

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BURNTWOOD TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE MAIN HALL, BURNTWOOD MEMORIAL INSTITUTE, RUGELEY ROAD,
BURNTWOOD ON THURSDAY 25 JANUARY 2024 COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM**

PRESENT

Councillor Coe MBE (in the Chair)

Councillors Banevicius, Bullock, D Ennis, L Ennis, Flanagan, Galvin, Gittings, Ho, Norman, P Taylor, Tranter, Willis-Croft, Wittstock and Woodward

In attendance

S Lightfoot, Town Clerk

Ms J Minor, Deputy Clerk

Five members of the public

INSPECTOR FINLAYSON, DEPUTY COMMANDER, LICHFIELD

The Chair welcomed Inspector Finlayson and PC O'Mahoney to the meeting. Inspector Finlayson explained that he had been in policing for 18 years and was once based at the former Chasetown Police Station so he understood the area well and he explained the engagement role of PC O'Mahoney which would include other partners for example Lichfield District Council and Burntwood Town Council as well as schools etc. Inspector Finlayson referred to the crime figures of the last 12 months which had been circulated to all Members prior to the meeting. The figures showed the biggest decrease in crime was in Chasetown with 19% [125] less crimes over the last 12 months compared to Burntwood showing 5% [48] decrease in crimes in the last 12 months.

Inspector Finlayson explained that in Chasetown public order offences were down by 8, theft of motor vehicles were down by 21 and burglary residential were down by 5 however he explained that he had asked for a further breakdown of more serious violent crime with injury. Inspector Finlayson stated that as visibility was important, the PCSOs would be visible however Officers would be more targeted. With regard to ongoing work for example vehicle crime, Inspector Finlayson explained that Operation Bormus was a dedicated team across the force who target criminals committing vehicle thefts around Staffordshire and continue to stop those responsible and bring them to justice. With regard to 'boy racers' on the bypass, Inspector Finlayson explained that Section 59 notices were being erected. The signs warn motorists that a Section 59 notice is in force. This gives officers authority to seize vehicles being driven in an anti-social manner in the area. The Section 59 warning notices count as a first warning to motorists who drive in an anti-social manner. Inspector Finlayson also confirmed that he sits on the Community Safety Partnership Panel.

Councillor D Ennis thanked Inspector Finlayson and PC O'Mahoney for their attendance. He stated that Burntwood was not Stoke-on-Trent or Birmingham as figures showed crime is low in this area, however, he felt that theft was on the increase in the Town. Councillor D Ennis explained that the police had done a couple of community engagement events at Burntwood Leisure Centre. He explained that he would have preferred to see crime figures for Burntwood North and Burntwood South. Councillor D Ennis stated that he would like to see Burntwood's own officers, delivering a quick response and confirmed that we only had two PCSOs currently when previously we had four.

Inspector Finlayson stated that community engagement was something they were looking to expand on however they had a limited amount of resources.

Councillor Norman explained that we needed to encourage members of the public to report all crimes and asked what was the current 101 answering times and were officers still based in

Chase Terrace. Inspector Finlayson confirmed that officers were still based at the Fire Station in Chase Terrace but did not know the exact times for answering 101 calls as this differs day to day. He explained that the force had introduced a triage function to help keep up with increasing levels of 101 demand. It is staffed by experienced officers who help to signpost callers to the most appropriate level of service. Triage officers can signpost people to partner agencies, transfer calls to local officers already dealing with an incident and can also offer a call back service in non-emergency situations. Inspector Finlayson confirmed that 999 calls are being answered within 7 seconds and there is also an on-line reporting system.

Councillor Flanagan referred to the Section 19 notices being erected on the Bypass and Inspector Finlayson stated that this was a Staffordshire Police campaign to deter 'boy racers'. Councillor Flanagan also referred to the figure on rapes which were nearly 1 per month. Inspector Finlayson explained that the figure on rapes may be domestic related and he referred to other sexual offences which can mean crimes that exploit others for a sexual purpose, whether in person or online. This can involve physical contact, including non-penetrative acts such as kissing without consent.

Councillor Galvin referred to evidence-based practice as the figures are showing a decrease in crime what has been done to achieve this as Staffordshire Police are in special measures. Inspector Finlayson confirmed that key work had been done on anti-social behaviour [ASB] and he explained that the Lichfield LPT had seen a reduction of 28% on top of the 30% reduction the year before. Inspector Finlayson stated that they were also looking at bringing in a digital app.

Councillor Woodward felt that the handout gave good headline figures which showed that crime was coming down but was aware of the limited resources available. She praised the work of PCSOs Humphreys and Small. Councillor Woodward referred to the Community Safety Partnership and she felt that the partnership was not currently engaging with the people it needed to and was not working effectively at the moment.

Councillor Willis-Croft asked if criminals were travelling into Burntwood from other areas to commit crimes and Inspector Finlayson confirmed yes, but not many.

Councillor Ho referred to speeding vehicles on the bypass but also Bridge Cross Road and Cannock Road and asked if the speed cameras could be working as they are not at present. Inspector Finlayson confirmed that the Chief Constable is looking at updates to fixed speed cameras. This will see digital equipment replacing the current fixed safety cameras, making it quicker to capture and receive images of those who travel about the relevant speed limit.

