

**Minutes of the Burford Town Council meeting held on  
Wednesday 7 December 2022 at 6.30pm**

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**Present:** Cllr P Higgs – Mayor, Cllr M Taubenheim, Cllr J Tunnell Westmacott, Cllr D Cotterill, Cllr S Lofthouse, Cllr D Cohen, Cllr S Palmer, Cllr J Rushton, Cllr P Bruce, Cllr J White, Cllr J Craven, Cllr H Ashton. Cllr N Field-Johnson. Maggie Andrews – Clerk. John Yeatman RFO, Mr G Jolly & Mrs J Ran – members of the public.

Mr Jolly spoke on the Coles Field application. He encouraged all residents to write in with their objections. Several concerns were shown including access, infrastructure, & impact on the landscape. The application is just for ordinary housing, 70 dwellings. The Council will be lodging strong objections.

**1. MINUTES. Resolved:** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 2 November 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

**2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.**

Cotswold Arms. OCC have inspected the site suggesting we seek a compromise. The Mayor & Deputy Mayor will visit the landlord to discuss further.

Local Plan. Cllr Ashton will collate data.

Bench on The Hill. After consultation in The Bridge and permission from OCC the bench will be re-sited.

Coach Park. The Mayor to draw up proposed plan and put this to OCC for their input and comment.

Witney Street bin. Publica felt disinclined to move the bin having had only one complaint.

Chamber of Trade. A meeting is planned for early January when hopefully a new committee will be established.

Church Lane one-way. Discussion required with OCC.

**3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies were noted from Cllr Derek Cotterill.

**4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

The following Councillors declared a personal interest because they represent the Council as Chairperson of the following committees:-

Cllr Higgs – Finance. Also to receive a cheque for reimbursement of office printer in the sum of £87.90 & printer cartridges/Rotary dinner tickets £96.44.

Cllr Tunnell-Westmacott – Cemetery & Environment.

Cllr Rushton - Recreation Ground.

Cllr Cohen – BEAP. Reimbursement Firework night costs in the sum of £40.00

Cllr Taubenheim – Pavilion.

Cllr White – Traffic

Cllr Cotterill receiving a cheque for £90.00 reimbursement costs for Potenza Picena visit.

**5. CLLR FIELD-JOHNSON REPORT.**

The full report was circulated to all Councillors.

It includes the OCC budget which is now underway.

It is likely the administration will impose a 5% increase in Council Tax on residents. The County wide review of HGV routes in Oxfordshire continues at a slow pace and no expected progress is expected until at least mid-2023.

Following Oxford Bus Company's announcement of the withdrawal of bus services to parts of the city, Recognising that this will adversely affect many local residents OCC has launched a tender process for replacement services. The council has set aside up to £2.5 million over the next two years to protect previously commercial services at risk of withdrawal because of lower passenger numbers and spiraling bus industry costs.

OCC has acknowledged spending £73,000 repairing vandalized plastic bollards used in Low Traffic Neighbourhood schemes in East Oxford. Steel bollards are now to be installed at a cost of £100,000 after the 'unprecedented levels of vandalism'.

A new study from Queen's University Belfast, Edinburgh University & the University of Cambridge has found that reducing speed limits from 30 to 20mph has had little impact on road safety. An RAC road safety spokesman said, 'Our research shows drivers are less likely to comply with a lower limit if they don't believe it is appropriate for the type of road'.

#### **6. CLLR ASHTON REPORT.**

The report was circulated to all Councillors and included the following:

Planning & the 5YHLS. WODC has confirmed that it only has 4.1 years of land supply. This has already led to an off-plan development on land west of Hanborough being approved by Uplands Planning Committee. Those in opposition stressed the un-sustainability of the development in terms of water supply and sewage treatment, doctor's surgery, schools, and transport. Although the absence of a 5YHLS did not influence the Inspector's recent decision on Cole's field, it is being emphasized in the current application and supports the benefit site of the benefit/harm equation.

Land East of Barns Lane. Cllr Ashton reported that he would like to discuss the merit of trying to get OCC Highways to object to a single access point because it adds traffic on the Whitehill/AQ40 junction, in icy conditions the access will be dangerous and Whitehill becomes impassable as Witney Street is never gritted or cleared. The risk of this approach is that the developer can simply re-open the access to Wysdom Way.

