

**Minutes of the Burford Town Council meeting held on
Wednesday 5 April 2023 at 6.30pm**

Present: Cllr P Higgs – Mayor, Cllr M Taubenheim – Deputy Mayor, Cllr J Tunnell Westmacott, Cllr D Cotterill, Cllr D Cohen, Cllr S Palmer, Cllr J Rushton, Cllr J White, Cllr J Craven, Cllr P Bruce, Cllr S Lofthouse, Cllr H Ashton, Maggie Andrews – Clerk.

1. MINUTES. Resolved: that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 1 March 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.

Cotswold Arms. A meeting to be convened between Bill Oddy (Ubico) Cllrs Higgs & Taubenheim.

Coach Park. The Mayor is in contact with James Wright at OCC to find a solution regarding coach parking in Priory Lane. One suggestion is to drop off passengers and then park on the A361.

Church Lane pedestrian management. OCC felt to mark a pedestrian area would give pedestrians a false sense of security but safer to have the 20mph signage and to drop the request.

Cotswold Play area. Pursue inspection details once we take ownership.

Coronation Plans. BTC and St John’s church organising the event, all details will be in the Bridge magazine.

Car park extension. Drawings are being produced and a meeting is to be arranged between Cllrs Higgs, Ashton, Cotterill & Will Barton (WODC). Drain issues need to be addressed so that water flows freely.

Zebra crossing, The Hill. We await information from OCC regarding match funding – Cllr Field-Johnson to be asked if he could contribute from his OCC fund.

Amanda Hanley. Comprehensive notes have been circulated to all interested parties including the Chamber of Trade.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were noted from Cllr Field-Johnson & John Yeatman (RFO).

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 receiving reimbursement for £209.94 for a 500kg grit bin.

Cllr Tunnell-Westmacott – Cemetery & Environment.

Cllr Rushton - Recreation Ground. Also receiving reimbursement of £12.68 for Rec gate signage.

Cllr Cohen – BEAP.

Cllr Taubenheim – Pavilion. Also receiving reimbursement £249 regarding last year’s Jubilee costs.

Cllr White – Traffic.

5. CLLR FIELD-JOHNSON REPORT.

Home to school transport. The Council were deluged with emails from concerned parents with the decision to withdraw ‘Home to school spare seats scheme.’ A motion was then moved “This Council apologises unreservedly for its decision to send ‘withdrawal’ letters to parents under its Spare Seats scheme without parental or wider public consultation. Up to 235 children affected in the short term and as many as 1,384 students in the medium term”.

County Hall car park repair costs. OCC has sent around £15,000 repairing the County Hall carpark. It was felt this money would have been better spent repairing our roads and fixing the many potholes in West Oxfordshire.

Household waste recycling centres. Short closures at the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) are planned during March & April to enable deep cleaning and essential maintenance. Closing dates: Dix Pit 24 & 25 April, Drayton 30 & 31 March, Oakley Wood 20 & 21 April. More information on OCC's website.

DIY Waste prices to rise. The cost and other chargeable waste at HRWCs will rise this month. While most items can be left free of charge, DIY waste i.e. rubble, soil, fence panels, work tops, sinks – is legally classified as industrial waste and incurs a charge. From the 1 April items charged at £1.50 will now cost £2. Bags of plaster board from £2.50 to £3.50, tyres from £5 to £6. Full list on the Council's website. Cllr Field-Johnson is concerned these measures will lead to an increase in fly tipping.

6. CLLR ASHTON REPORT.

Car Parking strategy. WODC intends to review and update its car parking strategy and Cllr Ashton has agreed to assist the Executive team member Lidia Arciszewska on this initiative. Data is being collected for Burford, Woodstock, Chipping Norton & Witney which will all have immediate issues. Data has been collected in the first quarter and will continue over Easter, in June and in August. This will allow different strategies to be developed and piloted, depending on the objectives in each case, aiming to develop a District-wide off-street parking strategy in 2024. In the meantime, enforcement activities for on-street parking have passed to OCC as from 1 April.

Mullen Car Museum & development. The planning application for this museum, car exercise track and large holiday homes at Enstone Airfield was approved in outline in 2018. A full application with considerable changes was approved last week in Development Control Committee.

Botley West Solar Farm. WODC has been reported in the press as not being prepared to condemn the plans for the huge solar farm, after Council resisted an opposition motion to do so. The rationale for this is that WODC will be a statutory consultee when the formal proves starts and does not want to risk undermining the credibility of its comments when the full details of the scheme have been published. The action group against the solar farm supports this positioning.

After discussion with Ken Gray Cllr Ashton suggested we should have more say regarding the Bridge pedestrian pavement. Cllr Higgs will approach OCC again reminding them of the urgency and that the safety of pedestrians is their responsibility. A minor accident occurred on the bridge involving a school pupil. Duncan Enright has been made aware of this.

HGVs. We responded to the consultation which closes 10 April. Cllr Ashton & Ken Gray will meet and write a submission for the consultation which Cllr Higgs will submit to Joe Atkins, copying in all interested parties at OCC including Duncan Enright by the deadline of 10 April.

7. OTHER MATTERS FOR DISCUSISON

Shared Prosperity Fund. WODC has commissioned a study to identify potential UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) projects to support West Oxfordshire's Market Towns. Working with specialists in place management & development - Heartflood Ltd, the Council is conducting a survey targeted at town center businesses and the public. In particular, this study will be looking at a) Signage and wayfinding tools, b) Support for independent businesses,

c) The provision of information for visitors and d) Public realm improvements.
In the meantime, the consultant Chris Gregory will speak to as many key stakeholders as possible to gather local input.

8. MAYORS REPORT

The Mayor was invited to make the closing speech at the BEAGles Environmental Day on the 18 March at the Warwick Hall, which he attended for most of the day.

