

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
HELD AT BURNTWOOD LIBRARY, SANKEYS CORNER
ON THURSDAY 15 MAY 2008 COMMENCING AT 7.00 P.M.**

PRESENT

Councillor Dr W F Hassell in the Chair
20 Town Councillors
8 Members of the Public

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 17 May 2007, having been circulated, were taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Following the 2007 elections and the change in the political profile of the Town Council, it is a pleasure to say as Chairman of the Council that all elected Members have worked constructively together for the good of the town. Debates at Council meetings have been robust at times but always good-natured when different opinions have been taken into account and consensus reached. I have enjoyed chairing and being part of the meetings of Burntwood Town Council over the last year.

Our Council meetings and internal organisation have benefited from having a full time Town Clerk. The move to our new Council Offices in Lambourne House was completed on time and without too many problems. A Council presence on the high street rather than being out of sight behind the library has been beneficial to residents and we are visibly there to deal with any enquiries. We are in the process of establishing a Burntwood Town Council web site which will also widen access to the Council and improve information flow.

The Council has recently completed and forwarded an application to be awarded Quality Parish Council status. We are fairly confident that the Council now meets the necessary criteria and we look forward to receiving accreditation later this year.

The 2007 Burntwood Wakes was a great success. For the first year since the Wakes restarted, the weather was good and this helped to make the event so very enjoyable and possibly the best yet. Thanks are due to all the elected Members, officers and community groups who worked together to make it happen. Sincere thanks are also due to those who sponsored the Wakes. Their contributions really had a big effect on the overall size and success of the event.

Preparations are well in hand for this year's Burntwood Wakes and again we are all hoping for good weather. The Town Council has decided that this year's Burntwood Wakes will still be a free event. However, the costs of the Wakes are very large for a Council of our size and implementation of a small charge for the Saturday evening event may well be considered for next year.

The Town Council has decided to re-launch the Burntwood in Bloom competition and we hope that as many residents as possible will enter. There are categories for all, ranging from complete gardens to single containers and hanging baskets. Entries need to be in by next month and winners will be announced at a special event in September.

As Chairman of the Town Council I hosted the two traditional annual civic events, the Town Council's Carol Service and its Civic Service. I thank Reverend David Weaver and the Christ Church community for welcoming us to Christ Church and for providing two such joyous occasions. These services presented the town of Burntwood in a very good light and it was pleasing to see so many local organisations represented at the services as well as neighbouring parish councils and district and county members. There was also a special civic event this year, when in partnership with Lichfield District Council, the Town Council hosted a reception for Chasetown Football Club to commemorate their historic 2007/2008 FA Cup run. Mementos were presented to the players and club management.

During the year, Mary and I have had the privilege of representing Burntwood on over fifty occasions. Our thanks go to the Vice-Chairman, Councillor John Walker MBE, who agreed to attend when we were unable to do so. Thanks to John's help no civic invitation was turned down. I would also like to record my thanks to John for saying prayers at Council meetings as substitute for my not appointing a chaplain for this year.

My charities for the year have been St Giles' Hospice and the local branch of the Alzheimer's Society. Thanks to the generosity of prize givers, donors and ticket buyers about £1,250 has been raised to be shared between the two charities.

It may be an old fashioned thing to say, but it really has been an honour and a privilege to be Chairman of Burntwood Town Council over the last year. I thank everyone who has helped to make my Chairman's year so enjoyable and I wish my successor an equally happy year.

3. FINANCIAL STATEMENT/PRECEPT

A detailed breakdown of the Income and Expenditure for 2007/08 and the Precept for 2008/09, having been circulated, was received and noted.

4. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Reports were received in respect of Member representatives on various outside bodies. Reference was made in several reports that Members had

not been notified of meetings and events, even though all the outside bodies had indicated that Members would be welcomed to contribute to their activities.

RESOLVED That:

- (a) The Lichfield District Council be asked to explain how the voice of the Burntwood community at large is heard if the Burntwood Strategic Forum Partnership does not meet.
- (b) The Outside Bodies be reminded that all Members give of their time freely and receive no financial reward for their role and that Members are keen to contribute to the local community – all Outside Bodies to be asked that they ensure Members are invited to attend meetings and events during the year.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Members of the public were invited to speak on any issue that they wished to raise.

(a) **Garage Fire, Beech Crescent, Chasetown**

Mr S Allport spoke on behalf of residents of Beech Crescent, expressing their concern that the garage (workshop) was being rebuilt larger than its original size, that oxy-acetylene cylinders continued to be stored on the premises and that a business was being run from the premises without the appropriate permissions.

The residents understood that the Town Council had no direct influence on the planning aspect of the workshop but believed that Members would be as concerned as they are over their safety given the presence of the oxy-acetylene cylinders. The residents sought the Town Council's support in ensuring their safety.

RESOLVED That letters be sent to the Lichfield District Council, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Homezone and the Safety Partnership outlining the residents and Members concerns regarding the unauthorized use of the premises as a business and seeking assurances that the oxy-acetylene cylinders are stored in the correct manner to ensure that residents safety is not compromised. IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of the letters be sent to Mr Allport as the spokesman for the residents group.

- (b) Mr Drury spoke of the large number of large vehicles traveling on the A5190 through the town to access the landfill site at Cannock, rather than using the Burntwood Bypass. He was concerned that this practice caused potential road safety hazards for residents, school pupils, school cross patrols, etc.

RESOLVED That:

- (i) Letters be sent to those companies whose vehicles are known to be traveling through the town and not using the Burntwood Bypass (details to be provided by Mr Drury) requesting them to instruct their drivers to use the Bypass in the interests of pedestrian and road safety.
- (ii) The Lichfield District Council to be requested to ensure that their waste vehicles use the Burntwood Bypass, as set out in the Planning Conditions attached to the use of its Operational Depot in Plant Lane.
- (iii) The Staffordshire County Council Highways Department be requested to ensure that signage is correctly in position from the A5 Muckley Corner directing traffic to the Burntwood Bypass and not to the A5190 through the town.

(c) **PC Lisa Richardson**

PC Richardson explained that she is Beat Officer for Chasetown, and is based at Chasetown Police Station. She explained that one officer was no based at Armitage to enable better response times to be achieved over the large area covered by the Chasetown Police Station. Six Beat Officers are in post – three are rural based and three are based in the town. PCSO’s also cover the Chasetown Police Station area.

Councillor Mrs Humphreys asked request contact details for the Beat Officers – PC Richardson agreed to provide the requested information to the Town Clerk for circulation to both elected Members and any interested member of the public.

Mr K Wills-Croft mentioned that persistent parking in the bus stop at Sankeys Corner Fish Bar caused problems. PC Richardson said that this would be investigated.

The Meeting closed at 7.45 p.m.

Signed:

Date: