

**Minutes of the Burford Town Council meeting held on  
Wednesday 5 July 2023 at 7pm**

---

**Present:** Cllr P Higgs – Mayor, Cllr M Taubenheim – Deputy Mayor, Cllr J Tunnell-Westmacott, Cllr D Cohen, Cllr J Rushton, Cllr J White, Cllr J Craven, Cllr P Bruce, Cllr S Lofthouse, Cllr Cotterill, Cllr H Ashton WODC, Cllr Field-Johnson OCC, Maggie Andrews – Clerk. John Yeatman RFO. Mr L Reynolds.

Mr Reynolds a resident from Witney Street aired several concerns regarding work to the Bull including the Right of Way from the High Street, the volume of material coming out of the premises, the height of the external flue among other issues. He felt a review of work done should be carried out. The Mayor said we are only consultees and this matter was for WODC Planning. Cllr Ashton had asked Heritage to investigate who seemed happy with the outcome. A completion certificate will need to be issued before the premises can be used. BTC and Cllr Ashton will raise these issues with Planning.

**1. MINUTES. Resolved:** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 7 June 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

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

Cotswold Arms. Cllr Bruce prepared drawings of the street furniture at the premises which have been given to Kizzy so that she can apply for a pavement license. Bill Oddy (Ubico) will be chased over the matter of clearing the wooden structures in Priory Lane and the general tidiness of the site. He has not come back to BTC with the information requested.

Car park extension. No progress to date however the anti-flood work is being pushed through the system which will be on an experimental basis and monitored.

The Lamb & Bay Tree. Cllrs Taubenheim & Westmacott are again monitoring the matter of the overflowing & untidy waste bins. Neighbours are complaining of flies and smells. Up to date photos and information will be sent to the Brewery for some permanent action.

**3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies were noted from Cllr Palmer.

**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.

Cllr Tunnell-Westmacott – Cemetery & Environment.

Cllr Rushton - Recreation Ground.

Cllr Cohen – BEAP.

Cllr Taubenheim – Pavilion.

Cllr White – Traffic.

Cllr Craven – Climate Change

**5. CLLR FIELD-JOHNSON REPORT.** (the full report was previously circulated to Councillors).

Thames Water. Cllr Field-Johnson together with WASP continue to campaign regarding the dumping of raw sewage into our rivers, calling on Thames Water to re-invest funds to improve water quality. Since Privatisation, water companies have taken on £60bn of debt and instead of using money to improve the infrastructure, £50bn was paid to either overseas shareholders or parent companies.

It was reported that Thames Water discharged sewage overflow 8,014 times last year – the equivalent of 22 times per day!

The company is also under financial pressure and has recently sought a cash injection of around £1bn from investors.

Review of HGVs in Oxfordshire. A further meeting was convened with OCC to discuss the review of HGV routes throughout Oxfordshire, but this continues at a slow pace. There are commitments that by the Autumn some recommendations will be made and further HGV trials implemented.

Pothole innovation trial. After a winter that saw a number of potholes reported in Oxfordshire double compared to the same period last year and heavy criticism from the public, a trial has taken place aimed at improving the repair process. OCC and its highways contractor Milestone Infrastructure used the road between Steventon and East Hanney as a test site to seven different methods of filling in potholes or repairing minor defects requiring ‘patching’. Each section of the road had a different type of pothole or patch repair carried out to get a direct comparison of the various methods. The prolonged freeze over winter followed by a protracted period of wet weather led to an unprecedented increase in the number of emergency pothole repairs. The next stage will involve contractors returning and additional testing and analysis to enable a longer-term review of the methods.

LTN Impact report leads to growing calls for resignations. Leading OCC Cabinet members have faced calls to resign after a Council report revealed modelling which showed Low Traffic Neighbourhoods led to ambulances experiencing delays when responding to life threatening calls. The council report analysed the impact of LTNs in East Oxford and Cowley on South Central Ambulance Service’s response times and found the traffic measures cause delays to response time. There have been calls for Andrew Gant Cabinet Member for Highways management & Duncan Enright Cabinet Member for travel, to resign for not releasing the information in an ‘open and transparent manner’.

