



Minutes of **FILTTON TOWN COUNCIL'S – Extraordinary Full Council Meeting** held at 7:00PM on Tuesday, 18th August 2026 – Held at: Studio 1, Elm Park Leisure Centre, Filton, Elm Park, Bristol, BS34 7PS.

PRESENT: Cllrs: T Mewies (*Chair & Mayor*), B Mead (*Deputy Mayor & Vice Chair*), E Adjeivi, B Dewfall, A Doyle, A Mills, J Molloy and A Monk.

IN ATTENDANCE: Simon Davies (*Town Clerk*), Robert Hutton (*Deputy Clerk*), Peach Jones (*Support Officer*) and Benjamin Roberts (*Finance & Governance Officer*).

APOLOGIES: Cllrs: J Baverstock, A Bird, M Elmorssy, D Harris and S Milestone.

NON-ATTENDANCE: .

MEETING STARTED AT 7:03PM

1. EVACUATION PROCEDURES - NOTED.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - NOTED: Councillors: Baverstock, Bird, Elmorssy, Harris and Milestone.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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| A. To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda. | No declarations were received. |
| B. To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any). | No requests for dispensations were received. |
| C. To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate. | No dispensations were granted. |

4. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: No declarations were raised to exclude any items from the press and public.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

RESOLVED: No questions were received from members of the public or press, of which, neither were in attendance.

6. ELM PARK LEISURE CENTRE TENDER

The Town Clerk presented the proposed tender documentation for the long-term operation of Elm Park Leisure Centre, including the Service Specification, Tender Response Requirements and a Tender summary.

Members were advised that the tender seeks to appoint a specialist leisure operator to manage the facility on behalf of the Council under a disclosed agency model, with the successful operator responsible for the day-to-day operation, maintenance and promotion of the leisure centre whilst acting as an agent of the Council. The proposed arrangement is intended to provide greater financial efficiency through the recovery of eligible VAT by the Council whilst maintaining professional leisure management and service delivery. The tender specification includes requirements for community participation, performance reporting, asset management, health and safety compliance, customer service standards and long-term sustainability of the

facility. The proposed contract term was outlined as a long-term arrangement commencing from January 2027.

Members were informed that the tender documentation had been refined following feedback received during discussions with the current leisure operator and previous providers. This included the inclusion of provisions requiring Council approval for discounts exceeding 20% of standard fees and charges, ensuring that significant pricing changes remain subject to Council oversight.

During discussion, Members sought clarification regarding the tender timetable, anticipated market interest and risks should no suitable bids be received. The Town Clerk advised that the tender would be publicly advertised and remain open for a minimum period of 35 days, £300,000 excluding VAT, funded by a loan from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb). It was noted that, whilst there was always a risk of receiving limited bids, expressions of interest and previous engagement with the leisure sector provided confidence that suitable submissions would be forthcoming. The Town Clerk further advised that securing a long-term operator remained important to reducing ongoing financial pressure on Council reserves and providing certainty for the future operation of the facility.

Members discussed the advantages of proceeding with the procurement process at the earliest opportunity in order to maximise market engagement and allow sufficient time for evaluation, negotiation and mobilisation ahead of the commencement of the new contract.

RESOLVED: That the Invitation to Tender and associated tender documentation for the appointment of a long-term leisure centre operator for Elm Park Leisure Centre be approved, and that the Town Clerk be authorised to undertake all necessary actions to advertise and publish the tender on the appropriate procurement and public tender platforms.

7. EAR MARKED RESERVE (EMR) FOR CONTRACT CONTINGENCY

Council considered a proposal to establish a dedicated Ear Marked Reserve (EMR) to provide financial contingency and support for the long-term operation of Elm Park Leisure Centre. Members noted the importance of maintaining an appropriate reserve to mitigate potential contractual, financial or operational risks associated with the leisure centre and to provide greater financial resilience in future years.

