

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BURNTWOOD TOWN COUNCIL  
HELD IN THE MAIN HALL AT BURNTWOOD MEMORIAL INSTITUTE, RUGELEY ROAD,  
BURNTWOOD ON WEDNESDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2022 COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM**

**PRESENT**

Councillor Birch [in the Chair]

Councillors Banevicius, Bishop, Bullock, Coe, D Ennis, L Ennis, Evans, Flanagan, Gittings, Ho, Kirkham [from 6.07 pm], Norman, Willis-Croft and Woodward

**In attendance**

S Lightfoot, Town Clerk

Ms J Minor, Deputy Clerk

Mrs Bacon

R Price, Staffordshire Local Democracy Reporter

**BURNTWOOD BE A FRIEND**

The Chair welcomed Joanne Dodds, Burntwood Be A Friend Project Co-ordinator to the meeting. Ms Dodds explained that Burntwood Be A Friend [BBAF] was a community focused charity run by the people of Burntwood, for the people of Burntwood. She explained that BBAF was born out of necessity during the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020 and was now an evolving organisation that reacts and responds positively to the changing needs of the community. In November 2021 BBAF launched its Community Store based at Jarvis Court at Sankey's Corner which is accessible to all – fully inclusive so as to remove any stigma and encourages less food waste. It is run by paid staff and BBAF volunteers.

Ms Dodds stated that their aims are to reduce isolation and promote emotional and mental wellbeing; relieve socio-economic deprivation; grow and support thriving volunteering and increase community connections. She stated that they also run a men's walk on Mondays and a women's walk on Thursdays. The walks provide a safe environment to talk and reduces isolation. BBAF also have a community garden located in the grounds of St Anne's Church which again is accessible to all.

Ms Dodds explained that BBAF have a good relationship with local authorities and local charities. They have links with local supermarkets who donate surplus food.

Ms Dodds also mentioned that they would like the Community Store to become more of a Community Hub so that it can be used to help more local people through activities and meetings on days when the store is not open for shopping. By assisting more people, they hope to further improve their reach [e.g. by providing financial advice, wellbeing sessions, help with filling in forms/application etc] however, she stated that at present, their electricity bills are their biggest expense by far.

Ms Dodds also explained that BBAF had made it through to Round 2 of The People Awards and encouraged all Members to vote for them as this would help to get Burntwood on the map and secure more funding for their charitable activities.

The Chair thanked Ms Dodds and asked if any Member wished to ask a question.

Councillor Norman declared an interest as he volunteers on the helpline on Thursdays. He explained that the newly appointed Community Development and Engagement Officer [Ms Horner] could be involved in any future plans which BBAF had and encouraged BBAF to engage with the Citizens Advice service regarding income maximisation.

Ms Dodds explained that the helpline is not their first point of call for most people – face to face is now their preference. She felt that if a community hub was created, then Citizens Advice could be encouraged to attend.

Councillor Willis-Croft referred to BBAF links to local supermarkets and asked if Morrisons were involved. Ms Dodds explained that Morrisons were not a regular surplus provider at the moment.

Councillor Flanagan referred to the community store and felt that some members of the public thought it was a food bank and not accessible to all and asked what can Councillors do to help. Ms Dodds explained that they used social media to get the word out and that more marketing was proposed in January/February 2023.

Councillor Woodward explained that she was slightly disappointed to note that Ms Dodd's presentation did not refer at all to the support the Town Council gave in BBAF's early months. She stated that she spent many hours on their behalf during the lockdowns attending zoom meetings, passing on information from the District Covid Response group, liaising with Staffordshire County Council etc, as well as the ongoing support the Town Council has given. She questioned the duplication of community hubs around the town which already exist. However, she encouraged Councillors to join and become a member to reduce food waste.

Councillor Evans declared an interest as she volunteers on the telephone befriending service. She also mentioned that she was a Trustee of CASES and stated that it was important to get them out in the community.

## **PUBLIC FORUM**

No questions were raised by members of the public.

### **50. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillors Brown [dispensation], Greensill, M Place, R Place, Taylor and Westwood.

### **51. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**

None received.

### **52. HUNSLET WARD: CO-OPTION TO FILL VACANCY FOR ONE MEMBER**

Members were informed that applications to be co-opted had been received from Mrs Bacon and Mr Hiley. In the absence of Mr Hiley, Mrs Bacon was asked to explain why she should be considered for the vacancy for the Hunslet Ward.

Mrs Bacon explained that she was born and bred in Burntwood and had previously been a Parish/District Councillor for 30 years. She stated that she loved working with the community. She explained that if you know your community, you know their needs and it was her passion to help people.

The Chair asked Councillor Woodward and Councillor Ho if they wanted to ask questions. Councillor Woodward stated that she was really grateful to the candidates for putting their names forward and asked Mrs Bacon what specific issues she felt the

Hunslet Ward would bring. She also referred to Councillor Kirkham as the other ward member. Mrs Bacon reiterated her committed to helping people in the ward.

Councillor Ho felt that as a Parish Council it should not be too political and asked how would she work with this. Mrs Bacon stated that she was not a political person and would work as a team.

Following the questions, a vote by secret ballot was held.

Mrs Bacon, as the successful co-optee signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office after which she took her place at the table.

### **53. MINUTES**

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

Councillor Norman referred to Minute No. 34 – Chair's Report [Page 15] and explained that as Chair of the Council he had attended a concert [the day after being elected as Chair] where he had sat on the front row in his Chain of Office etc.

