

**Minutes of the Burford Town Council meeting held on  
Wednesday 1 November 2023 at 7pm**

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**Present:** Cllr P Higgs – Mayor, Cllr M Taubenheim – Deputy Mayor, Cllr J Tunnell-Westmacott, Cllr D Cohen, Cllr J White, Cllr P Bruce, Cllr S Lofthouse, Cllr Cotterill, Cllr J Rushton, Cllr S Palmer, Cllr H Ashton, Cllr Field-Johnson OCC, Maggie Andrews – Clerk. John Yeatman RFO.  
Mr J Blackburn, Mr R Shute representing SRRA (Shilton Road Resident's Association.)  
A request was made from SRRA for a 20 mph limit on Shilton Road which was previously circulated to Councillors. The matter will be discussed under agenda item 7.

**1. MINUTES. Resolved:** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 4 October 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

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

Cotswold Arms. The Clerk asked Bill Oddy to remind them about removing the wooden structures in Priory Lane.

Car park extension. A meeting is to be held at the car park on 2 November with the District representatives to discuss flooding relief measures, look at suitable EVC points, extending the car park to the east, lighting on the bridge, and investigate why the lamp at the entrance to the car park does not work.

Priory Lane Coach Park. The Mayor will chase the matter with OCC since no further comments have been received from them.

Bull Right of Way. After monitoring the situation, it appears the doors are generally now open for the public's use.

121 High Street. The Mayor continues to pursue the matter.

Planning. It is noted that there was some confusion over two applications, 23/02329/HHD Winston & 23/02339/HHD Arnridge, both in Barns Lane. The Council's comments should have been reversed to read that there was no objection to Winston but the Council would prefer to see a permeable surface for the parking area at Arnridge. Amended comment has been sent to WODC Planning Officers.

**3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies were noted from Cllr J Craven.

**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 payment for a MacBook Air £1259.98.

Cllr Tunnell-Westmacott – Cemetery & Environment.

Cllr Rushton - Recreation Ground.

Cllr Cohen – BEAP.

Cllr Taubenheim – Pavilion.

Cllr White – Traffic.

Cllr Craven – Climate Change. Also receiving reimbursement for print cartridges for the Race Night -£77.55

**5. CLLR FIELD-JOHNSON REPORT.** (the full was report circulated to Councillors), it covered:

OCC 'No overall control' (NOC.) As reported last month the 'Fair Deal alliance' running OCC collapsed. A motion is being submitted to Full Council on 8 November proposing a cross-party, quasi-committee system.

New Cabinet. Details can be found on <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/council/about-your-council/oxfordshire-councillors/oxfordshires-cabinet>

Council Budget 2024/2025 under development. This is now underway. Given the NOC status of the council, the development and approval process is likely to be especially challenging.

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNS) will remain. This is despite the fact that the 18-month trial has been lambasted by residents and businesses. Cabinet approved the use of automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras in place of existing physical barriers, which have been repeatedly vandalised.

Heavy rainfall and high river levels in Oxfordshire. Consistent rainfall has led to higher-than-normal river levels on many watercourses in Oxfordshire. Information and links to the Met Office's weather warning bulletins are:

The Environmental Agency's information relating to flood alerts – <https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/location?q=Oxfordshire>

The Met Office issues weather warnings when severe weather is expected –

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/warnings-and-advice/UK-warnings>

OCC has produced a flooding toolkit which provides advice & support for residents and businesses: <https://oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com>

Police & OCC reaffirm 20mph speed limits. In response to parish council criticisms about the lack of effectiveness of OCC's £8 million 30mph to 20mph sign change, it is reported that Thames Valley Police have said:

'We enforce speed limits based on evidence and threat and harm principles, and officers will always deal with situations they encounter operationally. We rely on the public to provide information and encourage anyone with information about speeding or poor driving to report it so we can gather information and take action where appropriate, asking people to report online on our website or by calling 101. While we share the council's enthusiasm for road safety and making improvements for all road users, it is important that the introduction of 20mph speed limits is done in conjunction with Department for Transport guidelines'.

Cold Callers offering property repairs. Residents are being warned to be wary of cold callers offering property repairs after recent storms. OCC's Trading Standards have received increased numbers of complaints.

Burford bridge & HGV limit. A meeting was held with OCC officers to discuss planned repairs to Burford bridge. Progress has been slow but we are hoping repairs will begin this side of Christmas.

BTC and OCC met the new Cabinet Member for Highways, Judy Roberts who fully understood the issues facing Burford; its economy, building destruction and pollution incurred by the HGVs. We are waiting for the County-wide HGV report. Funding needs to be provided and this will need to be approved in the February budget which is under increased pressure to fund social care and education.

