

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BURNTWOOD TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE MEETING ROOM, BURNTWOOD LIBRARY, BRIDGE CROSS ROAD,
BURNTWOOD ON THURSDAY 12 JANUARY 2023 COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM**

PRESENT

Councillor Birch [in the Chair]

Councillors Bacon, Bishop, Bullock, Coe, D Ennis, L Ennis, Evans, Flanagan, Greenhill, Kirkham, Norman, M Place, R Place, Taylor, Westwood, Willis-Croft and Woodward

In attendance

S Lightfoot, Town Clerk

Ms J Minor, Deputy Clerk

Ms A James, Finance Officer

Ms K Horner, Community Development and Engagement Officer

County Councillor Cox

County Councillor Wilcox [from 6.15 pm]

One member of the public

PUBLIC FORUM

No questions were raised by members of the public.

Councillor Birch referred to the passing of former Town and District Councillor, Brenda Constable who had died recently. A minute silence was held in memory of Brenda Constable. Councillor Woodward explained that she had worked alongside Brenda and her late husband Doug [Brenda's soul mate who had died in 2020] for many years. They had had great respect for each other and were friends and felt that Brenda had left her mark on Burntwood. Councillor Norman said that Brenda always contributed to District and Town Council meetings and was already missed before this sad news. Councillor Bacon stated that she together with District Councillor Tranter had visited Brenda every Tuesday. She stated that Brenda and Doug had offered help and support when she was first elected all those years ago. Councillor Bacon commented that "Brenda was a lady, and Doug was a gentleman". She confirmed that the funeral would be held at St Anne's Church on Friday 10 February at 11.30am.

66. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Banevicius, Brown [dispensation], Gittings and Ho.

67. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

Councillor Woodward declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item No. 7 – Asset of Community Value – Chase Terrace Methodist Church as she was a member of the church which ceased to be a place of worship in August 2022.

Councillor Woodward declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item No. 12 – Community and Partnerships Committee Minutes dated 09 December 2022 and in particular Minute No. 42.1 – Better Burntwood Fund - Burntwood Be A Friend as she is a Trustee.

Councillor Evans declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item No. 7 – Asset of Community Value – Chase Terrace Methodist Church as she was a member and steward of the church which ceased to be a place of worship in August 2022.

68. MINUTES

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

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 2022 [Minute Nos. 50-65] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

69. CHAIR'S REPORT

Councillor Birch read out the following statement:

The Christmas events over the festive season were a real success with a wonderful community spirit and a chance for people to come together. The Boney Hay one was more challenging due to some very heavy rain, but it was nonetheless attended by some members of the public and the Rotary Club as always were present to facilitate the children being able to see Santa. I would like to put on record my thanks to the Rotary Club who never let the town down with their involvement and support for the Christmas events. They also provided the amazing Christmas Tree at Swan Island which always brightens up the area for us all.

The Council will continue to plan for further events in the year ahead with the usual events programme for the Wakes, Play in the Parks and the markets and we will of course have the Coronation of King Charles in May. We will be looking to see what we can do to recognise this national event.

I would like to take this opportunity to make people aware of the menopause Café's that have been opening up. There is one in Lichfield on the 28 January and there was also recently one held in Burntwood at the Redmore Pub on The 08 January. This is an important subject for all women and should also be of importance to all men who support women through this period of their lives. A quick google search will show the dates of future events where people may be able to go and have a chat about the issues they face because of the menopause. It would be great to see these events grow and raise awareness of the menopause as a health and wellbeing matter for us all.

Raffle prizes for the Chair's charity event will be gladly received if anyone has anything suitable, they would like to donate. The charity is Papyrus which prevents suicide in young people and I will be hosting a charity quiz night at St Matthews Sports and Social Club on Saturday 25 February. It would be great if you are able to come and join us by forming a team and taking part.

I would also like to welcome Kat Horner to the team of Council staff. Kat is our Community Development and Engagement Officer and she is a very welcome addition to our team.

70. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

None received.

71. UPDATE ON INCOME AND EXPENDITURE COMPARED TO BUDGET FOR FIRST 8 MONTHS OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR

The Chair explained that this item was for information purposes only and no decision was required by the Council. The report showed income and expenditure compared to budget for the first eight months, April to November, of the financial year.

72. ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE – CHASE TERRACE METHODIST CHURCH

Councillor Woodward reported that the Community Development and Engagement Officer had drafted a Community Asset Value nomination for the former Chase Terrace Methodist Church. If approved this would allow Lichfield District Council to place the building on a register so that the community value would have to be considered by developers or purchasers in the future, giving some protection to this asset for the benefit of the Town. Councillor Woodward felt that Chase Terrace Methodist Church was a much-valued asset in the community. She explained that the church had ceased as a place of worship in August 2022. Prior to Covid-19 the church had been well used however numbers had since dropped. She stated that there were not many community buildings left and referred to the Cherry Close building. She confirmed that the church was currently on the market for sale.

Councillor Woodward explained that discussions had taken place during the Town Deal Meetings with Lichfield District Council with regards to perhaps forming some sought of partnership however the first step would be to register the church as an asset of community value. Members were informed that an e-petition had been started and that hard copies of the petition were available.

Councillor D Ennis stated that he was frequently been asked by residents and community groups for cost effective community space with a car park. He referred to the Town Council's adopted Neighbourhood Plan – retaining churches for public use and he felt that the Town Council needed to look at more buildings in Burntwood which could become an Asset of Community Value.

Councillor Norman stated that he supported this action however evidence was needed to demonstrate support.

Councillor Flanagan felt that there was very limited community facilities in that part of Chase Terrace and fully endorsed this action.

Councillor Taylor confirmed that with minimal publicity the e-petition had reached 231 with effect from 13 January.

Councillor Willis-Croft referred to the fact that the church could come up for auction.

Councillor R Place stated that the church was not the Town Council's to sell or the Town Council's to buy. He felt that potentially there could be two community facilities in Chase Terrace as he referred to the development of The Oak, however, he fully supported the action.

Councillor Evans felt that it was important to retain historic buildings as there was now very little land in Burntwood as a whole and supported the action.

Councillor Woodward explained that by registering the building as an asset of community value it would stop the auction process. She confirmed that currently the asking price was £150,000.

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

RESOLVED That the Town Clerk be authorised to nominate Chase Terrace Methodist Church as an Asset of Community Value.

73. APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS FOR 5 YEARS COMMENCING 01 APRIL 2022

The Chair explained that this item was for information purposes only and no decision was required by the Council. The report confirmed the appointment of Mazars LLP as the Town Council's external auditors for the 5 financial years from 2022/23 to 2026/27, with a 5% increase in the annual fee to £1,050 plus VAT.

74. BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2023/2024

Councillor Woodward explained that this year, we are proposing that we do not increase the precept as we are very much aware of the financial pressures being experienced by our residents.

Councillor R Place welcomed the zero percent increase however he referred to the reserves being held by the Town Council and felt that perhaps last years four percent increase was not in fact needed. Councillor Woodward explained that we are an ambitious Council and that the very modest increase of 3p per week last year contributed towards the introduction of the Burntwood Response and Repair Team service and the new post of Community Development and Engagement Officer. She felt that getting the balance right and continuing to provide services was always a challenge.

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

RESOLVED That the budget for 2023/24 be approved.

75. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – 15 NOVEMBER 2022 AND 14 DECEMBER 2022

It was proposed by Councillor Flanagan, seconded by Councillor Willis-Croft, and following a unanimous show of hands it was

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning and Development Committee held on 15 November 2022 [Minute Nos. 37-42] and 14 December 2022 [Minute Nos. 43-47] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

76. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 01 DECEMBER 2022

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

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 01 December 2022 [Minute Nos. 39-49] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

77. COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE – 09 DECEMBER 2022

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

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Community and Partnerships Committee held on 09 December 2022 [Minute Nos. 37-44] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

78. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED That under the Public Bodies [Admissions of Meeting] Act 1960 [Section 2] [and as expended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972], the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information.

79. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 01 DECEMBER 2022

See Confidential Minute.

80. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

See Confidential Minute.

[The Meeting closed at 6.56 pm]

Signed

Date