

Our Ref: MD

01 June 2011

To: All Members of the Best Value Committee
(Councillors Constable, Drinkwater, Mrs Fisher, Humphreys, Isaacs and Mrs Woodward)

Dear Councillor

BEST VALUE COMMITTEE – WEDNESDAY 08 JUNE 2011

The above-mentioned Committee will meet in the **Meeting Room, Burntwood Library, Sankeys Corner** on **Wednesday 08 June 2011** (immediately following the Planning Applications Committee meeting) to discuss the following business.

Yours sincerely

Mary Danby (Mrs)
Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

3. MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Best Value Committee held on 24 February 2011 (Minute Nos. 17- 20) (**GREEN ENCLOSURE**).

4. BURNTWOOD TOWN STRATEGY

To agree the way forward in progressing the 12 No. Burntwood Town Strategy Objectives:

In summary, the action areas for initial development are as follows:

Burntwood Town Strategy objectives		Action areas		
		Primary area for consolidated action	Areas for direct action by the Town Council	Actions influencing other agencies and organisations
1	Built environment: retail and town centre development	1		
2	Identity and awareness of Burntwood		2	
3	Burntwood transport			3
4	Housing			4
5	Business and jobs		5	
6	Crime and anti-social behaviour			6
7	The local environment		7	
8	Leisure and social lifestyle		8 a/b	8 c/d
9	The learning community			9
10	Health and social care development			10
11	The self-helping community		11	
12	Partnerships development			12

Further details of these actions are set out in the following sections.

Action area 1: Retail and town centre development

Encourage and support the further development of quality retail and related facilities in Burntwood together with a wider range of social opportunities as well as the unlocking of unused brownfield land and property potentials.

Rationale

The major priority for the community and for agencies and organisations with a remit for Burntwood is the upgrading of the retail environment to add further opportunities for the local population. This would anchor income that is currently leaked out of the area in external shopping and related visits, and provide opportunities to create a genuine town centre for the area. Clearly, retail development will, in effect, be part of a town centre development scheme for the area. This is a District Core Strategy priority for Burntwood. As part of a town centre development, there is widespread support, in particular but not exclusively from young people, for the attraction of a cinema (and bowling) complex to the area.

Land and property owners should be encouraged to maximise the potential of key sites as this will utilise unused capacity and alleviate the intrusive effects of empty structures and unused land. In the short-term, planting and landscaping could be encouraged to improve the visual image of the areas involved.

Level and type of action by Town Council

Direct action by Town Council but primarily through activity to influence the strategic approach and decisions of relevant public agencies and landowners.

Initial actions

Unlike most areas for action, this is a more aspirational, medium and longer term area. Appropriate actions are as follows:

- In the short-term, work with developers to initiate new retail development. In addition, given community views on transport quality and leisure needs, it will important to,
- ensure that any developments are fully integrated with existing local centres and contain proposals for a public transport hub and, where feasible, additional leisure opportunities and informal meeting places.
- Work with land and property owners to improve the image and ultimately unlock the potential of unused and derelict sites and buildings.

Coordinating agency/group: Burntwood Town Council liaising with developers and local planning authorities.

Action area 2: Communication and the image of Burntwood as a place

Enhance internal and external communication and build the idea of Burntwood as an entity by working to integrate the constituent communities and developing a stronger image for the town.

Rationale

1. The town of Burntwood is not well known outside of the immediate area but could benefit from a raised awareness. Promotion through greater awareness could help to draw in more investment and visitors and generally add strength to the town's potential and income base.
2. Despite erosion in the significance of historical differences between constituent communities, identity is strong and there remains some competition between them. Preserving these local identities is valuable but promoting a consolidated Burntwood adds strength to the area's overall potential.

Level and type of action by Town Council

Direct action initiated by Town Council.

Initial actions

- Develop a brand image for the town of Burntwood, perhaps through the mechanism of a local design competition led by local people in the town.
- Investigate opportunities to improve local signage, introducing the idea of the 'Burntwood communities'.
- Work to agree on a single, unified website for the town and make effective use of Facebook sites for Burntwood.
- Over the medium-term, continue to consolidate and build the Burntwood image.
- Identify projects to promote and increase local cohesion and encourage self-promotion of Burntwood and offer awards

Lead agency/group: Burntwood Town Council working in conjunction with other agencies.

