

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BURNTWOOD TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE MAIN HALL AT BURNTWOOD MEMORIAL INSTITUTE, RUGELEY ROAD,
BURNTWOOD ON WEDNESDAY 12 JANUARY 2022 COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM**

PRESENT

Councillor Evans [in the Chair]

Councillors Birch, Bishop [from 6.03 pm], Bullock, D Ennis, L Ennis, Flanagan, Gittings, Kirkham [from 6.10 pm], Loughbrough Rudd, Norman, R Place, Tapper, Taylor, Willis-Croft and Woodward

In attendance

S Lightfoot, Town Clerk

Ms J Minor, Deputy Clerk

County Councillor Cox

County Councillor Wilcox

One member of the public

Councillor Evans welcomed Mr Lightfoot, new Chief Officer, to his first meeting.

EMMANUEL CHURCH

Councillor Evans welcomed Pastors Rod Lewis, John and Kala Blackah from Emmanuel Church. Pastor Lewis informed Members that he was retiring after 47 years and was handing over to Pastors John and Karla Blackah who both gave background information on how they had come to Burntwood and how they wished to continue Rod's work and work in partnership with the Town Council and others. Both Councillors Evans and Woodward thanked Pastor Lewis for his years of service.

INTRODUCTION TO HEALTHWATCH STAFFORDSHIRE

Councillor Evans welcomed Mr David Bassett, Community Outreach Lead South East Staffordshire to the meeting. Mr Bassett explained that Healthwatch Staffordshire was established after the Francis Inquiry into Stafford Hospital. He explained that Healthwatch Staffordshire are an independent watchdog that has been formed to make local health and social care services better for people by ensuring that their views and experiences are considered by those entrusted to design and run services. Like all local Healthwatch bodies, Healthwatch Staffordshire has a statutory seat on the local Health and Wellbeing Boards. They also have the statutory power to enter and view health and social care. They also have a statutory duty to report annually to Healthwatch England and publicly on engagement activities and how they have represented patients and social care users as well as the impact of these activities. Mr Bassett explained that engaging with the public was vital and the telephone helpline [0800 051 8371] is open Monday – Friday 9am to 5pm. Members of the public can also email enquiries@healthwatchstaffordshire.co.uk, visit the website and they also have Facebook and Twitter social media accounts. Mr Bassett explained that the current hot topics were access to primary care, access to NHS dentistry, delays in hospital appointments and procedures [primarily due to Covid-19], hospital discharges, access to adult social care, access to mental health and wellbeing services. Mr Bassett gave examples of members of the public that he has helped through his role as Community Outreach Lead.

Councillor Evans thanked Mr Bassett for his very informative talk. Councillor Norman asked Mr Bassett if he gave evidence to Scrutiny at Staffordshire County Council and referred to the two health centres which Burntwood were promised. Mr Bassett confirmed that they do pick up matters of concern and refer on where appropriate however, they do take up individual cases. Councillor Woodward stated that the information provided by Mr Bassett is something that Councillors could pass onto our constituents.

PUBLIC FORUM

No questions were raised by members of the public.

92. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Banevicius, Brown [Dispensation], Ho, M Place and Westwood.

93. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

None declared.

94. MINUTES

The Chair reminded Members that they were being asked to comment solely on the accuracy of the Minutes.

Reference was made to Minute No. 83 - Council Budget 2022-23 and how the named votes were recorded and it was **AGREED** that it be recorded which Councillor specifically voted which way.

Alternative Budget – Amendment Tabled

Proposed by Councillor R Place, seconded by Councillor Ho, and following a named vote [6 For, 12 Against]

Banevicius, S	Against
Birch, R	Against
Bishop, B	Against
Bullock, A	Against
Evans, D	Against
Flanagan, P	Against
Gittings, C	Against
Greensill, N	Against
Ho, W	For
Loughbrough-Rudd, T	For
Norman, S	Against
Place, M	For
Place, R	For
Tapper, S	For
Taylor, P	Against
Westwood, B	Against
Willis-Croft, K	For
Woodward, S	Against

RESOLVED That the amendment to the budget as proposed for 2022/23 be not approved.