West Botley Solar Farm. Cllr Ashton attended the consultation session. The project scope appears to be an opening position. The preliminary consultation will lead to design changes e.g. wider buffer zones, and fewer high visual impact fields.

The EIA will only be done on the next stage design, rather than the current scheme.

The rationale for Cumnor is that this is where they can connect to the National Grid. Quite a few fields are north facing slopes – inefficient and visually intrusive.

All installations will be securely fenced, not to prevent deer etc, but to stop the panels being stolen. This then creates a huge barrier to wildlife movement.

They are preserving footpaths which will have barriers planting on either side!

They might trade with local District Network Operators who can then sell power for local communities. They understand that some community benefit is necessary.

Blenheim thinks that all their land is 3b. There is no assessment yet of the land mix. No battery storage is envisaged on site.

Oxfordshire Highway issues. The Botley Road will be closed at the railway station for a year from 9 January 2023.

The A40 road works scheme is being reappraised following anticipated cost increases. The compulsory purchase process has been halted pending design changes to reduce costs.

## **7. OTHER MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION**

Burford Bridge. An Heritage statement is being written by Raymond Moody, Ken Gray & Cllr Cotterill. Concern was shown over the stone which is still in the river. It needs to be recovered to dry out and then used in the rebuild works. Cllrs Higgs & Field-Johnson will chase OCC highways on this matter.

Burford School Governors. They have requested a meeting with BTC. The Clerk to action.

Car park flooding. Cllr Cotterill has put a proposal to WODC for preventing flooding.

Further information to come.

Bonfire night. This is a self-financing event. After discussion it was agreed that the Council would accept the transfer of funds so that we could work together with those who organize the event.

## **8. MAYORS REPORT**

On behalf of BTC the Mayor placed a wreath on the War Memorial at the Remembrance Day service on 13 November. He is to attend the Mayors & Chairs dinner given by the Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire at Dorchester Abbey on 30 November and also the Burford Chamber of Trade meeting on 1 December.

He will attend the Burford b& Kingham Rotary Christmas dinner on 2 December and the Burford Civic Carol service on the 4<sup>th</sup>.

## **9. TREASURER'S REPORT**

The 2023/24 budget and precept calculation was circulated for discussion and approval.

The OCC Councillor priority grant of £3500 from Cllr Field-Johnson was received and put toward the 7.5t weight limit scheme.

The treasurer said there were several things to overcome such as waste bin charges and ongoing projects, plus inflation.

After perusal and discussion of the budget items Council unanimously approved them. The RFO was thanked for his hard work in preparing the budget for the next year.

### BTC Payments.

D Cotterill reimbursement Potenza Picena	90.00
Royal British Legion wreaths	110.00
Castle Water Tolley	4.63
P Higgs reimbursement office printer	87.90
CPRE Oxfordshire 2023 campaign	36.00
Cotswold Connect (HGV)	748.80
WODC Tolley business rates	207.00
WODC Cemetery business rates	125.00
Mrs M Andrews	1094.30
Mr D Buckland	1326.76
J Yeatman	440.80
HMRC PAYE	582.28
Nest Pension	69.78
Anna Grotex cleaning services	100.00
Systems & Solutions (Bytesafe)	20.00
BT business bill	86.47

SSE Tolsey	-436. 31
Margaret Johnson	107. 13
A K Timms	12. 24
Ricoh UK	39. 92
OALC Training course	36. 00
Windrush Press Remembrance leaflets	215. 00
Windrush Press Carol service	290. 00
E Wilson organist costs Civic service	50. 00
Special Effect charity collection at Civic service	450. 00
Petty Cash	50. 00
Castle Water Rec	40. 61
J Yeatman r'brse McAfee	59. 99
D Buckland r'brse petrol costs	30. 01
M Andrews re'brse banquet roll	14. 98
P Higgs r'brse printer cartridges & Rotary tickets	96. 44
<u>Tolsey payment</u>	
Ivor Lavers Tolsey ceiling repairs	160. 00

The above were passed for payment.

#### **10. SHILTON ROAD REPORT**

Late installation of the dropped kerb, Barns Lane. This is OCC's responsibility – Cllr Higgs has chased progress and been assured it is 'imminent'.

