



The Old Mining College Centre
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BURNTWOOD WS7 4QH

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Our Ref: GH/JM

09 April 2020

To: **Members of the Town Council**

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to a **virtual meeting** of the Town Council to be held **on Wednesday 15 April 2020 commencing at 6:00 pm** at which the business set out below will be transacted. Councillors and members of the public can join the meeting by using Zoom. For information on how to access Zoom please contact the Town Council [townclerk@burntwood-tc.gov.uk].

Yours sincerely

Graham Hunt
Town Clerk

As part of the Better Burntwood Concept and to promote community engagement, the public now has the opportunity to attend and speak at all of the Town Council's meetings. Please refer to the end of the agenda for details of how to participate in this meeting.

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

To receive declarations of interests and consider requests for dispensations.

3. CORONAVIRUS CONTINGENCY PLAN UPDATE [ENCLOSURE NO. 1].

For information purposes only.

4. BURNTWOOD BE A FRIEND PROGRESS REPORT

To receive a verbal update by Councillor Woodward.

5. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 [ENCLOSURE NO. 2 AND APPENDIX 1].

To approve the adoption of the Model Publication Scheme produced by the Information Commissioner's Office [ICO].

6. 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.

7. EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL [ENCLOSURE NO. 3, APPENDIX 1, APPENDIX 2 AND APPENDIX 3].

PUBLIC FORUM

30 minutes will be set aside at the beginning of this meeting for you to raise issues relevant to the remit of the meeting. You will have up to 3 minutes and can raise more than one issue. However, the Chairman has the option to extend the time allowed to you if they think it is appropriate.

So that the Members of the meeting can be properly briefed in order to enable them to provide a considered response to your question, please advise the Town Clerk of the question[s] you wish to ask the Council at least three working days before the meeting. The Chairman of the meeting has the right to reject any representations that he/she considers not to be appropriate for the particular meeting.

The public forum session will usually be the first item on the agenda and normally will last up to 30 minutes. In some instances, it may not be possible at the meeting to provide an answer. Where that is the case a written response will be sent to your stated address and a copy will be made available for public inspection at the Town Council's offices.

While audio and video recordings of this meeting are entirely legal, as a matter of courtesy to Town Council members who work for this town and this Council on a voluntary basis, we would be grateful if you would let the Clerk or the Chairman know beforehand.
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Burntwood Town Council

15th April 2020

Coronavirus Contingency Plan Update

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report provides an update on the Contingency Plan

2.0 Background

2.1 In response to the restrictions that the Coronavirus pandemic has placed on the Town Council's activities a contingency plan has been produced. It contains mitigation measures in respect of council meetings, staff, management of the Old Mining Centre and Burntwood Cemetery.

3.0 Current Situation

3.1 The Plan has ensured that the Town Council has managed to function during these extraordinary times. The current situation is as follows:

- Council Meetings. The planned calendar of meetings has been cancelled. Instead monthly Council meetings are to be held on a virtual basis using the Zoom Meetings platform. The Zoom system was successfully trialled at recent Leadership Team meeting to which the leader of the opposition was invited. The planned referendum for the Neighbourhood Plan is postponed until after the current emergency comes to an end.
- Staff. 3 of the 6 members of staff are self-isolating. Fortunately, everyone is virus free at the moment. TechCare have provided enhanced access to the computer system so staff can remotely access emails and the shared drive. The website has been updated and is being used to provide information about the coronavirus. Emails and telephone calls from the public are being dealt with in a timely fashion.
- The Old Mining College. The building is closed. The tenants still have access to the units in the annexe. But the majority of tenants are working from home. We have offered rent holidays of up to 3

months with the outstanding rent being repaid over the remainder of the financial year. So far only Cost Cutters have indicated that they would like to take advantage of this arrangement. One company has unfortunately given their notice to give up their tenancy. They plan to continue to trade from home.

- Burntwood Cemetery. The Cemetery is closed to the public to safeguard our staff, contractors and funeral directors working there. A significant increase in the number of burials is expected over the coming months. The Council has directly received a few complaints from people wishing to visit the cemetery. There has also been a more significant discussion on Facebook but this as yet has not been translated to formal complaints to the Council. WE are providing the opportunity for people to lay floral tributes outside the cemetery which we will place on the graves. The cemetery will be opened immediately it is safe to do so.

4.0 Future challenges

- 4.1 At the present time there is no information about additional challenges apart from the strong likelihood that the number of burials will increase. At the moment we are working to a possible additional 240 burials. Following discussions with the Funeral Directors and Gravedigger we are confident that there is sufficient space and staff capacity to cope with this increase.

5.0 Recommendation

- 5.1 This report is for information purposes only and does not require the Council to make a decision.

Contact Officer

Graham Hunt

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Burntwood Town Council

Compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000

15th April 2020

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to secure the adoption of a publication scheme to enable the Town Council to comply with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act (FOI)

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Under the provisions of the FOI public authorities are required to set out what information, as identified by the Act, that it holds and how it will respond to requests for information from the public. With regard to the first requirement of the FOI every public authority must have a publication scheme, approved by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), and to publish information covered by the scheme.
- 2.2 Through the publication scheme the public authority confirms its commitment to make certain classes of information routinely available, such as policies and procedures, minutes of meetings, annual reports and financial information.
- 2.3 The ICO has developed a model publication scheme for public authorities. Bespoke publication schemes can be used but need the approval of the ICO.