9. TREASURER'S REPORT

The draft year end expenditure vs budget figures were circulated, a full explanation of which will be in the audit notes which are being prepared together with account balances and full reconciliation of funds.

The 2022/23 payroll has been signed off with HMRC (P60's sent to employees) the 2023/24 payroll is set up using Brightpay.

Audit information has been received from Moore UK notifying a submission deadline of 30 June 2023, a period for the exercise of Public Rights is scheduled for 5 June to 14 July 2023.

Don Griffin has been asked if he is willing to undertake the Internal Audit – Council approved this appointment.

Business Rates refund of £2,074.31 has been received for the Cemetery, the agreed fee has been paid to Goodman Nash.

The VAT reclaim has been submitted in the sum of £4,034.88 for 2nd half of 2022/23.

April payments for approval.

OALC Membership 2023/24	318. 97
J Rushton R'brse gate sign	12. 68
P Higg R'brse 500 kg grit bin	209. 94
D Buckland petrol costs	30. 00
M Taubenheim R'brse Jubilee costs	249. 00
M Andrews R'brse paper towels	18. 09
Signway Ltd (7.5T WL & 40mph signage)	8915. 42
WODC business rates Tolsey	24. 50
WODC Cemetery business rates	62. 54
Mrs M Andrews	950. 00
Mr D Buckland	1326. 76
J Yeatman	471. 20
HMRC PAYE	528. 57
Nest Pension	69. 78
Anna Grotex cleaning services	100. 00
Systems & Solutions (Bytesafe)	20. 00
BT business bill	73. 16
Margaret Johnson	27. 90
A K Timms	26. 18
Hickman Bros	111. 67
Ubico Dog bin emptying Frethern Close	50. 05
WODC Trade waste	936. 00
Goodman Nash	871. 20
Burford PCC Warwick Hall hire	50. 00
ACD pest control	270. 00
Cotswold Connect (HGV)	417. 60

Bridge Magazine donation	500.00
Bonfire & Firework fund donation	500.00
Petty cash	25.00
Castle Water Rec	40.61

The above was approved and passed for payment.

10. CORRESPONDENCE.

A letter has been received from a resident suggesting Burford may benefit from the Community Speed Watch. This has been tried in the past and was found not to be successful, therefore Council decided against.

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning.

23/00637/HHD. 21 Tanners Lane. No objection

23/00548/LBC & 23/00695/FUL. Cotswold Gateway. Erection of three rapid electric charging points. Concern was shown over several issues including the loss of car parking spaces, the size of the charging pillars in the eye line of Burford Mews and car fumes for those seated at outside tables.

23/00694/HHD & 23/00695/LBC. 21 Priory Lane. Council showed concern over the position of the outside flue and fume emissions, suggesting the outlet should not affect other properties.

23/00801/LBC. 141b The Hill. No objection.

Recreation Ground.

Cllr Rushton circulated her report.

Rabbits. ACD pest control have submitted their report which was disappointing. Only 3 rabbits were killed.

Football. Complaints received from the teams about tyre marks on the pitches made by the grass cutting equipment. It was suggested McCrackens have a key to Westfield avoiding accessing the Rec by the car park.

New playground project. Good feedback was collected from the Eco Day where a stand was erected showing the suggested equipment. Online meetings have taken place with several companies of play equipment. Crowdfunding in progress and now a definitive list of equipment is required for the final costings from the companies.

General.

The Preschool are not currently using the garden area as the fence does not meet safety requirements.

Fly tipping has been increasing in the Rec car park. Cameras will be installed.

The large waste bin is broken and needs replacing.

A Rec and Pavilion meeting is set for 24 April at 5pm in the Council Chamber.

Pavilion. Nothing to report.

Environment. Several grass verges are being eroded around the town.

It is noted that George Yard is poorly lit and the path uneven. Cllr Bruce will investigate and report.

Cemetery. General maintenance continues to be carried out by David Buckland. The fixing of toppers to the low wall need to be completed.

The water pressure is very low and there is a leak at the water trough in the neighbouring field– investigation required.

Traffic. Parking on The Hill is causing problems – Council agreed that the double yellow lines should be repainted; OCC will be contacted on the matter.

BEAP. (Burford Emergency Action Plan) Circulated and finalised.

Other Reports. Cllr Higgs & Bruce attended a meeting held at the WODC offices in Witney concerning the Government scheme 'Climate Change & Nature recovery, Access to Nature. Cllr Bruce circulated a report from this meeting summarizing the event. WODC want to introduce and gain input for their new projects: Reducing Carbon Emissions – of which the largest emitters are Leisure Centres and Waste Disposal. Adaption planning e.g. mitigation of Heatwaves & Flooding etc, Bio diversity and nature recovery.

Discussion groups were held covering many subjects such as Retrofit (of energy efficient technologies e.g. insulation, solar panels etc.). Examples of schemes and grants that might apply were Sustainable warmth, Low Carbon Oxfordshire who provide videos and advice, Cosey Homes Oxfordshire, Better Housing, Better Health, Oxfordshire.gov.uk/retrofit. Electric Vehicle Infrastructure, Bio-Diversity & Nature Recovery, Protection of green areas and wildlife corridors, Protecting green areas through gaining ownership, Working with voluntary groups & neighbouring Councils. WODC will issue comprehensive notes in due course.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS. It was noted that a bugler will be required for the Remembrance Day service in November to sound the last post.

14. CHARITY MATTERS

The Tolsey Charity account balance & full reconciliation of funds was circulated. The fire alarm/emergency lighting service and testing was carried out in March. Four luminaries failed the 3 hour test. Pyrotec have ordered parts and will arrange for the work to be carried out in due course.

