

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BURNTWOOD TOWN COUNCIL
HELD AT THE OLD MINING COLLEGE CENTRE, QUEEN STREET, CHASETOWN, BURNTWOOD
ON THURSDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2018 COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM**

PRESENT

Councillor Bamborough [in the Chair]

Councillors Mrs Banevicius, Birch, Ms Brettell, Mrs Conolly [from 6.12 pm], Ennis, Mrs Evans, Miss Fisher [from 6.25 pm], Pullen , Mrs Rigby, Mrs Tranter and Mrs Woodward

In attendance

J G Brown, Interim Town Clerk

Ms J Minor, Senior Administration Officer

Ms A James, Finance Officer

Two members of the public

PUBLIC FORUM

No questions were raised by members of the public.

PRAYERS

Prayers were led by Pastor Lewis.

35. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Mrs Bacon, Mrs Constable, Constable, Drinkwater [Dispensation], Mrs Fisher, Mrs Humphreys, Humphreys, Mosson, Stokes and Mrs Stokes.

36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

None declared.

37. TOWN COUNCIL: MINUTES

Councillor Birch made reference to Minute No. 25 - Neighbourhood Plan Committee: Minutes and to his comments about the significant number of commercial interest representations which had been reported and stated that the Minutes needed to be amended to reflect the comments made.

Councillor Mrs Woodward made reference to Minute No. 27 - Appointment Committee: Minutes and in particular the statement made by Councillor Mrs Banevicius. Councillor Mrs Woodward agreed that it was inappropriate that the names and locations of those interviewed had been available in the public domain for Members and members of the public to see. Councillor Mrs Woodward also asked if the applications had been collected in from Members of the Appointment Committee and shredded. It was confirmed that all papers returned had been shredded.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 26 July 2018 [Minute Nos. 18-34] be received and where necessary approved and adopted subject to the comments of Councillor Birch been added to the Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee Minutes.

38. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

In the absence of Councillor Mrs Stokes no Chairman's announcements were made. However, Councillor Bamborough stated that Councillor Mrs Stokes was at home recovering following a spell in hospital and it was agreed that the best wishes of the Town Council be sent to her.

39. PLANNING COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Councillor Mrs Evans made reference to the apologies for absence for Councillor Drinkwater and stated that members of the public may not know the reason for this and asked if the word "Dispensation" could be added after Councillor Drinkwater's name. The Interim Town Clerk stated that to be consistent it may be appropriate to include all Members granted a dispensation.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Planning Committee held on 19 July 2018 [Minute Nos. 9-14], 16 August 2018 [Minute Nos. 15-18] and 11 September 2018 [Minute Nos. 19-22] be received and where necessary approved and adopted and that the word "Dispensation" be added to all Minutes where a Member had been granted a leave of absence.

40. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Councillor Mrs Woodward made reference to Minute No. 17 - Minutes and in particular paragraph 2 and asked if there was an update. The Interim Town Clerk confirmed that he had met Gary Brownridge and Chris Cook on 14 September 2018. They had confirmed that the number of cuts were the same [maintenance ratio] however the transport costs were less for Burntwood due to the distance from the Depot.

Councillor Mrs Woodward stated that costings etc were needed so that they could be considered if the Town Council ever wished to take over the parks. Councillor Pullen explained to Members that Mr Cook had offered to make a presentation to all Members of the Town Council on "Leisure and Operational Services - Strategic Alignment" and this could be arranged on the proviso that numbers/figures are provided. The Interim Town Clerk confirmed that he had asked Mr Cook for some dates. Councillor Mrs Tranter informed Members that the Leisure, Parks & Waste Management (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee had not met for six months.

Councillor Mrs Woodward made reference to Minute No. 19 - Photocopier Costings and stated that she felt that it was for all staff [within their job descriptions] to ensure value for money.

Councillor Mrs Banevicius made reference to Minute No. 21 - Planning Permission for Units at the Old Mining College centre and even though it was not directly in relation to the Units, stated that the Ron Bradbury Room should be registered as D1 Non-Residential Institutions [Clinics, health centres, crèches, day nurseries, day centres, schools, art galleries [other than for sale or hire], museums, libraries, halls, places of worship, church halls, law court, non-residential education and training centres]. The Interim Town Clerk advised that either a planning

permission existed for the use or established use rights had been acquired having regarding to the number of years it had been used for that purpose.