3.0 Current Arrangements

- 3.1 Burntwood Town Council has a range of data protection policies in place relating to the management and protection of the data that it holds. In addition, it has a draft Information and Data Protection Policy which refers to a publication scheme. However, this draft policy does not appear to have ever been approved by the Council and there is no approved publication scheme.
- 3.2 The Town Council does nonetheless follow good practice in terms of making information available to the public and giving them the opportunity to ask questions. All formal meetings and committees of the Council advertised. The public are actively encouraged to attend these meetings and they have access to the reports being

considered. The time allowed for a public forum at each meeting has recently been extended from 15 minutes to 30 minutes. The decisions made at meetings are recorded on the website and hard copies of the minutes are available on request.

- 3.3 The Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014 now make it easier for the public to record meetings. The Town Council has made appropriate provision for the public to use photography, filming and audio recording at its meetings.

4.0 Model Publication Scheme

- 4.1 The model publication scheme attached as Appendix 1 has been produced by the ICO for public authorities like the Town Council. Compared to many authorities the responsibilities of the Town Council are limited. It therefore does not need to have a more complex and bespoke publication scheme.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 Whilst the Town Council has a range of policies relating to the management and protection of data and follows good practice in terms of the transparency of its meetings it is still in breach of the FOI. To be fully compliant it must have a publication scheme that is fully accessible to the general public. The model publication scheme that has been produced by the ICO more than meets the needs of the town Council.

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 The Town Council is recommended to adopt the Model Publication Scheme produced by the ICO as set out in Appendix 1.

Contact Officer

Graham Hunt

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Model publication scheme

Freedom of Information Act

This model publication scheme has been prepared and approved by the Information Commissioner. It may be adopted without modification by any public authority without further approval and will be valid until further notice.

This publication scheme commits an authority to make information available to the public as part of its normal business activities. The information covered is included in the classes of information mentioned below, where this information is held by the authority. Additional assistance is provided to the definition of these classes in sector specific guidance manuals issued by the Information Commissioner.

The scheme commits an authority:

- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information, including environmental information, which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below.
- To specify the information which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below.
- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information in line with the statements contained within this scheme.
- To produce and publish the methods by which the specific information is made routinely available so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public.
- To review and update on a regular basis the information the authority makes available under this scheme.
- To produce a schedule of any fees charged for access to information which is made proactively available.
- To make this publication scheme available to the public.
- To publish any dataset held by the authority that has been requested, and any updated versions it holds, unless the authority is satisfied that it is not appropriate to do so; to publish the dataset, where reasonably practicable, in an electronic form that is capable of re-use; and, if any information in the dataset is a relevant copyright work and the public

authority is the only owner, to make the information available for re-use under the terms of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015, if they apply, and otherwise under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act section 19.

The term 'dataset' is defined in section 11(5) of the Freedom of Information Act. The term 'relevant copyright work' is defined in section 19(8) of that Act.

Classes of information

Who we are and what we do.

Organisational information, locations and contacts, constitutional and legal governance.

What we spend and how we spend it.

Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, tendering, procurement and contracts.

What our priorities are and how we are doing.

Strategy and performance information, plans, assessments, inspections and reviews.

How we make decisions.

Policy proposals and decisions. Decision making processes, internal criteria and procedures, consultations.

Our policies and procedures.

Current written protocols for delivering our functions and responsibilities.

Lists and registers.

Information held in registers required by law and other lists and registers relating to the functions of the authority.

The services we offer.

Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases. A description of the services offered.

The classes of information will not generally include:

- Information the disclosure of which is prevented by law, or exempt under the Freedom of Information Act, or is otherwise properly considered to be protected from disclosure.
- Information in draft form.
- Information that is no longer readily available as it is contained in files that have been placed in archive storage, or is difficult to access for similar reasons.

The method by which information published under this scheme will be made available

The authority will indicate clearly to the public what information is covered by this scheme and how it can be obtained.

Where it is within the capability of a public authority, information will be provided on a website. Where it is impracticable to make information available on a website or when an individual does not wish to access the information by the website, a public authority will indicate how information can be obtained by other means and provide it by those means.

In exceptional circumstances some information may be available only by viewing in person. Where this manner is specified, contact details will be provided. An appointment to view the information will be arranged within a reasonable timescale.

Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language that is legally required. Where an authority is legally required to translate any information, it will do so.

Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats will be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this scheme.

Charges which may be made for information published under this scheme

The purpose of this scheme is to make the maximum amount of information readily available at minimum inconvenience and cost to the public. Charges made by the authority for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum.

Material which is published and accessed on a website will be provided free of charge.

Charges may be made for information subject to a charging regime specified by Parliament.

Charges may be made for actual disbursements incurred such as:

- photocopying
- postage and packaging
- the costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information

Charges may also be made for information provided under this scheme where they are legally authorised, they are in all the circumstances, including the general principles of the right of access to information held by public authorities, justified and are in accordance with a published schedule or schedules of fees which is readily available to the public.

Charges may also be made for making datasets (or parts of datasets) that are relevant copyright works available for re-use. These charges will be in accordance with the terms of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015, where they apply, or with regulations made under section 11B of the Freedom of Information Act, or with other statutory powers of the public authority.

If a charge is to be made, confirmation of the payment due will be given before the information is provided. Payment may be requested prior to provision of the information.

Written requests

Information held by a public authority that is not published under this scheme can be requested in writing, when its provision will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.