During discussion, Members recognised that the establishment of a specific reserve would support prudent financial planning and assist the Council in responding to unforeseen circumstances without placing undue pressure on general reserves. It was suggested that provision for the reserve should be incorporated into future budget-setting and precept considerations.

RESOLVED: That the Finance & Scrutiny Committee be requested to establish an Ear Marked Reserve for Leisure Centre Contract Contingency purposes, with appropriate budget provision to be considered as part of the budget and precept-setting process from the 2027/28 financial year onwards.

8. DEFENCE OF ELM PARK

Council considered a report outlining a proposed framework for protecting Elm Park from unauthorised access, vehicle incursions and damage to park infrastructure. The report detailed a range of potential measures, including improvements to boundary security, replacement bollards, installation of accessibility-compliant kissing gates, strengthening vulnerable access points, restoration works and the creation of a structured incident response procedure. The report also proposed a phased programme of works and future budget planning to support the long-term protection of the park.

The Town Clerk advised that the motion had originally been proposed by Cllr Elmorssy; however, due to their absence, the supporting report had been prepared by the Town Clerk to assist Council's consideration of the matter. It was noted that the draft document had been shared with Cllr Elmorssy in advance of the meeting and had been positively received. The Town Clerk explained that the intention was to avoid unnecessary delay and allow the matter to be considered by the relevant committee without waiting for a future meeting.

During discussion, the Chair sought clarification regarding the proposed governance arrangements. The Town Clerk confirmed that the intention was for the matter to be referred to the Assets & Open Spaces Committee to develop a detailed defence plan and associated programme of works. Members also noted that the wording within the report should be amended, replacing the term "require" in relation to the Finance & Scrutiny Committee with "request", to better reflect the Council's intended approach.

Members further discussed the potential impact of future defensive measures on local wildlife and the wider environment. It was suggested that any proposed works should include consideration of biodiversity, habitat protection and environmental impacts to ensure that security improvements remain proportionate and sensitive to the park setting.

RESOLVED: That the report be referred to the Assets & Open Spaces Committee for further consideration and the development of an Elm Park Defence Plan, associated works programme and future budget requirements, with due regard given to wildlife and environmental considerations.

9. BLENHEIM DRIVE PLAY AREA TENDER

Council considered the proposed tender documentation for the redevelopment of the Blenheim Drive Play Area. Members were advised that the project seeks to deliver a modern, inclusive and aviation-themed play facility reflecting Filton's aerospace heritage, following extensive community engagement with local residents, schools and young people. The proposed scheme would be delivered within the existing play area footprint and aims to provide a high-quality destination play space for the local community. It was noted that the play area serves the Conygre Ward, which has a population of approximately 5,000 residents, and is one of only two children's play areas serving the wider Filton area. The estimated contract value is up to £300,000 excluding VAT.

The tender documentation highlighted strong community support for aviation-themed play features, inclusive play opportunities and durable equipment designed to minimise vandalism and maintenance requirements. Proposed priorities include aircraft-themed climbing structures, swings, trampolines, monkey bars, inclusive play equipment, seating, landscaping and wider environmental improvements. The project is expected to commence in late 2026, with practical completion targeted by July 2027.

Members reviewed the tender proposal and welcomed the ambition to create a distinctive play facility that reflects Filton's identity whilst responding to the priorities identified through public consultation. The importance of securing a robust and competitive procurement process was noted to ensure the delivery of a high-quality and value-for-money scheme.

RESOLVED: That the Blenheim Drive Play Area Tender be approved and that the Town Clerk be authorised to undertake all necessary actions to advertise and publish the tender through the appropriate procurement and public tender platforms.