Action area 3: Public transport access and traffic management

Work to maintain and improve public transport access for all Burntwood residents and to develop improved parking facilities across the area.

Rationale

Whilst relatively good, some parts of Burntwood have poor access to bus services. Some parts of the area have inadequate parking facilities. Improvements to these will support local businesses and enhance the contentment of the community. Revisiting traffic flow arrangements on Chasetown High Street is viewed by some as a priority.

Level and type of action by Town Council

Primarily through activity to influence the strategic approach and decisions of relevant agencies.

Initial actions

- Encourage schemes to promote car sharing where feasible, and the wider use of public transport in general.
- Work with appropriate agencies - primarily Arriva and the District and County Councils, as well as developers - to improve facilities. Major hub and infrastructure improvements could potentially be part of a town centre development.
- Encourage an assessment of the potential to run additional bus services to less accessible parts of the Burntwood communities area.
- Support any viable proposals to reopen the Walsall-Lichfield rail link and to include a Burntwood station.

Coordinating agency/group: Burntwood Town Council

Action area 4: The development of housing in Burntwood

Work to ensure that the housing stock in Burntwood is improved and developed to high standards, with a focus on brownfield locations, and, where possible, with improved access to homes for young people and families.

Rationale

In terms of quality of life and community contentment, the residential environment is an important aspect of the town. There tends to be inadequate access to housing at low ends of the market and so affordable housing is important, in particular for young people and those on low incomes.

The community strongly supports housing development focused on brownfield land, in particular where poor quality, sometimes unused, buildings are in evidence. Some stress a need for higher quality design in new build schemes, where possible reflecting the 'village' feel of the community.

Level and type of action by Town Council

Primarily through activity to influence the strategic approach and decisions of relevant agencies.

Initial actions

- Signal an intention to support housing development that fits with the ethos of the Burntwood Town Strategy.
- Liaise with Bromford Living and other social housing providers in seeking to maximise contentment with social housing, and,
- work with developers to promote more affordable housing opportunities, especially for young people and families.
- Encourage quality design and brownfield land development in as much as it enhances the local environment.

Lead agency/group: Burntwood Town Council

Action area 5: Businesses and employers support

Integrate and support the existing business community and proactively encourage new and expanded business investment in Burntwood. Encourage the development of a full Chamber of Business and Trade for the area.

Rationale

A stronger, more consolidated business community would add representational strength to the area. Building from existing organisations such as the Rotary Club, a more active Chamber could engage in a range of community activities. Moreover, Burntwood is well-placed as a location for a range of business types and could attract start-ups seeking relatively low cost premises.

The voluntary sector and social enterprises are viewed as having a role to play in enabling skills acquisition and developing community-focused businesses.

Level and type of action by Town Council

Direct action initiated by Town Council.

Initial actions

- Work with local businesses and economic development agents to encourage local expansions, business in-movement and start-up, and thus increased local job opportunities.
- Support the growth and development of locally-based community and social enterprises.
- Work towards linking the town more closely to the estate business community for mutual benefits.
- Encourage the development of a local Chamber of Business and Trade for the area, if appropriate a sub-group of the existing Lichfield and Tamworth Chamber of Commerce and Industry, by identifying key initiators amongst the business community.

Coordinating agency/group: Burntwood Town Council

Action area 6: Fear of crime and anti-social behaviour

Work with local agencies and organisations to minimise the incidence of crime and anti-social behaviour, publicise achievements where they occur and reduce the local fear of crime.

Rationale

Although crime levels are relatively low, and initiatives have helped to substantially reduce the incidence of anti-social behaviour, it remains a prominent issue amongst some parts of the community. Actions are needed to continue the process of reduction, to provide an information flow for local people and thus to alleviate fear of crime tendencies. Professionals feel that there is a need to encourage better parenting over alcohol abuse and, at the same time, to investigate ways of building a more tolerant adult community.

Level and type of action by Town Council

Direct action by Town Council but primarily through activity to influence the strategic approach and decisions of relevant agencies.