Councillor Mrs Woodward made reference to Minute No. 23 - Website and was pleased to see that a one off evening meeting to discuss the best way forward was to be arranged and she felt that the navigation and order of the minutes were not good and it was not user friendly.

Councillor Pullen highlighted recommendation B and confirmed that it would be a one off meeting to review the look and feel of the website and the content.

Councillor Mrs Evans made reference to Minute No. 25 - Training Room and stated that she had thought that the intention for the Old Mining College Centre was for community use and not commercial use. Councillor Mrs Evans also raised concerns regarding the starter units. Councillor Mrs Evans felt that commercial use for the Training Room was not the right kind of use for this room.

Councillor Ennis stated that he felt that the Old Mining College Centre was a community building and as the Town Council was not in financial constraints it did not need more commercial units.

Councillor Mrs Woodward stated that she felt that the Old Mining College Centre was a community facility first and foremost. However, the Town Council still had not decided what the Old Mining College Centre was for [no business plan, no strategic plan] and she proposed that the recommendation be not agreed.

Councillor Pullen agreed that the Town Council did not have a clear written vision for the Old Mining College Centre at this moment in time, however, the refurbishment works had started but were yet to be completed. Councillor Pullen explained that there were a few clashes however with rescheduling these could still be accommodated. Councillor Pullen did state that there would be a 50% reduction in community space available to hire however there was a sound reason to rent out the room until the refurbishment works had been completed.

The Interim Town Clerk explained to Members that a period of notice was needed to terminate any existing leasing arrangements.

Councillor Mrs Woodward asked if clarity could be given as to the terms and conditions. Councillor Mrs Tranter stated that this would be a short term lease. Councillor Pullen stated that the lease would be offered until 31 March 2019.

Councillor Mrs Banevicius stated that the Training Room needed to be registered as A1 [Shops – Shops, retail warehouses, hairdressers, undertakers, travel and ticket agencies, post offices, pet shops, sandwich bars, showrooms, domestic hire shops, dry cleaners, funeral directors and internet cafes] and it was confirmed that this would be done as part of the planning application for the units.

Councillor Pullen explained that the reasons behind the planning permission was so that multiple uses could be offered for the units.

Councillor Birch stated that no refurbishment works could be undertaken on the room. However, Councillor Mrs Tranter stated that painting of the room had commenced already and that the bulk of the work had already been undertaken.

Councillor Pullen stated that he felt that it was a pragmatic solution as the building was not ready yet.

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Woodward and duly seconded by Councillor Ennis that the recommendation to Council be not agreed. On being put to the vote the recommendations of Policy and Resources Committee [Minute No. 25] were agreed by seven votes to five.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 10 September 2018 [Minute Nos. 15-25] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

41. BURIAL GROUND COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Councillor Mrs Woodward stated that she was disappointed by the decision of the Committee not to enter into discussion with Hammerwich Parish Council [two Parish Councils with shared boundaries] having regard to the time that had elapsed since the previous decisions.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Burial Ground Committee held on 13 September 2018 [Minute Nos. 12-17] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

42. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

Councillor Birch submitted the following question:

“After the severe weather we experienced last winter, myself and Councillor Mrs Evans asked, in the full Council meeting of the 05 March of this year, if it would be possible for Burntwood Town Council to take control of ensuring the grit bins in Burntwood are filled and maintained by this Council for the benefit of our all our ward members. I mentioned to Council the reports to myself from many residents in the town, who had tried to clear the roads using the grit in the County Council’s grit bins. Invariably they were found to be empty and once reported empty they were not refilled for many weeks.

With the continuing cuts to services provided by the County Council and the reduction in gritting services provided by Highways there were numerous reports of people being unable to reach their own homes with their cars, unable to get off housing estates to get to work, attend hospital appointments or to visit relatives and vulnerable elderly people who were stuck in their homes.

A motion was submitted at that meeting by the Labour Group regarding the potential for grit bins being maintained and filled under the responsibility of this Council. It was resolved to defer the motion to allow for further discussions to take place.

The winter will soon be returning and residents of this town will be looking to us to have worked to solve some of the issues they raised last winter. Has any progress been made in ascertaining the viability of Burntwood Town Council taking over the local management of this vital service so that we can ensure the safety of the public in inclement weather, which the County Council consistently failed to do last winter?”

Councillor Pullen submitted the following response:

“Councillor Birch will recall the e-mail sent by our Interim Town Clerk in August, which outlined both the response from Staffordshire County Council regarding costs of re-filling bins and the result of our investigations into alternative, community-led projects.