**6. CLLR ASHTON REPORT.**

Botley Solar Farm. The developer has submitted their Scoping Report to the Planning Inspectorate. This is the first step in the first Pre-Application Stage of the process. WODC engages with the developer at this stage to inform the developer’s Statement of Community Consultation and begins to prepare a Local Impact Report, informed by affected Parishes. If the Inspector accepts the developer’s application for Examination, they formally request WODC to submit a Local Impact Report. The Inspector is not expected to submit a recommendation to the Secretary of State until early 2025.

2021-2041 Local Plan. This is proceeding slowly. It will be a long process! The next steps are:

1. Focused consultation on plan objectives, spatial strategy and call for ideas and opportunities – summer 2023
2. Consultation on preferred policy options/approaches - winter 2023
3. Publication of draft Local Plan – summer 2024
4. Submission for examination – autumn 2024

## 5. Adoption – mid 2025

At a recent Scrutiny committee, I have asked that the plan be drafted in two stages: firstly, the general policies and overall housing requirements and secondly the spatial distribution. Enforcement – Burford House Hotel. Retrospective works approved in 2019 have not been carried out and the owner has subsequently carried out other internal works without permission. If retrospective applications for these are not submitted the case will be referred to WODC's enforcement team for further action.

121 High Street. Nothing is happening at WODC or Kendal & Davis level. Both are 'finding it difficult to contact the owner'. It needs a combined approach to gain access and undertake a structural survey. The Town Council can help by stressing concern on safety grounds and visual impact on the High Street. Perhaps we can get Historic England to support (they have a High Street Heritage Action Zone campaign).

Diddly Squat. The Planning Inspector has allowed the appeal for a temporary car park at the farm shop, for 3 years only after which it must be returned to field. The appeal against restaurant closure was dismissed.

Community Funding. The Community Grant Scheme has been restructured. The relevant element for us is the 'Civic crowdfunding pledges' which are open to Towns/Parishes, schools, charities, and informal groups. This will be run by Spacehive and details of how it will work will be available in the next couple of months. Applications can be made in September and in Spring 2024. They will be assessed for Council funding within the following 6 weeks. Even if not approved for funding, projects can use Spacehive as a fund-raising platform. A total of £120,000 will be allocated to this initiative.

Projects should be submitted in one of 3 Lots:

1. Improving our natural environment and their access to it, so that we enable physical and mental wellbeing and cohesive, connected communities
2. Taking action towards the climate and ecological emergencies, so that we reduce carbon footprints and encourage nature recovery
3. Increasing community resilience and amplifying the voice of the seldom heard, so that we act on issues most important to our residents and their needs, such as access to food, supporting young people and cultural provision.

Cllr Ashton will book a venue (possibly the Old Hall Warwick Hall) for an Executive meeting with WODC and their support team.

He also aired concerns over the baking up of traffic at the A40 roundabout backing causing congestion. James Wright at OCC said road markings would cost in the region of £15,000 which will have to come from next year's budget. However, Keep Clear markings would go some way in alleviating the congestion.

It has been noted that black bins are appearing in the car park – there is no knowledge as to whom they belong. Cllr Ashton will investigate.

## **7. OTHER MATTERS FOR DISCUSION**

Priory Lane Coach park. Several complaints have been received from residents and The Priory. Large coaches are parked on the zig zags outside the Primary School, leaving their engines running and blocking the gateway entrance to The Priory. They have also parked in Lower High Street near Church Lane blocking the view of vehicles and taking up the disabled parking bay. Bourton on the Water has reduced the number of coach parking spaces from about 20 down to 8, and the privately owned car park will close to coaches at the end of the year. The Mayor circulated a paper suggesting various actions we could take including 'No Entry' signs to large coaches. James Wright at OCC is helping us with information as to what we could do but it is a big issue.

Cllr Taubenheim will ask the Chamber of Trade how much trade visitors bring to Burford.  
Playground Project. Cllr Rushton shared the recommendation of the Playground committee which had unanimously voted for Proludic. This was for several qualitative reasons, such as response to questions, the commitment of resources to project manage and work with BTC, the aspects like sustainability of materials, and accessibility for all abilities including the disabled. BTC agreed and supported the decision made. Cllr Rushton will inform Proludic of our decision and notify Wicksteed who were not selected.

#### **8. MAYORS REPORT**

The Mayor & Mayoress attended the Lord Lieutenant's 'Mayors & Chairs' dinner at Dorchester Abbey. He met several new Mayors and found networking useful.