Council Budget 2022-23

Proposed by Councillor Woodward, seconded by Councillor Birch, and following a named vote [12 For, 6 Against]

Banevicius, S	For
Birch, R	For

Bishop, B	For
Bullock, A	For
Evans, D	For
Flanagan, P	For
Gittings, C	For
Greensill, N	For
Ho, W	Against
Loughbrough-Rudd, T	Against
Norman, S	For
Place, M	Against
Place, R	Against
Tapper, S	Against
Taylor, P	For
Westwood, B	For
Willis-Croft, K	Against
Woodward, S	For

RESOLVED That the budget for 2022/23 be approved.

Councillor Birch referred to Minute No. 83 – Council Budget 2022-23 and in particular the final paragraph on page 33. He stated that the increase in the usage of food banks was due to Conservative Party policy and the word “redemption” should be replaced with the word “exemption”.

It was proposed by Councillor Woodward, seconded by Councillor D Ennis, and following a unanimous show of hands it was

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 16 November 2021 [Minute Nos. 72-91] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

95. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair read out the following statement:

“Since the last Town Council meeting I have attended a number of functions, but unfortunately some had to be cancelled due to inclement weather and this was disappointing for families at Christmas time. These included the Christmas Event at Sankey's Corner, together with the market and the switching on of the lights and the switch on at Swan Island. However, all the gifts intended for the children were fortunately distributed to many worthy groups in Burntwood. I did manage to attend the function at Boney Hay along with a number of my colleagues, which was enjoyed by all and we welcomed Christmas music courtesy of Chase Terrace Scouts Band.

Other events I have attended have been at Chasetown Football Club, where a group of VW enthusiasts were raising money for CRISIS, a very worthy cause. I have visited the new Community Store at Sankey's Corner, which is doing a great job helping the environment by saving food that is perfectly good but would otherwise go to landfill. I urge you all to visit and join if you haven't already.

Last Saturday I attended the opening of the Wellness and Yoga Centre at Swan Island, which looks as if it may well be very successful and is yet another bonus for Burntwood. In the evening a number of Councillors and the Deputy Clerk, attended Burntwood Institute to celebrate their 100th Anniversary. It was a great evening enjoyed by all and the entertainment was excellent.

Finally, I want to encourage all of you to consider what you can do towards making Burntwood a Dementia Friendly Town. Covid has held up progress, but we now need to work hard towards getting accreditation. We are working with the Alzheimer's Society as we really need to ensure we do what we can to help those suffering from this awful disease and their carers. Shortly we will be having an exhibition in the Library, put together by MHA, Ideas Alliance and the Town Council and we are aiming for it to be displayed afterwards at various venues around Burntwood, so I hope you can help raise awareness by encouraging people to attend. We are also still asking for who can to produce forget-me-knots in any form as it is a symbol of the Alzheimer's Society, so please do what you can to pass the message on and become actively involved in the campaign."

96. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

Councillor Flanagan asked the following question:

"As many of you will be aware, Stables Way is a major thoroughfare serving West Burntwood, which over the course of about 0.9 kilometres, drops by some 25 meters in height.

This ratio means that in times of freezing temperatures, the road from Bleak House Farm to the Skoda Garage roundabout becomes a major hazard for drivers and potentially with pedestrians as a result of skidding vehicles as well.

In the 20 years plus since Stables Way was built, Staffordshire County Council have not added this road to their gritting list.

At the beginning of December 2021, the road became gridlocked, with lorries; coaches and cars skidding down the road one by one, with little hope of stopping. Horns were being blasted to signal users of the roundabout leading from Cannock to Burntwood Town Centre that no-one could stop on the hill. I was contacted by constituents to assist, again, in having this road added to the gritting schedule, however as this is not within the remit of Burntwood Town Council responsibilities, I'd appreciate its support.