Initial actions

- Work in partnership with ongoing initiatives such as Burntwood Init, Positive Futures and morph4us to minimise anti-social behaviour across Burntwood.
- Publicise achievements in reducing anti-social behaviour when they occur.
- Work more closely with the Burntwood Community Partnership Sergeant and other Staffordshire Police colleagues to coordinate community activities.
- Assess the potential for future information sharing with the Neighbourhood and Business Watch coordination databases.
- Recognise and support the actions developed within other strategy objectives - such as improved social opportunities - that will help to reduce anti-social behaviour.

Lead agency/group: Burntwood Town Council working in conjunction with local community members and groups.

Action area 7: Local environmental improvements

Engage in small-scale, localised environmental actions.

Rationale

The community recognises the poor state of some aspects of the local Burntwood environment and views this as a priority. The particular issues that need to be addressed - poorly kept pathways, dog waste, litter problems - need to be eased and could be supported by community champions (action area 11). Local residents could be encouraged to help keep their areas tidy by forming teams to carry out local environmental tasks such as clearing weeds from pathways and shopkeepers could be incentivised to maintain the pathways outside their premises.

As a longer-term action, more generally, there is a feeling, raised and supported by a number of community members, that a significant enhancement of key locations and corridors through environmental improvements, planting and visual improvement could be a valuable aspiration for the public realm. This would substantially enhance the quality feel of the area.

Level and type of action by Town Council

Direct action initiated by Town Council.

Initial actions

- Complete a broad-based audit of local environmental problems, especially identifying those that could be subject to community action.
- Encourage community members to work in groups to deal with problems such as litter and poor path maintenance. Where appropriate, work in conjunction with organisations such as Groundwork UK.
- Encourage shopkeepers to maintain the areas immediately outside their premises and provide planting and other visual enhancements.

Lead agency/group: Burntwood Town Council working in conjunction with local community members and groups

Action area 8: (a) Community events and festivals coordination

A network to coordinate the use of the array of community buildings across the town and to proactively publicise the opportunities available to the wider community, in particular focusing on local young and older people.

Rationale

Whilst there is a strong community spirit in the town, and a wide range of learning, community support, sports and other community events and activities take place, internal communication could be improved to raise awareness of opportunities and to help pull the community together. Improved information on community events and activities should help reduce problems such as anti-social behaviour. There is also scope for a greater involvement of community agencies such as churches and schools in the planning of key events

Level and type of action by Town Council

Direct action initiated by Town Council.

Initial actions

This set of actions, building from and mutually supporting those in Objective 2, will involve the following:

- Coordination of the array of activities taking place in Burntwood through the selected website, as well as publicising and promoting the town via an electronic 'what's on' guide.

Lead agency/group: Burntwood Town Council working in conjunction with local community members.

Action area 8: (b) Pathways and trails development

Formally recognise a network of paths and trails across and beyond the town in order to enhance walking and cycling opportunities.

Rationale

There are a number of existing paths and trails and potential for some further development to create a unified network. This would provide an additional amenity for the town, could link it more closely to Chasewater and indeed to heritage sites and buildings, and might attract some external visitors thus bringing income into the area.

Level and type of action by Town Council

Direct action initiated by Town Council.

Initial actions

- Set up a working group to assess the potential for a walks and trails development in the area.
- Complete an audit of existing routes.
- Where possible, consider linking walks and trails to heritage attractions, including Chasewater Country Park, in and around the town.

Lead agency/group: Burntwood Town Council working in conjunction with local community members.

Action area 8: (c) Support for children and young people's activities

Fostering improved social and leisure opportunities for children and young people in Burntwood.

Rationale

Given past problems of anti-social behaviour, and a feeling amongst parents and young people in the area that there is scope to improve facilities, there are benefits in seeking to generate social activities for this group. This will help to break down barriers between young people and the community. A wider range of facilities and social activities, and a more effective use of existing opportunities such as Burntwood Youth Centre, will lead to a more contented youth community. There is a lack of informal opportunities for young people to meet and few suitable hubs - such as fast food restaurants or bowling alleys and the provision of this type of venue would be a major benefit. Parents in some parts of Burntwood feel that there are insufficient or inadequate play areas for young children.

Level and type of action by Town Council

Direct action by Town Council but primarily through activity to influence the strategic approach and decisions of relevant agencies.

