Minutes of the proceedings of the **CHILTON TOWN COUNCIL MEETING** held at
Hutton House, Chilton on Tuesday 10th September 2024.

Present: -- Chair Cllr. S. Sutherland (Mayor)
Cllrs: - E. Bruce, V. Collinson, D. English, P. Herbert, K. Hornsby, J. Houlihan, S. Reece & M. Young
Locum Town Clerk (LTC) - Mrs. Joanne Dickinson (JD) - left the meeting at 8.10pm
Member of the public- None
Community Safety Coordinators- Dawn Knight and Tia Daniel- left the meeting at 6.40pm

FC56.0/24- **Apologies for Absence –** Cllr P. Malpas- accepted by Members

FC57.0/24- **Declarations of Interest-** Cllrs English and Herbert declared an interest on agenda item 6b, minute number FC61.0/24a. Cllrs Bruce and Sutherland declared an interest on agenda item 11a regarding the Miners Banner, minute number FC67.0/24.

FC58.0/24 - **Member Dispensations-** None received

FC59.0/24- **Public Participation-** None present

FC60.0/24- **Receive information from Dawn Knight, Community Safety Coordinator, Durham Police and Crime Commissioners Office-** Dawn and Tia provided an overview of their roles to the councillors. The following salient points were highlighted-

i. They can provide support for events and a list of events to be provided to them. JD will arrange.
ii. Information on local issues to be provided in a summary report to Dawn and Tia and they will let the relevant agencies know.
iii. Council to report ASB issues on their land such as the issue of empty nitrous oxide canisters.
iv. An article to be sent to The Chapter informing residents of the actions being carried out by the council to work in partnership with various agencies.
v. Leaflets to be circulated online and promoted to residents.
vi. Important to report all issues as if not reported it never happened and resources will not be allocated in the locality.
vii. Information was provided about the Community Peer Mentors Programme and Operation Snap.
viii. Council asked to email and ask if the local school could be included in the Safe Park Scheme.

Dawn and Tia left the meeting at 6.40pm.

FC61.0/24- **Mayors Report-** Two additional items were added to the agenda at the meeting as correspondence received after the agenda was issues. There were no objections from Members to these additional agenda items being discussed.

a. **Discuss a request for a headstone/marker to be arranged for an unmarked grave.**

RESOLVED- Cllr Collinson proposed the council accept this request as long as it meets the current requirements for the installation of a headstone/marker. Seconded by Cllr Sutherland. All agreed.

JD to update the resident.
Members agreed that the Cemetery Committee should look at and give guidance for future applications.

Signed by Mayor ------------------------- 8th October 2024

b. **Several allotment tenants have contacted the council by phone/attending the office to seek an update on when the allotment keys will be issued for the West Chilton Allotments.**

Members discussed this request and an issue with the alignment of the gate was identified by a Member.
RESOLVED- Cllr Reece proposed the council ask the Officer to deal with the issue of the keys and take the gate alignment issue to the Allotment Committee. Seconded by Cllr Houlihan. All agreed except Cllrs English and Herbert due to an aforementioned declaration of interest.

Mayors Report- The Mayor thanked everyone for their hard work to arrange the Gala Day and gave credit to the Events Working Group. The Mayor's Charity raised £115.50 at the event. There is an upcoming Coffee Morning on 21.9.24 and details of the causes to support will be discussed prior to the event.
Members accepted the Report.

FC62.0/24-

a. **Minutes of Chilton Town Council Meeting held on 9th July 2024-**

RESOLVED- Cllr Reece proposed the minutes be accepted as a true record. Seconded by Cllr Bruce. All agreed except Cllrs Collinson, Hornsby and Young who were not present at the meeting.

a. **Minutes of Chilton Town Council Special Meeting held on 30th July 2024-**

RESOLVED- Cllr English proposed the minutes be accepted as a true record. Seconded by Cllr Houlihan. All agreed except Cllrs Collinson, Hornsby and Young who were not present at the meeting.

a. **Minutes of Chilton Town Council Special Meeting held on 29th August 2024-**

RESOLVED- Cllr Houlihan proposed the minutes be accepted as a true record. Seconded by Cllr English. All agreed except Cllrs Collinson, Hornsby and Young who were not present at the meeting.

FC63.0/24- **Monthly Financial Reconciliation and Budget Review of year to date spend/available funds for each committee-** RFO was not present and information had not been provided prior to the meeting. The matter was agreed to be deferred to the Policy and Resources Committee.

FC.64.0/24- **Receive, Review and adopt the External Auditor's Report and action and direction therein-**JD informed Members that the information was on the Town Council website and asked Members if they had any questions on the information provided. No questions received.
RECOMMENDATION- Members agreed to adopt the External Auditor's Report and action and direction therein.

FC65.0/24 **– Approve the Environmental Maintenance Contract-**Cllr Reece informed Members that the issuing of the tender was time sensitive. The Tender Document was ready for distribution but the specifics of the service contract need to be reviewed prior to publication. A working group had previously worked through the tender document. Members discussed the option of separating sections of the contract prior to it going out to tender.
RECOMMENDATION- The Tender Contract to be issued as one contract in its current form and the delegation of the detailed work on the specification of the service contract be delegated to the working group.
Cllr Collinson advised he would provide the working group with 4 technical questions.
A meeting of the working group to be arranged as soon as possible after checking the availability of the Officer.