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 14 September 2022 [Minute Nos. 31-49] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

### **54. CHAIR'S REPORT**

Councillor Birch read out the following statement:

Autumn is always a busy time in the run up to Christmas with lots of events taking place locally. On Sunday the remembrance services were held across the town and it is always heartening to see the number of young people who attend every year to participate from the youth groups, such as those from the scouting and guide movements, boys and girls brigades and others. Marches took place and wreaths were laid at the war memorials around the town.

The involvement of the youth groups reassures us that the horrors of past wars and those whose lives were lost to conflict will never be forgotten. Whilst we remembered the dead at the services, we also take time to honour those who continue to serve and who devote their lives to making sure ours can be lived in freedom and safety. I would like to take this opportunity to echo the thanks of this Council to those from Burntwood who continue to serve in our armed forces and their families who support and miss them whilst they serve.

We will soon have our Christmas events around the town at the end of the month. There will be Christmas lights switched on at Chasetown, Boney Hay, Morley Road, Burntwood Island and of course our Christmas Festival at Sankey's Corner.

These are lovely festive events for the community and are always well attended. In many cases they could not take place without the support and partnership between the Town Council, local businesses, and community volunteer organisations. I would

encourage all councillors to get involved in the ones in their area as they are a great way to engage with our residents and bring people together.

On Saturday our Vice Chair Cllr Evans is attending the Burntwood Lions Christmas Fayre to open their event on my behalf as unfortunately I will be away with work over the weekend. Thank you to Cllr Evans for stepping in and for your continuing support to myself.

We held over the summer the Sunflower growing competition over the last few months and the winners were the children of St Joseph and St Theresa's School in Chasetown. I attended one of their school assemblies to present their winners certificate and the gift voucher. This initiative helped us show our support for the people in Ukraine as the Sunflower is their national flower. The war in Ukraine continues as we all know, and I have no doubt that the people of Burntwood will continue to show our solidarity and support of Ukraine and its people.

The delayed Dementia Friendly walk took place in some rather unpleasant weather, even so it was well attended, and a fair few people endured the inclement conditions to complete the walk and show our support of those suffering from dementia and those who care for them. I would like to extend my thanks for the support we were given by Burntwood Methodist Church who provided us with some welcome relief from the elements and some light refreshments to go with their warm welcome. All those who participated and supported the event received a goody bag and medal.

## **55. MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

None received.

## **56. NOTICE OF CONCLUSION OF AUDIT FOR 2021/22**

Councillor Ho congratulated the Deputy Clerk for enrolling in the Period Power initiative and putting sanitary products in the toilets at the Old Mining College.

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

**RESOLVED** It was received and noted that Mazars had completed their external audit of the 2021/22 accounts on 13 September and gave a satisfactory opinion in the external auditor's report within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. It was also noted that the Council had not carried out a comprehensive assessment of risks in 2021/22 but had already made arrangements to prepare a comprehensive assessment for 2022/23 [and had also correctly answered No to question 5 on the Annual Governance Statement about appropriate assessment and management of risks], thereby avoiding any qualification to the audit.

## **57. NAMING OF THE NEW MEETING ROOM**

Councillor Woodward explained that Councillors and staff had been asked to put forward any suggestion[s] for the naming of the new meeting room.

It was proposed by Councillor Woodward, seconded by Councillor Evans, and

**RESOLVED** That the refurbished room at the Old Mining College be known as The Meeting Room.

## **58. RISK REGISTER**

Councillor Woodward thanked the Chair and the Town Clerk for the work that they had undertaken with the risk register.

It was proposed by Councillor Woodward, seconded by Councillor D Ennis, and

**RESOLVED** That the Risk Register be adopted.

## **59. FINANCIAL UPDATE FOR FIRST HALF OF CURRENT FINANCIAL YEAR**

It was proposed by Councillor Norman, seconded by Councillor D Ennis, and

**RESOLVED** The report of income and expenditure compared to budget for the first 6 months of the financial year, April to September be received and noted.

## **60. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – 13 SEPTEMBER 2022 AND 12 OCTOBER 2022**

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

**RESOLVED** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning and Development Committee held on 13 September 2022 [Minute Nos. 25-29] and 12 October 2022 [Minute Nos. 30-36] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

## **61. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 13 OCTOBER 2022**

Councillor Flanagan referred to Minute No. 31 – Bus Shelter [Chase Road], second paragraph and stated that he had said that the briefing note did not reflect the quotations. Councillor Flanagan also referred to Minute No. 33 – Community Development and Engagement Officer and asked if the resolution could include reference to the Person Specification and in particular No. 10 of the criteria being changed from Essential to Desirable as it had been agreed at the meeting that experience of grant applications and working with grant funded projects should be desirable and not essential as training could be given.

Councillor Ho thanked Councillor Norman for allowing him to submit his comments, in his absence.

It was proposed by Councillor Norman, 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 13 October 2022 [Minute Nos. 26-38] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

**62. COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE – 19 OCTOBER 2022**

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

**RESOLVED** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Community and Partnerships Committee held on 19 October 2022 [Minute Nos. 25-36] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

**63. 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.

**64. MINUTES**

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

**RESOLVED** That the Confidential Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 14 September 2022 [Minute Nos. 46-49] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

**65. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 13 OCTOBER 2022**

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

**RESOLVED** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 13 October 2022 [Minute Nos. 36-38] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

[The Meeting closed at 7.10 pm]

Signed .....

Date .....