With regards to the filling of grit-bins; Staffordshire County Council are currently reviewing the provision for this coming winter and we will stay in touch to ensure that there is adequate provision.”

Councillor Birch submitted the following question:

“The Labour Group of Councillors are extremely concerned with the news of cuts to the services provided by School Crossing Patrols across Staffordshire.

We understand that the continuing Local Government cuts to funding from Central Government mean that there is less money to spend on public services. For us the removal of School Crossing Patrols is a step too far.

School Crossing Patrols, affectionately known lollipop men and ladies, are a national institution who have been protecting our children, keeping them safe on the roads since the introduction of the Road Traffic Regulation Act in 1967.

This service is not an optional extra but an essential service that ensures the safety of our children and grandchildren as they journey to and from school. The loss or serious injury of a child in a road traffic collision is unthinkable, but this is a very real possibility as a result of these cuts.

The increase in road traffic over recent years cannot have gone unnoticed by anyone on this Council and as traffic increases so does the risk of collisions on the roads. At the last meeting of this Council we heard from the Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership on the importance of the Community Speedwatch groups around Burntwood. The police and local community are recognising the increasing dangers on our roads and sponsoring such groups at the same time as the County Council are removing an essential road safety service.

We do not believe that it is right to sit by and let these cuts take place, which see the children in Burntwood being put at risk. The Labour Group of Councillors request that Burntwood Town Council write to Staffordshire County Council, urging them to reconsider the decision made to remove the funding for the patrols and that should such representations be unsuccessful, that Burntwood Town Council makes funds available and steps in to fund this essential service to our local community.”

Councillor Pullen submitted the following response:

“I have been in touch with the relevant Cabinet Member at Staffordshire County Council and will be writing formally in due course.

This is clearly a subject which will affect many people throughout Burntwood, and we as a Town Council will do all we can to ensure that the provision in our town is not lost.”

43. BURNTWOOD TOWN DEAL

Councillor Pullen informed Members that two members of the Burntwood Business Community had attended a previous Town Deal Meeting and as a result it was agreed that Lichfield District Council would offer their support as they had with the Lichfield Bid [form and shape not yet known]. Councillor Pullen confirmed that Lichfield District Council had spoken again to the brewery regarding the former Oak Public House. Councillor Mrs Woodward confirmed that repainting of the former public house had started. Councillor Pullen confirmed that the plans for Greenwood House had been made available to view at the Memorial Institute on 18 September and that this project was moving forward. With regard to the blue boarding site Councillor Pullen confirmed that LCP were keen to move forward on this matter and that there was ongoing discussions regarding the Burntwood Retail Park.

Councillor Mrs Evans informed Members that it had been embarrassing that there had been no room booked at the Old Mining College Centre for the last Town Deal meeting. It had been resolved by having to have just a half hour meeting in the Ron Bradbury Room.

44. RISK ASSESSMENT

Councillor Pullen explained that at the Policy and Resources Committee held on 10 September 2018 it was been recommended to Council that the Finance Officer purchases the updated LCRS software [to include GDPR questions] at a cost of £99 plus VAT. Councillor Pullen pointed out to Members that no uncontrolled risks were identified for the 2017/18 financial year.

RESOLVED That the LCRS Overall Summary and LCRS Action Plan be received and approved.

45. NOTICE OF CONCLUSION OF AUDIT

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

46. BUDGET SUMMARY [4 MONTHS, APRIL TO JULY 2018]

Councillor Pullen explained that the Town Council were on budget for expenditure ahead of income.

Councillor Mrs Woodward made reference to the grit bins and crossing patrols [direct services to our residents]. Councillor Mrs Woodward highlighted the figure £236,699 [excess of income over expenditure] and stated that the Town Council does have money available to undertake different services. However, Councillor Pullen pointed out that the figure was in fact £13,342 [excess of expenditure over income] which may be left over at the end of the year which may go towards services currently undertaken by the Staffordshire County Council and Lichfield District Council in the future depending on decisions made by those Authorities.

Councillor Mrs Evans stated that it was vital to get the Neighbourhood Plan in place to increase the CIL monies and that the Town Council need to use their resources carefully and that it was disturbing that the Town Council may be expected to provide the services. Councillor Mrs Evans informed Members that the proposed cuts had gone through the Cabinet at Staffordshire County Council but were still to go through Full Council.

RESOLVED That the budget summary [4 months, April to July 2018] be received and noted.

[The Meeting closed at 6:50 pm]

Signed

Date