expenses reimbursement for Cllr James Hunt and Cllr Bobbie Sunderland, which was authorised by the Town Clerk. After that, members examined the full schedule, and the Mayor invited questions from members. There were none. Then,

**Motion:** It was moved by Cllr Bobbie Sunderland, supported by Cllr Rachael Hunt, and resolved that:

**Resolved:** The monthly payments list, copies having been circulated, be approved, and signed by the Mayor.

**Minutes:** The Mayor signed the payments list.

**FC\_2023.096 Budget Monitoring.**

- To review the income, expenditure, and earmarked reserves.
- To receive a report on emergency expenditure, copies having been circulated.

**Minutes:** Members reviewed the circulated documents, including emergency expenditure to save trees at Rodway Common. Cllr James Hunt invited questions from members. There were none.

### **FINANCE – EVENT APPLICATION**

**FC\_2023.097 Allotments Evening.**

To consider a motion on the agenda.

**Minutes:** To begin with, Cllr James Hunt introduced the motion, and opened the debate.

**Minutes** After that, Cllr Dave Somers challenged the authority of the OS Committee Clerk to organise the event, raised an objection to the event taking place at EGVH, and insisted that an Open Spaces agenda had been modified.

Next, the Town Clerk checked the document *Draft Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee 30th May 2023*, and the *Resolution Register*, and confirmed that the Open Spaces Committee had resolved that: “*The Open Spaces Committee delegates authority to the Committee Clerk to organise the allotments evening*”. Therefore, the event application was submitted by the OS Committee Clerk at their discretion, and in good faith.

After that, Cllr James Hunt checked the electronic document in question and confirmed this had *not* been modified. Cllr James Hunt then reminded Councillors to exercise caution when making accusations.

**Minutes:** Cllr Rachael Hunt left the meeting at 2117hrs.

Next, Cllr Colin Hunt expressed support for the Committee Clerk’s event application, and asked Councillors to trust the officer’s judgement on health and safety.

After that, Cllr Dave Somers expressed disappointment that he was not consulted. In reply, Cllr James Hunt explained that this meeting was the consultation, and there was still an opportunity to make amendments. Then,

**Minutes:** Cllr Dave Somers left the meeting at 2120hrs.

**Motion:** Finally, it was moved by Cllr James Hunt, supported by Cllr Colin Hunt, and resolved that:

**Resolved:** The Council approves an event application from the Open Spaces Committee Clerk for an Allotments Evening, with a budget of £700, copies having been circulated.

## PERSONNEL

**FC\_2023.098 Privacy.**

To consider excluding the public and press due to the confidential nature of the following items.

**Motion:** It was moved by Cllr James Hunt, supported by Cllr Colin Hunt, and resolved that:

**Resolved:** The remainder of the meeting be conducted in a private session to the exclusion of the press and public.

**FC\_2023.099 Recruitment.**

To review the recruitment pack for an Environmental Manager, copies having been circulated.

**Minutes:** To start with, at the invitation of the Mayor, the Town Clerk introduced the item and directed attention to the circulated recruitment pack document.

After this, Cllr Bobbie Sunderland suggested several amendments, which were debated by members. For example, formatting errors, a rewording of the introduction, and which criteria should be essential or desirable.

**Action:** Town Clerk agreed to revise the document accordingly.

**FC\_2023.100 Honorary Titles.**

To consider arrangements for a civic ceremony.

**Minutes:** To start with, at the invitation of the Mayor, the Town Clerk provided an update and confirmed that Richard Nichols has accepted the Honorary Title of Alderman.

Next, the Town Clerk displayed a variety of options for a civic ceremony, and the potential costs, on the projector screen. Councillors reviewed the options and expressed their preferred options.

**Action:** Council to consider final arrangements at the next available opportunity.

**FC\_2023.101 Forward Plan.**

To note upcoming agenda items. This item was requested by Cllr Rachael Hunt on the 17<sup>th</sup> of July 2023.

**Minutes:** To start with, at the invitation of the Mayor, the Town Clerk introduced the item and displayed a circulated document, explaining how the process could work.

After some debate, it was agreed that this should be an internal process with routine notifications at the end of each agenda.

**Action:** Forward Plan to be routinely included on the Full Council agenda.

**FC\_2023.102 Dates and Timings.**

**Minutes:** The Mayor announced that the next meeting of the Full Council was scheduled to take place:

**Thursday 28th of September 2023 at 1900hrs in the Emersons Green Town Council Chamber.**

The Mayor concluded the formal business of the meeting at 2152hrs and announced that an informal 'round-table' discussion would take place afterward.