

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BURNTWOOD TOWN COUNCIL
HELD AT ST JOHN'S COMMUNITY CHURCH, HIGH STREET, CHASE TERRACE
ON WEDNESDAY 08 JANUARY 2020 COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM**

PRESENT

Councillor Birch [in the Chair]

Councillors Banevicius, Brown, Bullock, D Ennis, L Ennis, Gittings, Greensill [from 6.05 pm], Ho, Kirkham, Loughbrough Rudd, Norman, M Place, R Place, Tapper, Westwood, Willis-Croft and Woodward

In attendance

G Hunt, Town Clerk

Ms J Minor, Deputy Clerk

Four members of the public

PRESENTATION BY CITYLIFE

Councillor Woodward confirmed that due to confusion over dates, Citylife would not be attending the meeting. She went on to give a brief explanation about Citylife which is a monthly magazine mainly covering Lichfield City and a small part of Burntwood. It provides a mix of news, events and stories. It is delivered to households completely free of charge. Councillor Woodward felt that Citylife seemed to attract more interest than the TownTrader.

PUBLIC FORUM

There were no questions raised by members of the public.

PRAYERS

Prayers were led by Reverend M Wallace from St John's Community Church.

44. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Evans, Flanagan and Taylor

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

RESOLVED That Councillor Taylor's request for a Leave of Absence from attendance at meetings from 08 January 2020 until the end of the municipal year be granted.

45. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

None declared.

46. TOWN COUNCIL: MINUTES

Councillor Woodward made reference to Minute No. 59 - Motion: Climate Emergency and asked that it be recorded that the resolution was made following a unanimous show of hands.

Councillor Woodward made reference to Minute No. 49 - Chasetown Ward: Co-option to fill vacancy for one member and in particular the paragraph referring to membership of Committees. Councillor Woodward asked that the decision referring to membership of the Planning Advisory Group be deferred until further discussion had taken place between herself and Councillor R Place.

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

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 28 November 2019 [Minute Nos. 44-63] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

47. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Birch explained that the Chairman was ill and that he was stepping in to chair tonight's meeting. Councillor Birch wished Councillors a Happy New Year and thanked Councillors and Officers for their work over the last few months. Councillor Birch thanked the Reverend Wallace for hosting the Town Council meeting at St John's Community Church. Councillor Birch welcomed members of the public and stated that it was nice to see some new faces.

Councillor Birch confirmed that he had together with the Chairman attended an event at the Skoda Auto Sales in Burntwood where the Burntwood and Cannock CFR officially launch their new rapid response vehicle. Members were informed that Burntwood Town Council had provided a grant to help towards the replacing and updating of equipment in two vehicles.

48. COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Councillor Birch made reference to Minute No. 40 - Review of Community Grants and in particular the paragraph referring to the Community Support Fund delivered by Burntwood Lions. Councillor Birch stated that he had spoken to representatives from Burntwood Lions at the launch of the new rapid response vehicle. Councillor Woodward stated that Burntwood Lions are doing a good job for the community and the Town Council. Councillor Woodward made reference to the significant changes that had been proposed to the Community Grants scheme however the Town Council needed to achieve best value in every pound spent.

Councillor Woodward stated that the Town Clerk had explained to those groups who had been unsuccessful the reasons why and they had been signposted to other funding opportunities. Councillor Woodward emphasised that the Town Council would still be supporting small community projects ranging from £100 to £500 that contributed to community capacity and would also be supporting the initiation or safeguarding of community provided services.

Councillor D Ennis stated that he had spoken to a representative from Burntwood Lions and explained that there was lots of procedures that needed to be followed before a grant could be given to families who are currently facing financial challenges and it was **AGREED** that the Town Clerk would invite representative[s] from Burntwood Lions to a future meeting of the Community and Partnerships Committee so that they can give an update on the funding provided by the Town Council and also the best way to help people etc [signposting people to the right place].

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

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Community and Partnerships Committee held on 02 December 2019 [Minute Nos. 35-43] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

49. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE : MINUTES

Councillor Woodward informed Members that this was the first meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee which had been set up in May 2019 following the election. Councillor Woodward stated that scrutiny was not to make things difficult but was to improve the way we do things [make better decisions]. Councillor Woodward explained that scrutiny can have a positive effect [i.e. the retention of school crossing patrols and the recycling centre]. Councillor Woodward stated that the Town Council had some big decisions to make in the future [i.e. whether or not to take on the public conveniences, parks] and asked Councillor Norman if the public conveniences could be put on the works programme for a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor R Place explained that there was some concern on his side of the chamber however felt that the makeup of the Committee was fair [two Labour Members, two Conservative Members and an Independent].

Councillor Norman stated that it was early days however the workload would be determined by the staff available to support the scrutiny process.

Councillor D Ennis made reference to Minute No. 5 - The Town Strategy and Terms of Reference for the Town Deal and in particular Action Area 5. Councillor D Ennis explained that as a local business owner himself, businesses had had a mixture of support but not enough Councillor involved. Councillor D Ennis made reference to the Xmas Event held in Chasetown which showed that businesses can run a successful event with support from the Town Council. Councillor D Ennis made reference to the feasibility of creating a Burntwood BID and confirmed that Lichfield District Council were on board with this.

Councillor Norman made reference to the Burntwood Town Strategy and in particular Action Area 5: Businesses and Employers Support and urged all Members to look at the Strategy.