**COUNCILLOR ASHTON REPORT.** Circulated to all Councillors, covering:

HGV restrictions. Cllr Ashton worked with Ken Gray on a presentation for OCC Executive member Judy Roberts, at a meeting organised by Cllr Field-Johnson.

Car parking. Cllr Ashton met with Cllr Higgs & Cllr Cotterill as a preparation for meeting District Executive Member Tim Sumner.

Coles Field. Cllr Ashton liaised with Mr. & Mrs. Sparrowhawk and their lawyers to ask WODC to request the inspectorate for the Appeal to be conducted as a Hearing rather than in Writing (as requested by the Appellant).

Cllr White felt BTC should write to the Inspectorate before a decision is made. Cllr White agreed to draft a letter for approval.

Pedestrian protection on the Bridge. Cllr Ashton attended a meeting with OCC's Mike Wasley together with design contractors, followed this up by asking them to consider a supplementary length restriction.

The Fainting Goat. No premises license application has been submitted, but a TEN application has been submitted and agreed for 8-12 November.

Other WODC matters. The Scrutiny committees have been merged and Cllr Ashton has been appointed to the new committee which meets monthly. He also attended a Local Plan Workshop on behalf of BTC and subsequently a meeting of the Working Group.

Cllrs Ashton & Field-Johnson left the meeting.

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

Shilton Road 20mph. After discussion the paper submitted by John Blackburn & Richard Shute to extend the 20mph restriction to Shilton Road was unanimously supported by Councillors. The Mayor will sign the paper and request Cllr Field-Johnson to also endorse it. We will then submit it to OCC.

Cllr White felt that the process of matters from the public should perhaps be discussed as they are presented so that we could be in possession of all the facts relating to the subject. This was noted for future meetings should the public wish to speak at the commencement of the meeting.

WODC Plan & Local Consultation. BTC's collective response to the Local plan 2041 consultation, ideas and objectives have been submitted. Thanks were expressed to Cllr Craven for an excellent paper.

Cotswold Gate. We are still awaiting full ownership.

Burford bridge pavement. Milestone have suggested that 'Goldmac' be used when resurfacing the walkway area on the bridge.

## **8. MAYORS REPORT**

Cllr Higgs met with Kenneth Greene whose company owns 121 High Street to ask about his plans for the property.

He attended the WODC Executive meeting held in the Warwick Hall, where three BTC councillors asked questions on HGVs, 121 High Street and Guildenford car park. WODC's answers are published in their minutes of the meeting.

Along with Cllrs White, Ashton & Field-Johnson he met two representatives of Milestone, who have the contract to recommend a safe pavement over Burford bridge. Two councillors from Fulbrook Parish, an OCC officer and Ken Gray were also in attendance.

Cllr Higgs, along with Cllrs White & Field-Johnson, is due to meet Judy Roberts, the OCC cabinet member now responsible for roads. Cllr Enright has resigned from Cabinet. Cllr Higgs expressed thanks to Cllr Field-Johnson for arranging the meeting.

Cllr Ashton has arranged a meeting with Tim Sumner, the WODC cabinet member for car parks, along with Cllrs Cotterill & Bruce to discuss the car park expansion and flood resilience measures.

Finally, The Mayor is happy to report that Christina Edgar-Hiatt is joining BTC on 6 November as the new Town Clerk, taking over the role when Maggie leaves at the end of the year. Christina is starting the CiLCA course on 25 October with OALC.

Following on from WODC's Executive committee meeting, Cllr Bruce raised the question about 121 High Street asking whether an outline programme for achieving remedial works could be raised. Councillor Rylett Executive Member for Planning & Sustainable Development replied that the property had been monitored by the planning team, involving regular visits from the Conservation & Enforcement Officers. Tracking down the owner has been a key problem. WODC will update us as appropriate.

Cllr White asked what was the District Council's position on OCC's team working on finding solution to the problems caused by HGVs rumbling through small towns and villages in the County, especially Burford. Answered by Councillor Saul Executive Member for Housing and Social Welfare, on behalf of Councillor Enright, Deputy Leader of the Council & Executive Member for Economic Development. Councillor Enright is well aware of the need for our many businesses in the district, including agriculture, quarrying and haulage, to have appropriate access. This must be balanced by the need of residents and businesses to be safe on our roads, and not suffer from heavy goods traffic unnecessarily. There is no solution which fits every situation, Gloucestershire & Warwickshire have the same problems. WODC will work with the County Council to facilitate the pilot and future work to the fullest extent, as well as considering the needs of businesses and residents in the forthcoming Local Plan.

