

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF BURNTWOOD TOWN COUNCIL
HELD AT BURNTWOOD LIBRARY, SANKEY'S CORNER, BURNTWOOD
ON THURSDAY 17 MAY 2018 COMMENCING AT 6.16 PM

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs Stokes (in the Chair)

Councillors Mrs Bacon, Bamborough, Birch, Ms Brettell, Drinkwater, Ennis, Mrs Evans, Miss Fisher [from 6.35 pm], Mrs Humphreys, Humphreys, Mosson, Pullen [from 7.05 pm], Mrs Rigby, Stokes, Mrs Tranter and Mrs Woodward

In attendance

J Brown, Interim Town Clerk

Ms J Minor, Senior Administration Officer

Three members of the public

PUBLIC FORUM

No questions were raised by members of the public.

PRAYERS

Prayers were led by Pastor Lewis.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

RESOLVED That Councillor Mrs Pamela Stokes be elected Chairman of the Town Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor Mrs Pamela Stokes made and signed the Statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

RESOLVED That Councillor Richard Bamborough be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Town Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor Bamborough made and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Mrs Banevicius, Mrs Conolly, Mrs Constable, Constable and Mrs Fisher.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

Councillor Mrs Woodward declared an interest in Minute No. 70 [Notes of a Meeting with the Fun Club - Events Committee dated 28 March 2018].

Councillor Mrs Tranter declared an interest in Minute No. 70 [Notes of a Meeting with the Fun Club - Events Committee dated 28 March 2018].

Councillor Mrs Stokes declared an interest in Minute No. 70 [Notes of a Meeting with the Fun Club - Events Committee dated 28 March 2018].

Councillor Stokes declared an interest in Minute No. 70 [Notes of a Meeting with the Fun Club - Events Committee dated 28 March 2018].

5. TOWN COUNCIL: MINUTES

Councillor Drinkwater made reference to Minute No. 96 - Town Council Minutes and felt that the statement "Burntwood Town Council supports the protection of the Green Belt and I have attended every meeting of the Burntwood Action Group to support that" was still not accurate. Councillor Mrs Stokes felt that this was a personal attack on the Chairman and as far as she was concerned it was accurate.

Councillor Birch made reference to Minute No. 99 - Burial Ground Committee Minutes and stated that he had not received the information regarding how much the refund which had been received was.

Councillor Mrs Evans made reference to Minute No. 100 - Planning Committee Minutes and asked if Councillor Bamborough as Chairman of the Planning Committee had spoken to the Leader regarding a letter being sent to the local MP emphasising what the current Government are doing to our planning system and the challenges faced by Local Authorities [National Planning Policy Framework]. Councillor Bamborough stated that he had spoken to the Leader and that a Task and Finish Group would be set up in order to draft a letter to the local MP.

Councillor Birch made reference to Minute No. 107 - Review of Risk Assessment and Management [Financial] 2017/18 and in particular an extra column was needed i.e. after Management of Risk and stated that this should be after mitigation had been applied.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 15 March 2018 (Minute Nos. 94-110) be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

6. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMEN, VICE-CHAIRMEN AND MEMBERS OF COMMITTEES, ETC

Councillor Mrs Evans asked if timing of the meetings could be provided at the beginning of the year so that members of the public are given the opportunity to attend meetings.

Councillor Mrs Evans stated that she felt that it was inappropriate for enquiries from residents relating to Councillor Mrs Rigby [Summerfield and All Saints Ward] to go through the Town Council and stated that Councillors should be made available any time of the year and not just turn up for meetings.

Councillor Mrs Woodward agreed that the Policy and Resources Committee should be chaired by the Leader of the Town Council. Councillor Mrs Woodward made reference to Minute No. 109 - schedule of payments made between 15 January - 28 February 2018 [Town Council Meeting dated 15 March 2018] and suggested that it may be best practice to submit the schedule of payments to Policy and Resources Committee for consideration. Councillor Mrs Woodward also made reference to a resolution regarding grit bins and dementia friendly town.