Initial actions

- Publicise the array of existing social opportunities via web-based or social media methods (see action areas 2 and 8(a)).
- Work to provide more choice for young people in terms of informal opportunities. This links to action area 1 and the development of social facilities such as a cinema complex.
- Extend the activity base of the Burntwood Wakes Festival to include specific activities for young people. Work with the young people representatives to plan and deliver activities.
- Liaise with District Council colleagues to review access to play areas for young children.

Lead agency/group: Burntwood Town Council working in conjunction with local community members and groups.

Action area 8: (d) Social activities for the wider community

Work towards improvements in the level of and access to social activities for the Burntwood communities.

Rationale

Social facilities - such as a cinema and bowling complex - have long been high on the community agenda, especially for young people. Although there are a range of social activities across the area, the community view is that there is scope for improvement, and for both younger and older age groups. Despite an assessment that found it not to be feasible, there is strong support from the community for the development of a large community facility that would be capable of hosting major large capacity events such as concerts and social gatherings. Given resource limitations and the need for full feasibility assessment, this must be a long term aspiration. In the meantime, better coordination of existing community facilities would be beneficial.

Over the longer-term, many recognise the potential for a major review and overhaul of parks and open spaces, including children’s play areas and facilities for young people.

Level and type of action by Town Council

Direct action by Town Council but primarily through activity to influence the strategic approach and decisions of relevant agencies.

Initial actions

- Work with partner agencies and organisations, including developers, to maximise the opportunities for the development of social facilities, whether as part of regeneration and/or housing schemes or otherwise.
- Continue to develop and build from existing intergenerational activity in the area, for example in the community arts arena.
- Maximise the awareness and use of existing community facilities through coordinated activities (see action area 8(a)).

Lead agency/group: Burntwood Town Council

Action area 9: Learning and training

Building a stronger learning community for young people and adults within Burntwood.

Rationale

Local educational provision is highly regarded and providers are keen to continue and extend their links with the community. Building stronger links with schools, and making fuller use of their facilities, will help to integrate their activities within the wider area. There is scope to build on the accumulated experience of intergenerational activities to develop this aspect further. Recognising the successes of initiatives already facilitated by local agencies, there is also a need to maintain and enhance learning opportunities for older people. Professionals feel that there would be benefits in delivering more services for young people actually in Burntwood.

Level and type of action by Town Council

Direct action by Town Council but primarily through activity to influence the strategic approach and decisions of relevant agencies.

Initial actions

- Develop closer links with education providers in the town to explore beneficial community project activities, including intergenerational working.
- Support the maintenance and further provision of learning opportunities for the non-school community.
- Encourage the delivery of young people's services in Burntwood itself.

Lead agency/group: Burntwood Town Council

Action area 10: Health and social care development

Support the development of two health centres in Burntwood and attempt to ensure that all members of the community have effective access to services. Encourage the provision of high quality care facilities for older people.

Rationale

There is a recognised need for improved facilities for the delivery of health and social care services in Burntwood. Plans are in development for consolidation on two sites, providing an opportunity to provide wider specialist services and to integrate the buildings with community leisure and related needs. With planned new developments being linked to sports and other community activities, there is scope to help build a stronger and more integrated community.

Level and type of action by Town Council

Primarily through activity to influence the strategic approach and decisions of relevant agencies.

Initial actions

- Support the development of new health facilities and work to ensure that these are as community friendly as possible, as well as effectively served by transport links.
- Monitor the provision of care facilities for older people and work to achieve high quality in this area.

Coordinating agency/group: Burntwood Town Council

Action area 11: Community champions and volunteering initiative

Encourage community participation and volunteering in Burntwood and identify community champions on recognisable needs.

Rationale

In an era of relative austerity in public funding, opportunities to engage in revenue projects are constrained. With a strong record of community involvement in landscape and development issues or in response to particular challenges such as anti-social behaviour, Burntwood is well-placed to further develop and sustain a strong community involvement and volunteering ethos with regard to a range of issues. These include local environmental actions, intergenerational activities in skills exchange, and the organisation of activities by and for young people. There is also scope to encourage volunteering amongst retired and older age groups

Level and type of action by Town Council

Direct action initiated by Town Council.