The Mayor & Deputy Mayor met with Lioncourt to give a final inspection of the remedial work to the play area and agreed it could now be transferred to BTC. Lioncourt are drawing up the papers with Solicitors and calculating the LEAP payment amount due.

John Blackburn of the SRRA has had a serious accident and in hospital. Consequently, the matter of the bus shelter is on hold until he can provide paperwork; we will then follow the matter up.

**11. CORRESPONDENCE.** A detailed letter has been received from a resident complaining about the kebab van at the layby on the A361. Concerns were shown over litter generated, hygiene safety and facilities, license to operate, vermin. The matter was referred to Publica who visited the site and found only rubbish that was not generated from the van. They reported it was clean and tidy, found no evidence of pests. All members operating the van have access to WC facilities and have hot water hand washing facilities within the van. It has a 4\* rating which was achieved this year.

#### **12. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### **Planning.**

22/02818/HHD & 2/02819/LBC. 30 Lower High Street. Internal & external alterations to include a single storey extension and installation of an air heat source pump. No objection.

22/02982/LBC & 22/02981/HHD. 19 Witney Street. Proposed lift from ground to first floor including roof modifications. No objection.

22/02968/HHD. 19 Witney Street. Erection of a timber storage outbuilding. Council has objections because the plans are insufficient and unclear. We are uncertain as to the term 'temporary' for a timber storage outbuilding. It would appear that the land is higher than the surrounding properties making it too dominant in its surroundings.

OCC ref. MW.0157/22. Whitehill Quarry. Extension of quarry to extract limestone. Concern was shown over the possibility of more lorries at the site.

Council felt that it was imperative vehicles used a wheel wash when leaving the site but decided to respond that there should be no additional traffic coming onto the High Street and wheel washing adhered to.

22/02472/FUL. Solar Park and energy storage, land at former Home Close Farm Shilton Road. Comments have been noted in Cllr Ashton's report; however Council had no objection.

Old Bull Hotel Licensing Act 2003. Application for variation of Premises Licence.

Council initially decided not to object but further discussion is required. Concern was shown over the passageway, it is a Public Right of Way – will it be preserved?

### **Recreation Ground.**

Cllr Rushton circulated a comprehensive report which included signage, working parties, tree planting, car park flooding mainly near the entrance to the Bowls club, rabbits, the Football Club Licence fees and the new playground project, improvement to basketball pitch. All these matters are being addressed and are progressing. Regarding the licence for the Football Club Councillors agreed this was in order and should now be signed by both parties and finalised.

Regarding the new play area investigations on funding are ongoing, we are also looking into crowd funding. Visits are planned for site visits from various companies.

A replacement bench has been installed, donated by Mr & Mrs Barraclough for which we are very grateful.

A request has been received from the family of the late Nora Thomas who would like to plant a tree in her memory. Council agreed that Cllr Tunnell-Westmacott will liaise with Cllr Rushton as to the type of tree and the site.

Problems were experienced when owners of a property on The Hill/Rec boundary requested access on to the Rec for rebuilding a wall. The inclement weather made it difficult for pedestrian access due to mud and some debris on the pathway and on the Recreation ground. However, this has now been rectified, the Rec area reseeded and ruts filled.

**Pavilion.** An art club has shown interest in renting the scout hut. Once the Clerk has details of their requirements the matter can be discussed fully.

**Environment.** Apart from the ongoing weeding the town looks tidy and well kept.

McCrackens have yet to pollard the yew trees in the churchyard.

**Cemetery.** General maintenance continues to be carried out by David Buckland.

**Traffic.** The TRO regarding 40mph limit from Whitehill will cost £2828.88.

**BEAP. (Burford Emergency Action Plan)** There are minor changes to be made and then it will be circulated to Councillors.

**OTHER REPORTS.** Cllr Bruce submitted his report to all Councillors. Social Media - we continue to post the page with information which may be of value to the community.

Potholes continue to be reported together with streetlights either not working or permanently on.

### **14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Problems with the building 121 High Street which has been empty for several years is causing problems for a neighbouring property owned by the Trustees. The matter is in hand with by Kendal & Davis.

It was noted that Councillor Cohen did not agree with the purchase of the Cotswold Play park and abstained from voting.

A birthday card has been sent to Betty for reaching her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Cllrs Taubenheim & Craven attended a farewell service at the Methodist Church.

### **15. CHARITY MATTERS.** None

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