RESOLVED That the Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen and Members of Committees, etc be as indicated with the exception of Councillor Mrs Tranter being removed from the Burial Grounds Committee and being replaced by Councillor Mrs Rigby.

7. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO SERVE ON OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED That the appointment of representatives to serve on Outside Bodies be as indicated.

8. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made the following statement:

"It gives me the greatest of pleasure to represent Burntwood for a 2nd term and continue my support of all the local groups, charities and organisations.

I have not decided which charities I will be raising funds for this year, so I will let you all know in due course.

Thank you for your continued support."

9. PLANNING COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Councillor Drinkwater made reference to Minute No. 56 – road naming at land adj Chase Terrace Primary School and stated that the Town Council had fallen foul of the disjointed policies at Lichfield District Council which had resulted in the suggested name of Harvey Close not being accepted.

Councillor Mrs Evans stated that the Interim Town Clerk had personally visited Mrs Gillion [the daughter of Mr and Mrs Harvey] and it was a great pity that the name was not suitable for the developers relating to marketing purposes.

Councillor Mrs Woodward stated that the developers had been difficult having regard to Chase Terrace Primary School [safe guarding measures etc] and asked if a letter could be forwarded to Lichfield District Council regarding the outstanding planning issues.

Councillor Birch made reference to Minute No. 60 – planning applications [planning application 18/00276/COU – Boora Newsagents and Post Office [change of use from post office [A1] to dental surgery [D1] including single storey extension to rear to form office and store room and installation of rear parking area] and the importance of designating the post office as a community asset.

The Interim Town Clerk explained the implications and potential outcomes of making an application to register the property as an Asset of Community Value.

Councillor Drinkwater stated that even though some Members had declared an interest in the application as it was only a personal interest they could still get involved [speak on it, vote on it].

Councillor Mrs Woodward stated that it was not the Town Council's intention to purchase the post office. Councillor Birch stated that the Town Council were just listening to the views of the community. Councillor Mrs Tranter stated that she personally felt that the Town needed a post office at Sankey's Corner.

Councillor Miss Fisher made reference to Minute No. 61 - apologies for absence and whilst her apology had not been formally submitted she wished for it to be recorded.

RESOLVED THAT

- a) The Minutes of the Meetings of the Planning Committee held on 08 March 2018 (Minute Nos. 52-56), 29 March 2018 (Minute Nos. 57-60) and 18 April 2018 (Minute Nos. 60-64) be received and where necessary approved and adopted.
- b) The Interim Town Clerk write to Lichfield District Council asking that the post office at Sankey's Corner be designated as an Asset of Community Value.

10. EVENTS COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Councillor Birch made reference to Minute No. 79 – Notes of a Meeting with Pat Collins Fun Fair and in particular that Michael Fabricant MP had agreed to officially open the Wakes having regard to the recent incidents on social media that Mr Fabricant had been involved in. Councillor Mrs Tranter stated that he had been asked to open the Wakes before the incident on social media.

Councillor Drinkwater stated that the Town Council should withdraw the offer following the verbal abuse on social media.

Councillor Mrs Tranter stated that the Events Committee [scheduled to meet on 23 May 2018] would review the matter.

Councillor Mrs Evans stated that this matter needed to be looked at as all sides were not happy and it was a total disregard to the young person who was a resident of Burntwood who merely wished to communicate with her Member of Parliament.

Councillor Mrs Woodward felt that it was totally appropriate that this matter goes back to the Events Committee.

Councillor Mrs Woodward made reference to Minute No. 82 – Play in the Parks 2018 Update and felt sad to note that Councillor Eadie as Cabinet Member for Operational Services, Leisure and Waste had confirmed to Councillor Mrs Tranter that Lichfield District Council would not be organising any events in Burntwood this year. Councillor Mrs Woodward stated that she was frustrated and had lobbied for a fair share of the leisure resources available.