Initial actions

- Encourage the completion of an audit of volunteering activities in the Burntwood area, reflecting on the achievements of initiatives such as Forward Action Burntwood, Burntwood Init, and church-based groups.
- Identify and recruit potential community champions.
- Complete an assessment of areas where community-led action could feasibly help to improve the area and build on its strengths.
- Explore examples of good practice in community self-help from other areas.
- Produce guidance on the role of champions for the area.

Lead agency/group: Burntwood Town Council working in conjunction with local community members and groups.

Action area 12: Partnerships development

Work to maintain, enhance and develop effective existing and new partnerships within and beyond the town.

Rationale

A wide range of successful partnership working occurs in Burntwood, whether between the Town, District or County Councils, between these and community organisations, or between various groups. Effective partnership working, particularly where it engages the community in joint initiatives and activities, is essential for the successful development of the town. There is scope to involve young people more fully in the development process.

Level and type of action by Town Council

Direct action by Town Council but primarily through activity to influence the strategic approach and decisions of relevant agencies.

Initial actions

- Promote an ethos of cooperation and support, engaging with appropriate partnerships as appropriate.
- Explore new partnerships as opportunities arise.
- Work more closely with the local business community to foster mutually beneficial initiatives.
- Consider setting up an advisory youth committee linked to the Town Council.
- Seek to maintain funding support for a Community Development Worker for the area.
- Continue to work with the District and County Councils to focus on, promote and help deliver,
 - Lichfield Core Strategy and other Council priorities as they relate to Burntwood;
 - high quality development guidelines for Burntwood; as well as important environmental sustainability and biodiversity assessment and support; and,
 - to ensure a recognition of the needs and aspirations of the Burntwood communities as set out in the strategy.

Lead agency/group: Burntwood Town Council

A final operational action area is recommended.

Burntwood guidance

Use the objectives developed for the strategy as a template to guide the position of the Town Council in actions, advisory activity and other roles.

Rationale

The objectives developed for the strategy are appropriate for use as guiding principles in making decisions on grants, planning and related issues. In establishing a position on local matters, their use will ensure that these community-based views are key bases for Town Council decisions.

Level and type of action by Town Council

Direct action confined to the Town Council.

Initial actions

- Set up a working group to review and refine the objectives as Council guidance.

Lead agency/group: Burntwood Town Council

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BEST VALUE COMMITTEE
HELD AT BURNTWOOD LIBRARY, SANKEYS CORNER, BURNTWOOD
ON THURSDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2011 COMMENCING AT 8.05 P.M.**

PRESENT

Councillor Norman (in the Chair)
Councillors Mrs Evans, Humphreys and Isaacs

In attendance:

Mrs M Danby, Town Clerk
Dr Rick Ball, Localecon Associates
One member of the public

17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Constable and Dr Hassell.

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

19. MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of a Meeting of the Best Value Committee held on 01 December 2010 (Minute Nos. 7 - 16) be approved as a correct record.

20. BURNTWOOD TOWN STRATEGY

Dr Rick Ball gave a brief Progress Report on the Burntwood Town Strategy and presented the final draft Strategy document. Dr Ball requested that the Committee consider the following aspects of the draft Strategy:

- The format and structure
- The Vision
- The key objectives
- The initial areas of action
- The scope and need (if any) for consultation with partner agencies
- The final form for publication

The Committee **AGREED that:**

- a) The format and structure of the document was acceptable as it stood.
- b) The Vision was acceptable as written.
- c) The key objectives were acceptable as written.
- d) The initial areas of action were acceptable as written.
- e) The Burntwood Town Strategy be put to appropriate Officers within the County and District Councils (i.e. Youth and Community Service, Economic and Business, Planning, Community and Partnerships).

- f) A simplified version be published containing a brief background, ethos, Vision, objectives and initial areas for action, with the full version being retained in-house as a technical report for consultation by interested parties and uploaded to the Town Council's website.
- g) Committee Members will submit any further comments they may have on the draft document via the Town Clerk no later than Friday 04 March 2010.
- h) The Town Council be requested to consider whether it wished the reference to Localecon Associates to be retained within the final document.

RECOMMENDATION That, having regard to the above, the Town Council approve and adopt the final draft Burntwood Town Strategy.

(The Meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.)

Signed.....

Dated.....