10. FILTON FOXES CYCLE SPEEDWAY STORAGE

Council considered proposals arising from a grant application submitted by Filton Foxes Cycle Speedway Club seeking support towards the provision of a dedicated storage and operational facility at the Cycle Speedway track within Elm Park. Members were advised that the Club had

originally applied for a Community Grant of £4,950 to assist with the purchase and installation of a portable office and storage unit. The application detailed the need for secure storage of bicycles and equipment, improved facilities for volunteers and coaches, safeguarding and first aid provision, and enhanced capacity to host regional, national and potentially international events. The application also highlighted that installation would ideally take place during the summer months to avoid damage to the surrounding grounds during wetter periods.

The Town Clerk explained that the item had been brought directly to the Extraordinary Full Council Meeting in order to facilitate a timely decision. It was noted that whilst the original request had been submitted as a grant application, the proposal had evolved into a potential Council-led procurement project, enabling the asset to remain under Council ownership and be managed through appropriate tenancy or licence arrangements. Members were advised that three quotations had subsequently been obtained to provide evidence of value for money and support procurement transparency, with quoted prices ranging from approximately £3,990 to £8,184 excluding VAT depending on specification and condition.

Members discussed the proposed use of the facility and noted that it would be used to store valuable Club assets, including cycle speedway bicycles, public address equipment and other operational equipment. Consideration was given to insurance, liability and access arrangements. Councillors agreed that any future agreement should ensure responsibility for equipment remained with individual user groups, with appropriate insurance requirements and tenancy or licence arrangements put in place to protect both the Council and facility users from potential claims.

Discussion also took place regarding key-holder arrangements and whether a formal sign-in and sign-out process should be introduced. Whilst Members recognised the benefits of maintaining an audit trail for access to valuable equipment, concerns were raised regarding the administrative burden this could place upon Council staff. Members generally favoured a simpler arrangement that clearly assigned responsibility to authorised users through robust terms of use and insurance provisions.

Members noted that the potential for shared community use had previously been raised during discussion at the Finance & Scrutiny Committee. It had been queried whether Filton Foxes Cycle Speedway Club would support other community organisations making use of the facility, including groups such as Filton Community Garden. Council was advised that the Club had indicated it would be supportive of a shared-use arrangement, provided that any facility procured remained of sufficient size and specification to meet the Club's operational, storage and event requirements. Members welcomed this approach and considered that a shared community asset could maximise value for money and increase the wider community benefit arising from the investment.

During consideration of the quotations received, Members noted the significant variation in specification and cost between the options presented. Whilst supportive of the principle of providing improved facilities for the Club, several Members questioned whether the quotations represented the best value available and suggested that alternative solutions, including the procurement and adaptation of standard storage containers, could also be investigated.

The discussion broadened into consideration of the Council's own operational storage requirements. Members noted that the Council currently faces a shortage of storage space and that the existing storage hut was in a deteriorating condition despite having utilities available nearby. It was suggested that replacing the current structure with two storage units could provide a longer-term solution for both Council operations and community groups. Members further noted that procuring multiple units as part of a single project may achieve better value for money than purchasing a single unit in isolation.

Council also discussed the potential siting of any future units and agreed that the preferred location would be in the vicinity of the existing Open Spaces storage hut, or adjacent to the cycle speedway track, whilst ensuring there would be no adverse impact on the operation of the facility.

The Chair noted that whilst the item had originally been brought to Extraordinary Full Council to facilitate a prompt decision, the amended proposal would require further investigation before a final procurement decision could be taken.

RESOLVED: That the Council utilise this opportunity to address both the storage requirements of Filton Foxes Cycle Speedway Club and the Council's own operational storage needs through the potential procurement of two storage units or an alternative storage solution. The Town Clerk was authorised to reassess the quotations received, investigate alternative value-for-money options and develop revised proposals capable of accommodating both Council requirements and potential shared use by community organisations. Any future arrangements for user groups shall include appropriate provisions relating to insurance, liability, security, access and user responsibilities.

11. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

NOTED: No other urgent business had been raised.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – NOTED: Tuesday, 29th September 2026 at 7pm.

MEETING CLOSED AT 7:50PM