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

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 04 December 2019 [Minute Nos. 1-726-34] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

50. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Councillor Woodward made reference to Minute No. 48 - Planning Advisory Group - Terms of Reference that confirmed that further discussions will take place between herself and Councillor R Place to confirm who the nomination would be.

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 Meeting of the Planning and Development Committee held on 11 December 2019 [Minute Nos. 42-50] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

51. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

No Members questions were raised.

52. FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Councillor D Ennis welcomed the level of risk being reduced from high and medium to low over the last year. Councillor D Ennis explained that staff [loss of key personnel] would always be at a medium level. Councillor Birch stated that following a previous request from himself that it was good to see that there was now a risk after mitigation column.

Councillor Woodward thanked the officers for producing a Financial Risk Assessment which was now in an acceptable format.

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

RESOLVED That the Financial Risk Assessment and Management be received and adopted.

53. REVIEW OF ANTI FRAUD AND CORRUPTION POLICY

Councillor Woodward made reference to the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and in particular paragraph 3.6. Councillor Woodward gave a brief explanation regarding the case at Rugeley Town Council and even though the Town Council has a Code of Conduct [open and transparent] it was **AGREED** that the wording "Any concerns can also be referred to the Police" would be added to paragraph 3.6 of the Policy. Councillor Woodward confirmed that the procedure with regard to petty cash had been tightened.

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

RESOLVED That the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy be received and adopted.

54. BUDGET 2020/21

Councillor Woodward explained that the budget had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and had been considered by the Leadership Team together with Councillor R Place as Leader of the Opposition Group and his Deputy, Councillor Ho. Councillor Woodward felt that the budget was pro-active and made reference to the Town Clerk's report and in particular paragraph 2.2. Councillor Woodward explained that the precept needed to be sufficient to cover four areas of expenditure. There needed to be an allowance for contingencies [in 2019/2020 an asbestos survey needed to be undertaken and there was no

contingency in place. Also there was a budget for street lighting however no contingency for replacement thereof]. Councillor Woodward explained that even with the slight proposed increase [Band D Council Tax from £37.90 to £40.90] 15 out of 25 Lichfield District Parishes had a higher precept.

Councillor Woodward explained that the budget had included a contingency for public conveniences however no decision had been made yet.

Councillor Loughbrough Rudd made reference to the public conveniences and asked if a budget plan for the future had been made. Councillor Woodward stated that detailed discussions had yet to take place however Councillor Woodward made reference to the lack of public conveniences at Morley Road Shopping Centre and the “Loo of the Year” Award.

The Town Clerk confirmed that he would be meeting with an officer from Lichfield District Council on 09 January 2020 to further discuss the public conveniences [to obtain a clear steer on what the District Council are offering]. The Town Clerk confirmed that a report would be going to a future meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee.

Councillor Tapper asked if a study had been undertaken regarding the current usage of the public conveniences as he felt that the public conveniences in Chasetown were not used and members of the public thought they were closed. Councillor Woodward suggested that as a District Councillor, Councillor Tapper was in the best position to request the information and to report his findings to the Town Clerk.

Councillor Birch explained that he had recently received two complaints regarding the poor state of the public conveniences at Sankey’s Corner.

Councillor Norman stated that Lichfield District Council had previously undertook a study of the usage etc of the public conveniences when closure of mentioned.

Councillor D Ennis suggested that Members would be shocked at the amount of use the public conveniences got in Chasetown and this was the ideal opportunity to take over an asset.

Councillor R Place said that whilst he was sure that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would like the opportunity to look into the public conveniences however the usage information was needed. Councillor R Place explained that the Conservative Party do not like increasing the precept however at the meeting with the Leadership Team there was a consensus made.

Councillor Ho made reference to the public conveniences and in particular anti-social behaviour. Councillor Woodward confirmed that no decision had yet been made by either Lichfield District Council and/or Burntwood Town Council. Councillor Woodward stated that she had not recently received information from the PCSOs regarding anti-social behaviour in the public conveniences.

Councillor Woodward felt that this was an opportunity for the Town Council to look to be ambitious [civilise society] and to take control of our own destiny. Councillor Woodward made reference to grit bins [which may be an item for the future as Staffordshire County Council are only filling the bins once a year].

Councillor R Place referred to Code 204 in the budget [Public Conveniences] and he suggested that it may be possible to work with other partnerships to reduce the cost of maintenance, cleaning etc from the initial estimate of £20,000 per annum. Councillor Woodward agreed that the Town Council could enter into a partnership with other organisations. The Town Clerk

made reference to the scale of the expenditure and confirmed that any contracts over £10,000 would require a formal tendering process which could lead to further savings.

Councillor Willis-Croft made reference to his former employer, Armitage Shanks regarding the purchase of any new equipment.

Councillor D Ennis stated that people care about things that look better [proud of] and made reference to the picket fencing around the Xmas tree at Chasetown.

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

RESOLVED That the draft budget for 2020/21 be agreed and that a Precept of £349,016 [Band D Council Tax of £40.90] be declared on Lichfield District Council for the 2020/21 financial year.

55. UPDATE FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS/DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Councillor Woodward stated that an update meeting with County Councillors Fisher and Tittley was taking place on 21 January 2020.

Councillor Ho made reference to Christ Church, Burntwood who would be celebrating their 200th Birthday in 2020. Councillor Woodward confirmed that the Town Council had given a grant as it was felt that the application contributed to community capacity.

[The Meeting closed at 7.06 pm]

Signed

Date