

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD AT LAMBOURNE HOUSE, BRIDGE CROSS ROAD, BURNTWOOD
ON THURSDAY 19 DECEMBER 2013 COMMENCING AT 7.00 P.M.**

PRESENT

Councillor Campbell (in the Chair)
Councillors Mrs Brettell, Mrs Evans, Isaacs and Taylor

In attendance

Councillor Mrs Tranter
Mrs M Danby, Town Clerk

47. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Mrs Rigby

48. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

Councillors Mrs Evans and Isaacs declared an interest with regard to the proposed Ring and Ride Scheme (Minute No. 49 below) as they both sit on the LDC Community Transport Working Group.

49. BURNTWOOD TOWN STRATEGY ACTION AREA 3: PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACCESS AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP – PROPOSED RING AND RIDE SCHEME (Minute No. 43 refers)

Councillor Mrs Tranter advised the Committee of discussions she had had with the LDC Community Transport Manager to explore the possibility of a Ring and Ride Scheme being provided for Burntwood:

One of the aims of the Burntwood Town Strategy is to improve transport links. Bus routes often do not operate on convenient routes for people living on the various estates to access. The transport strategy group carried out a survey and one of the questions was would people welcome a ring and ride service.

It was noted that LDC Community Transport would be happy to supply a 16 seat mini-bus on a Monday, Thursday and Friday as vehicles are booked out on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. It was requested that Burntwood Town Council would like to run a pilot scheme for a period of one year, possibly beginning in January 2014. Driver training to MIDAS level would be given free, if BTC can encourage one or two volunteer drivers from Burntwood to help, although there are volunteer drivers already working on the Community Transport team.

A daily cost for the use of the mini-bus and volunteer driver would be £90 per day. This includes all associated costs (fuel, maintenance, insurance etc), amounting to approximately £14,000 for the year (possibly excluding Bank Holidays, so may be a little less).

A £2 fee each way be charged with no concessions (including bus passes). A volunteer or two would be needed on the bus to collect fares – unless a different payment scheme can be used. Community Transport does not wish its volunteer drivers to be responsible for collecting/holding money.

Existing BTC office staff should be utilised to schedule the appointments in the interim at least for the pilot scheme, which should be for a period of 12 months.

Initially a proposed catchment area of two miles from the Town Council's office would be covered.

The Ring and Ride Service be operated during the hours of 9.00 a.m. - 3.30 p.m. Monday, Thursday and Friday with people being instructed to call between the hours of 9.30 a.m. – 12.30 p.m. to book journeys. Two days advance notice must be given.

An invoice will be raised by agreement to Burntwood Town Council on a weekly/monthly basis – to be advised.

Anyone can pre-book a collection on the Ring and Ride but may not just jump on a bus en- route as this contravenes the Section 19 Permit by which the Community/Charity Transport works.

The Committee discussed the above information at length and agreed that the following recommendation be put to the Town Council at its January 2014 meeting:

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT:

- a) The Town Council contract with LDC Community Transport for a six month trial period for a Ring and Ride service to be operated on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays (excluding Bank Holidays) from 9.00 a.m. – 3.30 p.m. from 01 April 2014.
- b) The BTS Action Area 3 Working Group be requested to give more thought to solving the issue of attracting volunteers to collect the fares and possibly one or two more volunteer drivers.
- c) The BTS Action Area 3 Working Group be requested to give more thought on whether tickets or tokens might be pre-purchased from the BTC office by users and how these might be administered on the vehicle.
- d) Clarification be sought as to whether the volunteer fare collectors would be covered by LDC's insurance.
- e) A magnetic sign be purchased to be affixed externally to the vehicle during the above hours of operation stating that it is sponsored by Burntwood Town Council.
- f) The Scheme be administered by existing Town Council staff.
- g) That the six month trial be funded from BTS funding contained within the 2013/14 BTC budget and that this funding be "ring fenced" within Earmarked Reserves for this purpose.

50. MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on 31 October 2013 (Minute Nos. 27 – 46) be agreed as a correct record **SUBJECT TO** the following amendment being made:

Minute No. 32 PROPOSAL FOR LONGER OFFICE OPENING HOURS

The word "functions" to be omitted from the Resolution, the Resolution therefore now reads:

"That on the basis of the available information the Town Council does not look to extend its office opening hours until such time as additional services are undertaken by the Town Council."

Minute No. 41 BTC OFFICE: REPLACEMENT SHOP FRONT WINDOW AND DOOR (AUTO SWING DOOR)

It was noted that the Landlord for the Town Council's office had confirmed that he bears no responsibility for replacing the existing shop front and door – this responsibility lies with the service provider, i.e. the Town Council. The Town Clerk was requested to clarify the Council's position with its Insurers prior to the Planning Application being submitted and the Purchase Order subsequently being placed.

51. RYECROFT SHOPS: CAR PARK

Members were advised that over recent months the Burntwood High Street Innovation Group (the Burntwood Business Crew) had discussed the poor state of the car park at the Ryecroft shops. The following text had been extracted from a report presented recently to the Lichfield District Council's (LDC) Cabinet:

"There has been a long-standing issue (over 10 years) with the car park at Ryecroft shops. The surfacing is uneven and potholed. There are drains with no covering and there are regular health and safety incidents as a result. The traders have reported that the car park has resulted in a significant dip in sales and difficulties for customers.

The car park is in private ownership, however ownership has consistently changed hands and it has not been possible to track down the owner.

The car park already has a number of legal charges against it, following work carried out by LDC's Housing team to rectify health and safety issues with the adjacent housing.

It has been agreed that chasing the landlord to deliver the works to the car park will not deliver a result within a timeframe that will help the businesses. As such, the Burntwood Business Crew has agreed to invest up to £5,000 of the High Street Innovation Fund, subject to LDC approval.

The local County Councillor for Lichfield – Burntwood North has offered to contribute £2,000 to the project (subject to application approval).

Burntwood Town Councillors have also indicated that BTC could consider matching the High Street Innovation Fund contribution (subject to Council approval), taking the potential invest pot to £12,000.

Quotes for the work are within this budget, and the works could also include improvements to lighting and pavement repairs.

The traders in Ryecroft have also indicated that they would be willing to invest a further £300-£500 (subject to formal agreement) annually into a central pot to support the upkeep of the car park/shopping area through a Community Interest Company (to be established). Formal consultation with traders will begin in November 2013."

The Committee noted that the above proposal meets the objectives of the BTS Action Area 7: Local Environmental Improvements.

After lengthy discussion the Committee agreed that the following recommendation be put to the Town Council at its January 2014 meeting:

RECOMMENDATION That the Town Council commit the sum of £3,000 towards the above improvements **SUBJECT TO** the District Council seeking a Legal Charge to eventually recoup the money expended to enable the contributors to be refunded.

52. 2014/15 BUDGET (DRAFT)

Members considered the draft 2014/15 General Budget (**Appendix 1A**) and the draft 2014/15 Burntwood Cemetery Budget (**Appendix 1B**) and agreed that the following recommendations be put to the Town Council at its January 2014 meeting:

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT:

- a) The Town Council does not renew its membership of the Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association (2014/15 subscription £1,428) as the Town Council does not use the services of that organisation sufficiently to justify paying the annual subscription.
- b) The Town Council does not increase its fees and charges for Burntwood Cemetery for the 2014/15 financial year.
- c) The Town Council declare a 2014/15 Precept in the sum of £222,725 on the District Council – this equates to a 0% increase on the Band D Council Tax payer for the coming financial year.
- d) The budgeted shortfall of £22,072 on the General Budget be met from the Town Council's General Reserves.

(The Meeting closed at 8.37 p.m.)

Signed

Date