

**Minutes of Burford Annual Town Meeting
held in the Warwick Hall 27 April 2022
at 7.00pm**

Present:

Cllr P Higgs Mayor, Cllr M Taubenheim Deputy Mayor. Cllr J White, Cllr D Cohen, Cllr D Cotterill, Cllr S Lofthouse, Cllr S Palmer, Cllr J Tunnell-Westmacott, Cllr P Bush, Cllr J Rushton, Cllr F Triggs, Cllr N Field-Johnson, Maggie Andrews – Town Clerk. John Yeatman – RFO.
38 members of the public.

1. WELCOME.

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting. All reports were circulated at the meeting and are on the website.

2. CLLR DEREK COTTERILL.

Cllr Cotterill is standing down as our WODC representative but is remaining as a Burford Town Councillor. He reflected on his last 16 years in office – to which a round of applause was given. The Mayor thanked him for his service and for agreeing to remain as a town Councillor.

Cllr Cotterill's comments referred to Keith Davies who was Mayor back then and who encouraged Derek to stand for WODC. He joined the majority party which was Conservative adding that 'one can make a difference'.

He referred to the Burford School Foundation of which he was a trustee, the Shilton Road development which WODC at first refused; it went to appeal and we won. The Warwick Hall development was built, and he recently tried to obtain an extension to the main car park. The Environmental Agency & Historic England objected saying it would spoil the view into the church yard.

HGV's are back since we lost the current battle but the problem needs to be pursued again. There are 252 listed buildings in Burford all of which need protecting from the damage caused by HGVs from air pollution and vibration.

Publica share their staff with Gloucestershire County Council and he felt that WODC was losing their identity.

Potenza Picena. We have been twinned with this town in Italy for 22 years. Those who started the twinning are reaching retirement age and new young blood is needed. Burford school organise exchanges but these have been on hold due to Covid. Italians have still visited Burford and there are advantages on both sides.

3. MINUTES.

It was proposed, seconded and approved from the floor that the minutes of the last meeting held in 2019 were passed as a true record. The Mayor then signed the minutes which were previously circulated.

4. QUESTION AND ANSWER TIME. Mr Barraclough had previously written to the Council with concerns over pavement seating mostly outside pubs and restaurants which, on occasion causes difficulty to pedestrians. The Mayor said that during covid we were encouraged to have a pavement seating culture to draw people back into the town. It is a balancing act but should not cause obstruction. WODC issue pavement licenses but it is not clear whether all premises have them.

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Our aim is to visit the premises concerned and advise them about keeping easy access but if problems continue the matter will be taken up with WODC. It was noted that at times the post box is difficult to get to because of pavement furniture. This must be kept clear.

The matter of poor management of Warwick Hall users was raised. There was lack of heating in the winter due to ground source heating failure, lack of technical assistance regarding the audio-visual system. It was suggested that a 'User Committee' be set up. This matter will be discussed at the June Council meeting.

Hugo Ashton (WODC) raised the Coles Field appeal asking if we should send our original documentation or re-submit with any changes? Cllr White responded that we should re-affirm our original documents adding all that has come to light since, in particular a major traffic route through Frethern Close. A letter drop will be carried out advising how to go about it but John said we should all send a different letter. Cllr Higgs said that WODC have put all the objectives on their website in readiness for the appeal.

Ruth Reavley announced that there would be a special 9.30am Jubilee service on 5 June in Burford Church to which all were welcome.

Elizabeth Mortimer aired her concerns regarding the different water levels on the river Windrush. Cllr Cotterill responded saying the problem was the sluice at 91 Witney Street which could be opened and flushed through. However silt builds up thereby the flow is not as it should be. The Environmental Agency have discussed these issues but to put a sluice into the Spillway would cost in the region of £12 - £15,000. Phil Hall & Nicholas Mills are discussing ideas to protect Island House from flooding. Apparently WODC are only interested in preventing floods and not the aesthetics.

Judy Branson added that a breeze block wall had been built at one point but when the area flooded the wall fell over and so there was now a good flow! Clendon Daukes said that although we have limited powers we should work together with the District & County Councillors and go to a higher authority.

Sally Colter asked whether the Council could combine with the Chamber of Trade to establish a more successful body. Council felt this should remain solely with the Chamber of Trade. A meeting is planned with local businesses.

Coles Field. Gordon Elliot asked what plans BTC had regarding appeal for we need to fight back. John White reminded us of our successful fight with Greystoke but to employ lawyers to fight on our behalf is extremely expensive. If we should put a foot wrong BTC would have full liability of costs, and so we will take all other steps available to us. Hugo Ashton asked if we should talk to Chris Wood at WODC? John agreed and we will discuss it with him since he is experienced in appeals.

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Peter Martin spoke about the exciting ideas afoot for Tourism, the Town, the Museum and the Archive project. He felt a prominent VIC sign was needed when visiting the Museum. The Tolsey is a listed building but we could apply to WODC planning for an outside sign. Sally Colter said that the Book shop and the Post office also have most of the leaflets and information that covers Burford.

John Yeatman asked Cllr Field-Johnson what OCC propose doing with the ongoing HGV problem. Cllr Field-Johnson responded by saying that there may have to be a compromise by changing the 7 ½ tonne to an 18 tonne restriction and that we would not give up the fight. He felt confident that we would get some sort of ban in force.

Carolyn Walton commented that she was disappointed that Burford appeared not to be doing much in welcoming Ukrainian refugees. Clendon Daukes responded saying that Burford Church and the benefice churches were already co-ordinating information and gathering requests from those who wished to help.

Cllr Bush raised the issue of sewage going into the Windrush. BTC, Ashley Smith & WASP are working together with our MP on this matter.

Clendon Daukes then gave a vote of thanks to the Council.

The Mayor added that lots of information is on our website and encouraged everyone to keep informed by viewing the site.