FC66.0/24- **Consider options to increase the usage of the facilities available at Hutton House to benefit residents-** Members discussed a request from Livin to hold drop in sessions at Hutton House to coincide with the days that the Ladder Centre is in attendance. Members agreed this would be of benefit to residents and gave permission for these sessions to take place free of charge. Members discussed the offer of providing a space for residents in the winter months. Funding options to be looked into.
RECOMMENDATION- Bookings at Hutton House for commercial bookings to be delegated to the office team. Any request for the room to be offered for free will be discussed by Full Council on an individual basis.

FC67.0/24- **Review the Events Plan 2024/2025 and approve the provisional ticket process and dates of events running through 2025-** Members reviewed and discussed the Events Plan 24/25 and agreed the following-
RESOLVED- Cllr Bruce proposed the ticket prices for the Fireworks Event by set at £3 and under 2's go free. Priority will be given to Chilton Residents for initial ticket purchases. All agreed.

RESOLVED- Cllr Bruce proposed that the council provide funding of up to £500 for the Family Event on 16th November 2024 and that the up front payment to the provider be made prior to the event with Officer Support. Ticket sales will be paid to the council after the event. Seconded by Cllr Reece. All agreed.

Cllrs Bruce and Sutherland did not take part in discussion on the following matter-
Members discussed the road closure issues that were raised this year and the council agreed to assist with ensuring the road closure was carried out.
RESOLVED- Cllr Reece proposed the Miners Banner Event is taken as a Heritage Event with a budget of £500 and be included in the Council Events Plan. Seconded by Cllr Houlihan. All agreed except Cllrs Bruce and Sutherland due to an aforementioned declaration of interest.

RESOLVED- Cllr Bruce proposed the council approve the Events Plan 24/25. Seconded by Cllr Reece. All agreed.

FC68.0/24- **Discuss future security requirements in relation to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GR&T) Encampments-** Members discussed the recent encampment of Joe's Field. DCC Officers advised that a review of the security measures should be carried out of all land as the issue may occur again. Items left behind included a boiler and a fridge freezer which will need to be removed.
RECOMMENDATION- The council work with DCC GR & T Team to look at all sites and consider security options.
RECOMMENDATION- The council give permission for Cllr Sutherland to purchase locks for all the gates that are required at Joes Field.

FC69.0/24- **Neighbourhood Plan-** Cllr Reece informed Members that Stage 1 has been approved by DCC. A meeting will be taking place with a DCC Planning Officer on 12th September 2024. The funding application is to be submitted imminently. A meeting has taken place with an Officer from DCC regarding the Bowling Pavilion being included as a Heritage Asset and if this is agreed then this will allow access to some funding.
Members accepted the report

FC70.0/24- **Charity Report-** The council has been asked to repay the maintenance contract funds incorrectly paid by the Miners Welfare Trust in the last 3 years totalling £4793.46.
RESOLVED- Cllr Bruce proposed the council repay the amount of £4793.46 to the Miners Welfare Trust. Seconded by Cllr English. 9 for and 1 abstention.

FC71.0/24- **Website-** Cllr Reece gave an update to Members and asked permission to make the website more dynamic and for the news and events section of the website to be moved up the page. Members agreed to this request.

FC72.0/24- **Playground Reports-** Members discussed the process of the council being informed of the feedback from the annual and monthly inspection reports to ensure actions are carried out. The following was agreed-
Upon receipt of an Inspection Report any matters in red should be actioned immediately. Those that are yellow/amber should be actioned in a timely manner. An update from the Officer should be given to the Council on actions carried out after each inspection report is received.

RESOLVED- Cllr Sutherland proposed that Members are given authority, when necessary, to take equipment out of use and make it safe. For information an email is to be circulated by the Member to advise the action taken. Seconded by Cllr English. All agreed.
A Member asked JD to circulate the January Annual Inspection Reports to the Council.

Exclusion of Press and Public- No public present.

FC73.0/24- **Disputed Land-** Members were informed the meeting will take place with the Solicitor on 16th September 2024 at 10am.

JD left the meeting at 8.10pm

FC74.0/24- **Receive an update on the recruitment of the Town Clerk and Staff Structure-**
Cllr Reece provided members with updates on the following:

- Recruitment of Town Clerk- application have now closed, and the interview date set for the 24th September. Following the interview the HR Committee would bring a recommendation to council to ratify the appointment.
- Structure- We are now in the formal consultation period which will close on the 23rd September. All formal feedback will be considered, and a decision made as to implement or provide a rationale for not implementing at this time. This will be included in the response document. The structure will be implemented on the 1st October 2024
- Staffing: there is currently one member of staff on long term Sickness Absence

Cllr Reece proposed that the Council purchase DCC's Absence Management Policy and associated documents -£250 plus VAT and Annual HR Support £250 plus VAT

Council unanimously agreed

Meeting Closed at 8.16pm.

Cllr S. Sutherland,
Mayor of Chilton Town Council,
8th October 2024

Signed by Mayor ------------------------- 8th October 2024