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

The 1<sup>st</sup> quarter expenditure and account balances and reconciliation papers were circulated.  
July payments for approval.

Castle Water Cemetery	38. 49
D Buckland petrol & PPE reimbursement	25. 00
WODC Tolsey business rates	0. 00
WODC Cemetery business rates	60. 00
Mrs M Andrews	903. 05
Mr D Buckland	1375. 15
J Yeatman	462. 75
HMRC PAYE	554. 95
Nest Pension	75. 04
Anna Grotex cleaning services	100. 00
Systems & Solutions (Bytesafe)	20. 00
BT business bill	63. 74
McCracken & Son	2426. 40
Hickman Bros	245. 00
Mclaughlin Electrical	745. 00
J. Buckland	50. 00
Petty cash	25. 00
Castle Water Rec	40. 61

The above was approved and passed for payment.

#### **10. CORRESPONDENCE.** None

#### **11. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### **Planning.**

23//01542/HHD. 10 Tanners Lane. No available plans, no comment.

23/01324/HHD. 50 Witney Street. No objections.

23/01392/HHD. Tiverton Cottage. The Council objected to the removal of the Historic boundary wall. One car parking space is insufficient for a 4-bedroom house. This plan removes a portion of 'commercial' land for a residential driveway.

23/01486/S73. The Old Bull Hotel 105 High Street. Pictures were sent to WODC Planning identifying our objections. BTC have strong objections together with residents in Witney Street regarding the height of the flue above the roof line and its visibility from Witney Street and the South. The machinery sitting on the roof should be clad and soundproofed.

##### **Recreation Ground.**

Cllr Rushton circulated her report.

The RosPA inspection of playground equipment will be carried out this month.

New playground project. The response to fundraising has been amazing. £5331 to Crowdfunding page, £20092 at the time of writing direct to BTC's account with more expected. All donors have received an update/thank you letter.

In the quote from Proludic, mulch safety surfacing has been replaced with wetpour, and their quote also includes resurfacing the concrete basketball area with tarmac. The overall cost has been maintained at £120,000 thanks to a significant discount.

Bowls Club. A Gala day is planned for 27 August. Council agreed to make Westfield available for parking.

Cadets. Cllrs Higgs & Rushton met with Major Hames the Commanding Officer for Oxfordshire & Colour Sergeant Geoff Wall – Detachment Commander for Burford. The Cadets may be more involved in Burford in future, especially at Festival times.

General. A report was received about litter on the Rec; none was found.

A length of wall on A40 boundary wall has been repaired by David Buckland.

David will meet with a tree surgeon to look at a large limb of a tree which is overhanging Hunts Close and some cause for concern.

The footpath to the Rec from the High Street has had a dangerous fence panel removed, unfortunately this now means gravel is spilling onto the path. The Clerk to action.

Pavilion. The fire extinguisher check has been carried out.

Environment. Gigaclear continues work on The Hill.

A street clean-up working party will be arranged – date to be advised. Action Cllr Westmacott.

The Chamber of Trade will be asked to encourage Traders to weed and clean their frontages. Overgrown grass to the right of the entrance to Westfield need cutting back. Cllr Westmacott will advise McCrackens.

It has been noted that one of the football pitches has been enlarged making it difficult for people to sit comfortably on one of the benches because they are so close to the markings. Cllr Rushton to action.

Cemetery. Cllr Westmacott thanked Councillors for coming to a working party clearing moss from grave stones. Steve McCracken will meet with our Groundsman to assess trees requiring attention; some of which are dead and some possibly dangerous.

Climate Change. Cllr Craven advised that a summary of a recent meeting will be circulated to Councillors.

Traffic. No report.

Other reports. None.

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

It is noted that the Spice Lounge has placed large tall planters outside their frontage. This will be added to information for Bill Oddy to address, including his summary on A boards outside premises. Honeycotts are not always adhering to the advice from Bill Oddy from WODC Street Scene to make sure their advertising boards do not encroach on the public highway. It was noted that some pedestrians still have to walk in the road. An elderly resident has found it difficult walking safely at the Mermaid frontage because of A boards.

Maggie Andrews announced that after 26 years serving Burford as the Town Clerk, she will be retiring at the end of the year.

#### **15. CHARITY MATTERS**

A new trader selling children's eco-friendly bed linen and Teepees has been approved.