The Country Councillor for Burntwood North has been made aware of this issue.

Can I ask that you as a leader and us as a council, actively pursue Staffordshire County Council with regard to keeping our constituents safe, as well as other road users passing through Chase Terrace?"

Councillor Woodward said that she was very much aware of the need for Stables Way to be on the gritting schedule and had asked for a reassessment in her former role as a County Councillor. She was also aware of the recent incidents and had continued to lobby both the SCC Cabinet Member and Highways Officers on this. Although not within the direct remit of the Town Council, Councillor Woodward said that issues of concern for local people are issues of concern to Town Councillors. She was happy to report that earlier that day she had received confirmation that the traffic data had now been assembled and that officers were "hopeful" that Stables Way would soon be included in the gritting schedules. However, she would continue to lobby on this matter as she knew Councillor Flanagan would too.

97. CHANGE OF PAYROLL SOFTWARE

Councillor Woodward referred to the issues which have arisen this week with Unity Trust and authorisation of payments. Councillor R Place, who has successfully authorised payments together with Councillor Birch previously, stated that there had been a blockage in the system which should work seamlessly.

Councillor Flanagan referred to 5.0 – Financial Context of the report and it was assumed that the VAT only element of the cost could be reclaimed.

It was proposed by Councillor Woodward, seconded by Councillor D Ennis, and following a unanimous show of hands it was

RESOLVED That it be noted the change in software used to pay Town Council staff and the resulting changes in billing arrangements and the Town Clerk be authorised to review the current financial arrangements including software and access issues and to bring further recommendations to a future meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee.

98. UPDATE ON INCOME AND EXPENDITURE COMPARED TO BUDGET

Councillor Norman referred to Cost Centre 206 – Hanging Baskets and Planters and in order to brighten up Burntwood, this could be reviewed in the future. Councillor R Place agreed as there was £580,000 currently in reserves some of this money could be used.

It was proposed by Councillor Woodward, seconded by Councillor D Ennis, and following a unanimous show of hands it was

RESOLVED That the current position against budget be noted.

99. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – 23 NOVEMBER 2021 AND 08 DECEMBER 2021

It was proposed by Councillor Birch, seconded by Councillor Gittings, and following a unanimous show of hands it was

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Planning and Development Committee held on 23 November 2021 [Minute Nos. 21-25] and 08 December 2021 [Minute Nos. 26-30] be approved as a correct record.

100. COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE – 17 NOVEMBER 2021

Councillor D Ennis referred to Minute No. 30 – Wakes [Queen's Platinum Jubilee] 2022 and in particular the final paragraph on page 11. Councillor R Place confirmed that the Platinum Jubilee celebrations were an item on the agenda for next week's Hammerwich Parish Council meeting where the idea of spreading the celebrations around the Town will be discussed.

Councillor Woodward referred to meetings which had been held previously with other Parish Councils which border the Town to try and resolve long standing issues [i.e. the burial ground] and it may be the appropriate time to re-instate them. It was **AGREED** to set up a partnership meeting with Hammerwich Parish Council.

It was proposed by Councillor Woodward, seconded by Councillor Gittings, and following a unanimous show of hands it was

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Community and Partnerships Committee held on 17 November 2021 [Minute Nos. 23-31] be approved as a correct record.

101. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 30 NOVEMBER 2021

It was proposed by Councillor Woodward, seconded by Councillor D Ennis, and following a unanimous show of hands it was

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 30 November 2021 [Minute Nos. 10-19] be approved as a correct record.

102. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 21 DECEMBER 2021

It was proposed by Councillor Norman, seconded by Councillor Bishop, and following a unanimous show of hands it was

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21 December 2021 [Minute Nos. 1-7] be approved as a correct record.

[The Meeting closed at 7.09 pm]

Signed

Date