Councillor P Taylor referred to the other theft figures and Inspector Finlayson confirmed that this covers a multitude of offences including theft of mobile phones, shop lifting etc.

Councillor Coe MBE thanked Inspector Finlayson for the update.

PUBLIC FORUM

No questions were raised by members of the public.

52. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Bacon [Unwell]
Councillor R Ennis [Prior Commitments]
Councillor Evans [Unwell]
Councillor Hancox [Unwell]
Councillor Holdsworth [Unwell]

Councillor Kirkham [Work Commitments]
Councillor S Taylor [Unwell]

The reasons for the apologies were approved.

53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

None declared.

54. MINUTES

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

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

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 15 November 2023 (Minute Nos. 38-51) be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

55. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Vice Chair read out the following statement on behalf of the Chair:

Since the last meeting I have attended a number of functions to represent the Council. On Monday 20 November I attended the Boney Hay Christmas Event organised by the Town Council and wished to thank Bromford and Haywoods Blinds for sponsoring it and the Rotary Club, the face painter and the Scandrett family, especially James for the music. On Wednesday 22 November I attended an event at Chasetown Memorial Park where special roses were planted as part of the continuing campaign to raise awareness in the district of knife crime. On Saturday 25 November I attended the Xmas Event at Sankey's Corner which again was organised by the Town Council. On Sunday 26 November I attended the Christmas Lights switch-on at Swan Island. I would like to thank the Rotary Club for all their hard work in organising the event and Holly Grove Academy for their amazing singing. On Saturday 02 December I attended the Morley Road Christmas Lights switch-on. It was certainly cold but heart-warming to be at another Christmas events. Thanks to Tracy Price, Wayne Jones, the shops, and stallholders for another lovely event – and, of course, Burntwood Rotary for bringing Santa along. On Tuesday 05 December both myself and the Vice Chair attended Lichfield City Council's Carols for Christmas at the Guildhall. On Thursday 11 January 2024 I attended the first Memory Café run by Magnolia Friends at Burntwood Memorial Hall. I was delighted to attend this new, much needed event. It was obvious how much both those with dementia and their carers valued the friendship and interaction that was taking place and I would encourage others in the same situation to participate.

Finally, dates for the diary – Following the success of our markets last year they will be back on 14 April. The Wakes Festival will be held on Saturday 20 July and the Play in the Parks events will start on 29 July. Councillors are asked to support these events and share them on their social media platforms.

56. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

No questions were raised by Members.

57. CONFIRMATION OF BANKING AND INVESTMENT ACCOUNT MANDATES

Members were asked to approve that the 5 signatories for its current account with Unity Trust Bank be authorised as signatories for all its other bank and investment accounts. Members were referred to Minute No. 9 of 24 May 2023 Full Council meeting where the update to signatories was made to the current account only. In future, amendments to signatories approved by the Council should apply to all its accounts, unless specifically noted otherwise.

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

RESOLVED That the 5 signatories be authorised as signatories for all of the Town Council's bank accounts and investment accounts.

[Councillor Woodward left the meeting at 6.40 pm]

58. UPDATE ON INCOME AND EXPENDITURE COMPARED TO BUDGET

Councillor D Ennis informed Members the current accounts package used by the Town Council does not reflect the income received. He referred to cost centre 213 – Events and confirmed that the Town Council had received sponsorship from businesses which enable the Town Council to offer more community events and this was not reflected. In fact, Councillor D Ennis confirmed that the events budget was underspent by £7,000. Councillor D Ennis also referred to cost centre 301 - Civic Expenses. He confirmed that the previous Chair had undertaken a successful charity quiz night and over £700 had been distributed to PAPYRUS Prevention of Young Suicide.

Councillor Bullock, on behalf of Councillor Woodward, referred to cost centre 205 – Traffic Islands and in particular traffic islands sponsorship. The Town Clerk explained that the figures assumed 100% occupancy but this was not the case and there was currently two traffic islands up for sponsorship.

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

RESOLVED That the Council notes the latest position against budget and that further updates will be provided at subsequent meetings.

59. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 06 NOVEMBER 2023

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

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 06 November 2023 [Minute Nos. 26-35] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

60. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – 13 NOVEMBER 2023 AND 04 DECEMBER 2023

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 Meetings of the Planning and Development Committee held on 13 November 2023 [Minute Nos. 32-38] and 04 December 2023 [Minute Nos. 39-45] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

61. COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE – 14 NOVEMBER 2023

In respect of the Burntwood Town Council Student Award in Memory of Stephen Sutton MBE, Councillor P Taylor confirmed that a five-person panel had met on 29 November 2023 to discuss the 10 eligible applications. Due to personal data these Confidential Minutes will be received at the Community and Partnerships Committee meeting on 29 January 2024.

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

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Community and Partnerships Committee held on 14 November 2023 [Minute Nos. 25-36] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

62. 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.

63. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 06 NOVEMBER 2023

See Confidential Minutes.

64. COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE – 14 NOVEMBER 2023

See Confidential Minutes.

65. DEBT WRITE OFF

See Confidential Minutes.

(The Meeting closed at 7.00 pm)

Signed

Date