Councillor Mrs Woodward made reference to Minute No. 85 – Chasewater and strongly disagreed with Councillor Mrs Tranter's comments as Councillor Mrs Woodward felt that Chasewater was Burntwood's biggest asset and the Town Council should be keen to promote it as "our" asset.

Councillor Mrs Tranter stated that from her point of view access to Chasewater was a problem for residents of Burntwood [car parking].

Councillor Mrs Woodward stated that she had been lobbying for 3 years to get the car park in Church Street opened, and for additional parking at the Sportsway.

Councillor Birch stated that Chasewater was mentioned in the draft Burntwood Neighbourhood Plan and the Town Council needed to raise the profile of Chasewater.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Events Committee held on 28 March 2018 (Minute Nos. 67-73) and 30 April 2018 (Minute Nos. 74-85) be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

11. DEFIBRILLATORS TASK AND FINISH GROUP: NOTES

Councillor Mrs Evans made reference to the fact that Councillor Mrs Tranter is not a Member of the Task and Finish Group however she is mentioned in the Minutes and made comments. Councillor Mrs Evans asked for clarification.

Councillor Mrs Tranter stated that she had asked for a meeting to be called so that an update could be provided. Following the meeting three more defibrillators had been installed.

Councillor Ennis explained that the Town Council were massively reliant on volunteers.

RESOLVED That the Notes of the Meeting of the Defibrillators Task and Finish Group held on 03 April 2018 (Notes Nos. 1-4) be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

12. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Councillor Mrs Woodward made reference to Minute No. 33 – Future Role of the Town Clerk and in particular the probation period [six months] which allowed a review to take place if required and asked if consideration could be given to a break clause.

Councillor Mrs Tranter stated that legal advice had been sought and notice could be given for up to 2 years.

Councillor Pullen explained that from employment law prospective the Town Council could give notice [without giving a reason] up to 2 years and he would not like to see a break clause.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 02 May 2018 (Minute Nos. 30-33) be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

13. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

No Members questions were raised.

14. BURNTWOOD TOWN DEAL

Councillor Pullen made reference to the accomplishments that have been made over the last 12 months by pro-actively working with Lichfield District Council, Staffordshire County Council and London and Cambridge Properties etc. Councillor Pullen felt that this had had a very positive impact on Burntwood.

Councillor Mrs Woodward explained Staffordshire County Council's forward plan and stated that Greenwood House was one aspect of this and would be considered shortly.

15. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS MADE BETWEEN 15 MARCH AND 15 MAY 2018

Councillor Birch made reference to the Unison payment and stated that under the General Data Protection Regulation [GDPR] this is classed as sensitive personal data. Councillor Mrs Tranter stated that the payments were deducted from salary.

Councillor Mrs Woodward made reference to the schedule of payments being considered by the Policy and Resources Committee. Councillor Pullen stated that the Town Council needed to be transparent.

Councillor Birch made reference to the election expenses [by-election Boney Hay and Central] and the cost [£12,924.66]. Councillor Mrs Tranter stated that a breakdown from Lichfield District Council had been received. Councillor Mrs Evans asked if all Members could be provided with the breakdown of costs.

The Interim Town Clerk explained the procedure regarding a casual vacancy [more than six months to ordinary election] before 07 November 2018 and it was noted that after that date the Town Council may co-opt to fill a vacancy.

Councillor Mrs Evans made reference to the cost of the utilities [Corona Energy and Npower]. Councillor Pullen stated that the utilities were reviewed last year however the Interim Town Clerk stated that utility companies regularly telephone the office and the utility are reviewed on a regular basis.

RESOLVED That the Schedule of Payments totalling £73,797.69 made between 15 March and 15 May 2018 inclusive be received and noted.

16. INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2018

Councillor Mrs Woodward made reference to 3.3 – Risk Management “adequate insurance” for the Burntwood Wakes Festival and various other “one off” items bearing in mind the recent incident at Harlow involving inflatables and asked if the Town Council was absolutely sure that the insurance is adequate.

Councillor Mrs Tranter stated that she had had a discussion with the Interim Town Clerk a couple of weeks ago and the Interim Town Clerk had obtained confirmation from the insurance company that sufficient cover was in place provided all reasonable precautions had been taken.

Councillor Mrs Woodward made reference to 3.6 – Petty Cash and felt that a once a year review was not enough and asked how the petty cash was now monitored. Councillor Mrs Tranter stated that she had previously undertaken the task herself and the Interim Town Clerk stated that the newly appointed Finance Officer was also monitoring the situation. Councillor Ennis felt that the petty cash could be reviewed in its entirety however Councillor Mrs Tranter explained that there were occasions when cash was needed. Councillor Ennis stated that a better procedure could be in place i.e. review the amount of cash kept on site.

Councillor Mrs Evans made reference to 3.12 – Other Matters and made reference to the General Data Protection Regulation [GDPR] and asked if all officers and Councillors had received the appropriate training.

Councillor Mrs Evans made reference to 5 – recommendation and the revision of the website and asked when this would be undertaken.

Councillor Pullen stated that the Town Council needed to look at the navigation of the website [currently not best practice] and that this be reviewed to the Policy and Resources Committee. Councillor Pullen agreed that it was very important to get up to speed with the general rules of the GDPR.

The Interim Town Clerk informed Members that himself, the Senior Administration Officer, the Direct Services Manager and the Finance Officer had received training and that the reception staff had been briefed.

Councillor Mrs Evans stated that the Town Council must be aware of the implications.

The Interim Town Clerk informed Members that an amendment to the draft Data Protection Bill had been tabled by the Government which will exempt Parish Councils from the need to have a Data Protection Officer [DPO] however it will still be a matter of good practice to have a DPO but not a statutory requirement. Members asked if the Interim Town Clerk could forward an email to all Members to ascertain who had received the training.

Councillor Mrs Woodward stated that it may be a point to be considered that Burntwood Town Councillors have delegated emails. The Interim Town Clerk suggested that this may be more appropriate following the elections next May.

RESOLVED That the Internal Auditor's report for the year ended 31 March 2018 be received and noted.

17. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2018

Councillor Pullen stated that the overall operating income had fallen by over £20,000 and the running costs had fallen by nearly £90,000. Councillor Mrs Woodward felt that this was partly due to the previous administration.

17.1 Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 31 March 2018

RESOLVED That the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 March 2018 be approved.

17.2 Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2018

RESOLVED That the Balance Sheet for the year ended 31 March 2018 be approved and that the Chairman and Responsible Financial Officer be authorised to sign the document.

17.3 Balances and Reserves as at 31 March 2018

Councillor Pullen stated that the earmarked revenue reserves would be used to actively improve Burntwood.

Councillor Drinkwater made reference to the cost of the Burntwood Neighbourhood Plan and asked if this was value for money. Councillor Pullen explained that this document would shape the community and additional CIL monies would be received when the Plan was adopted.

Councillor Mrs Evans stated that in light of the recent by-election expenses there needed to be more monies in the election budget. Councillor Pullen stated that this would be rectified at a meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee.

RESOLVED That the Balances and Reserves as at 31 March 2018 be approved.

17.4 Annual Return: Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement for the Year Ended 31 March 2018

RESOLVED

That the following be agreed in order to comply with legislative requirements:

1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and proper practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or on its finances.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this smaller authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this smaller authority and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.
9. The Annual Return: Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2018 be approved and the Chairman be authorised to sign the document.

20.5 Annual Return: Section 2 - Accounting Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2018

RESOLVED That the Annual Return: Section 2 – Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2018 be approved and that the Chairman be authorised to sign the document.

(The Meeting closed at 7.49 p.m.)

Signed

Date