MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BURNTWOOD TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE 71 ROOM, BURNTWOOD MEMORIAL INSTITUTE, RUGELEY ROAD, BURNTWOOD ON MONDAY 24 MARCH 2025 COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM

PRESENT

Councillor L Ennis (in the Chair)
Councillors Banevicius, Bullock, D Ennis, R Ennis, Evans, Flanagan, Galvin, Gittings, Hancox, Norman, P Taylor, S Taylor, Tranter, Willis-Croft, Wittstock and Woodward

In attendance
S Lightfoot, Town Clerk
Ms J Minor, Deputy Clerk
Ms A James, Finance Officer
County Councillor Wilcox
County Councillor Cox
County Councillor Loughbrough-Rudd
Mrs Bishop
Mr Swain
Mr Bennetts

PUBLIC FORUM
No questions were raised by members of the public.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR PLATFORM
County Councillor Wilcox stated that this would be his last meeting as he was not seeking re-election at the forthcoming County Council Elections. He thanked Councillors and Officers for the support that had been shown to him. Councillor D Ennis thanked all three County Councillors for the work undertaken since May 2021.

80. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Bacon (Unwell)
Councillor Coe MBE (Unwell)
Councillor Flanagan (Personal Reasons)
Councillor Kirkham (Work Commitments)

The reasons for the apologies were approved.

81. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

None declared.

82. HUNSLET WARD: CO-OPTION TO FILL VACANCY FOR ONE MEMBER

Members noted that the vacancy had been advertised and that no notice requesting an election had been made. Members were informed that an application to be co-opted had been received from Mrs Bishop. Referring to the Town Council's Standing Orders Councillor L Ennis invited the candidate to give a presentation of up to three minutes. She explained that there would be no further discussion following the presentation. It was proposed by Councillor L Ennis, seconded by Councillor D Ennis and **resolved** that the Town Council would suspend Standing Order 1(s) and agreed to conduct the vote by secret ballot. Ballot papers were distributed. The Chair announced the result.

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

83. HIGHFIELD WARD: CO-OPTION TO FILL VACANCY FOR ONE MEMBER

Members noted that the vacancy had been advertised and that no notice requesting an election had been made. Members were informed that applications to be co-opted had been received from Mr Bennetts and Mr Swain. Referring to the Town Council's Standing Orders Councillor L Ennis invited the candidates to give a presentation of up to three minutes. She explained that there would be no further discussion following the presentation. It was proposed by Councillor L Ennis, seconded by Councillor D Ennis and **resolved** that the Town Council would suspend Standing Order 1(s) and agreed to conduct the vote by secret ballot. Ballot papers were distributed. The Chair announced the result.

Mr Swain, as the successful co-optee signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office after which he took his place at the table.

Councillor D Ennis welcomed the newly elected Members and thanked Mr Bennetts for putting his name forward.

84 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 20 January 2025 (Minute Nos. 64-79) be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

85. CHAIR'S REPORT

In the absence of Councillor Coe MBE, Councillor L Ennis read out the following statement:

It is always very rewarding when you have an idea which makes a longer-term difference than you had anticipated. In January the Town Council team, the Library volunteers and I held a thank you event for Carers. I am always inspired by the selfless way that people take care of loved ones. I thought that it would be good to say a special thank you to them. We had a lovely afternoon tea at the Library and it was good to see people enjoying the opportunity to relax and chat. What we hadn't anticipated was that they enjoyed it so much that MHA are now going to hold regular chat sessions at the Library, as the carers requested the opportunity.

The role of Chair is very diverse, going from Carers to school students. I was able to join the Road Safety Week awareness event that they held at Fulfen School. They had obviously done a lot of work preparing for the event and knew all the risks that were posed by parents doing things like parking right outside school or blocking little side roads. They even picked up on those who parked halfway on the footpath making it impossible for parents with buggies, or anyone in a wheelchair or mobility scooter to pass. They became parking enforcement officers for the afternoon and it was a really strong message for parents who were badly parked. Fulfen School did an excellent job, and it has hopefully made a difference to the children and parents.

My charity of the year is Pathway Project. I would like to raise as much money as possible and enable them to continue doing their amazing work with adults and children who live with domestic and sexual abuse. My big event is a quiz night on 3 May. I would love to see as many of you as possible, so that I can raise a lovely amount of money for a very worthy cause. Please come along. It will be lots of fun and will make an outgoing chair very happy to have made a difference. Tickets are available from the Town Council Offices and raffle prizes would be welcomed.

86. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

No questions were raised by Members.

87. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2024/25

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

RESOLVED That the Calendar of Meetings for 2024/25 be amended as follows:

- Planning and Development Committee be moved from Tuesday 01 April 2025 to Wednesday 02 April 2025.
- Policy and Resources Committee be moved from Thursday 15 May 2025 to Wednesday 14 May 2025.

88. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2025/26

Councillor Evans pointed out that the Calendar of Meetings for 2025/26 did not reflect the new date for the Policy and Resources Committee in May 2025 and that 06 November 2025 was in fact a Thursday and not a Monday.

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

RESOLVED That the Calendar of Meetings for 2025/26 be received and adopted subject to the amendments highlighted at the meeting.

The Deputy Clerk to send the amended Calendar of Meetings for 2025/26 to all Members.

89. MEMBERS MEETING ATTENDANCE FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2024-25

Members noted the report detailing the annual Members meeting attendance for the municipal year 2024-25.

90. REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Following the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 17 July 2024 (Minute No. 8 refers) it was noted that the Financial Regulations had been highlighted in blue where significant amendments had been made, sections highlighted in red do not apply and should be deleted from the final version and sections highlighted in green are suggested for deletion, as not appropriate, not required, or impractical with current resources.

Councillor P Taylor referred to Page 7, Section 5 – Procurement and in particular 5.6, 5.7, 5.8 and 5.9 and highlighted that some of the sections in procurement stated including VAT' and others stated 'excluding VAT' and felt that this difference could be significant when making decisions.

The Town Clerk explained that the regulations were based on the updated model document of financial regulations issued by NALC in May 2024.

Councillor D Ennis **recommended** that, for consistency and clarity, all sections relating to VAT should state 'excluding VAT' and this was seconded by Councillor Woodward.

Councillor Norman referred to Page 9, Section 5 – Procurement and in particular 5.21 and asked if including both the Clerk or Deputy Clerk is guidance provided by NALC. The Finance Officer explained that the NALC model often refers to one officer only e.g. RFO so had been amended to better serve this Council's situation, partly due to her part-time working hours.

Councillor Evans referred to Page 10, Section 6. Banking and Payments and, in particular, 6.7 and confirmed that neither she nor Councillor P Taylor had ever been asked to sign the schedule when payments are made. Councillor P Taylor **recommended** that the regulations be amended to state that the authorising councillors send emails to the Deputy Clerk confirming when payments have been authorised and this could be the official approval and this was seconded by Councillor Woodward.

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

RESOLVED That the Financial Regulations be approved and adopted subject to the recommendations highlighted at the meeting.

91. FINANCIAL UPDATE TO END JANUARY 2025

The Finance Officer explained that, at the time of approval of the budget, the Community Ownership Fund (COF) money for the redevelopment of Chase Terrace Community Centre (CTCC) had not been secured. Therefore, that income and any related expenditure were not included in the budget, thus distorting some comparisons against budget now.

Members noted the report of income and expenditure compared to budget for the first 10 months of the financial year, April 2024 to January 2025.

92. EARMARKING OF RESERVES AT FINANCIAL YEAR END

Councillor D Ennis referred to Item 11 – Significant Events and it was **recommended** that this should be left unchanged, with any Events budget underspend for 2024/25 not being added to this reserve.

Councillor D Ennis referred to Item 4 – Better Burntwood Fund and it was **recommended** that any unspent 2024/25 budget be added to this reserve.

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

RESOLVED That the suggested changes to Earmarked Reserves at financial year end in Appendix 6A be approved and adopted, subject to the recommendations highlighted at the meeting.

93. VAT STATUS OF CHASE TERRACE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Referring to Minute No. 32 – Town Council Meeting held on 16 July 2024 refers, Councillor P Taylor stated that an alternative approach to Opting to Tax had been put forward to HMRC last summer. A reply is still being chased. He explained that in the absence of any response or if a negative response is received from HMRC, then, as resolved, the Council will Opt to Tax on the building. This will be done before or within 30 days of the next VAT return deadline (07 May 2025), the first return in which VAT will be reclaimed for the works on the building.

94. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – 13 JANUARY 2025, 05 FEBRUARY 2025 AND 05 MARCH 2025

It was proposed by Councillor Gittings, seconded by Councillor P Taylor, 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 January 2025 (Minute Nos. 45-50), 05 February 2025 (Minute Nos. 51-57) and 05 March 2025 (Minute Nos. 58-63) be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

95. COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE – 22 JANUARY 2025 AND 10 MARCH 2025

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

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Community and Partnerships Committee held on 22 January 2025 (Minute Nos. 39-52) and 10 March 2025 (Minute Nos. 53-63) be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

96. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 23 JANUARY 2025

It was proposed by Councillor Galvin, 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 23 January 2025 (Minute Nos. 38-44) be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

97. 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.

98. CONFIDENTIAL 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 Confidential Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 20 January 2025 (Minute Nos. 77-79) be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

99. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 23 JANUARY 2025

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

RESOLVED That the Confidential Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 23 January 2025 (Minute Nos. 43-44) be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

(The Meeting closed at 6.42 pm)

Signed …………………………………………

Date …………………………………………..