Cllr Higgs asked what was WODC's action plan to improve car and coach parking in Burford. Councillor Graham, Leader of the Council said the Executive are recommended by officers to resolve to:

- a) Agree that a further review in 2024 of Guildenford car park, supports the best use of council assets to identify parking issues and capacity levels; and
- b) Agree to delegate the decision to approver costs associated with undertaking a further review of Guildenford car park, to the Assistant Director for Resident Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Leisure & Major Projects.

These reviews would incorporate proposals to mitigate against flood risks, and look at the issues related to coach parking in the town. So, in short, we are on it, and we will work with you to find a solution.

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

Draft budget is being prepared for the finance meeting on 13 November.

### **November payments.**

P Higgs reimbursement MacBook Air (for new Town Clerk)	1259. 98
Castle Water Tolsey	6. 95
WODC Tolsey business rates	0. 00
WODC Cemetery business rates	60. 00
Mrs M Andrews	970. 84
Mr D Buckland	1375. 15
J Yeatman	542. 50
HMRC PAYE	603. 85
Nest Pension	75. 04
Anna Grotex cleaning services	120. 00
Systems & Solutions (Bytesafe)	20. 00
BT business bill	72. 73
McCracken & Son	2090. 40
Margaret Johnson	68. 39

A K Timms	48. 61
Burford PCC Hall hire	277. 75
OALC CiLCA training course	330. 00
Royal British Legion	175. 00
D Buckland reimbursement petrol costs	20. 01
J Craven reimbursement ink cartridges	77. 55
Petty Cash	50. 00
Castle Water Rec	216. 93
Play safety	36. 00
M Andrews reimbursement table cloths/receptions	27. 98

The above was approved and passed for payment.

**10. CORRESPONDENCE.** None

**11. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Planning.**

Priory Tearooms pavement license W23/01161. No objection.

Coles Field. There is no indication yet as to when the appeal will be held.

**Recreation Ground.**

Cllr Rushton circulated her reports. It covered the following:

Problems have again arisen regarding the grass cutting schedule for football pitches. Now that the season has ended for mowing, it was agreed that Cllr Tunnell-Westmacott will liaise with McCrackens early next March to ascertain and confirm when mowing will take place so that line markings are not eradicated.

New Playground project. Thanks were expressed to all who helped to make the Race Night successful. It raised £1028.

The playground quote has been amended and agreed - £120337.71. The Council formally resolved to accept the quotation and submit the order which will be signed by Cllr Rushton & Maggie Andrews.

The hedgerows along Tanners Lane & A40 junction have still not been cut back by OCC.

The Clerk will chase this again.

Tree Tech have submitted a quotation for tree work on the Recreation ground. Once all quotations have been received the Council will make a decision.

Quotations have been received to remove the cherry tree – once WODC agree this should be felled, Council agreed to accept Ed Weir's quotation in the sum of £700.

Cllr Rushton will chase SSE regarding our enquiry over trees close to overhead cables.

Rabbit numbers seem reduced – all agreed the quotation of £360 for gassing.

**Pavilion.** No report.

**Environment.** Quotations for tree work in the closed Churchyard have been sought, a final decision will be made once all have been received.

Deep ruts have been made by vehicles delivering pallets etc. for the bonfire night in Westfield. Cllr Rushton agreed to oversee stewarding on the night regarding parking at the school.

Thanks are expressed particularly to Jack Buckland for his stoic work in helping with the Bonfire event. Thanks also to Smurfit.

Cllr Tunnell-Westmacott is pursuing the matter of overgrown foliage outside Riverside House, Lower High Street.

**Cemetery.** Once all quotations have been received for tree work at the Cemetery Council will make a final decision. The dead and dangerous ash tree situated in the Garden of Remembrance has been felled. The sum agreed was £575.

**Climate Change.** Cllr Perryn said that a further meeting will be convened with Hannah Kenyon since there is a lot of information to digest.

**Traffic.** Thanks were expressed to Ken Gray & Cllr Ashton for their briefing paper which set out the whole history of the HGV saga.

**Other reports.** None.

**14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.**

The remembrance service will take place on Sunday 12 November at the War Memorial as in previous years. All signage will be in place as will stewards.

Cllr Taubenheim agreed to report the Lime tree in Sheep Street which needs some attention. He is liaising with the Chamber of Trade on Christmas events. Christmas trees will be along the High Street as in previous years.

Overgrown foliage is causing problems on the A40 pedestrian areas. This will be reported to Fix my Street.

A light in George yard is not working – the area is very dark – Cllr Bruce will report this to OCC.

Cllr Cotterill reported that twinning with Potenza Picena seems to be at an end due to changing administration.

**15. CHARITY MATTERS**

The full inspection & test of the Tolsey fire alarm & emergency lighting was completed on 18 October 2023.

The fire alarm system maintenance contract renewal for 2023/24 is due in November, quotation is £255 + VAT.

A recent application to trade under the Tolsey has been refused.

