

**Minutes of the Burford Town Council meeting held on
Wednesday 4 October 2023 at 7pm**

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

1. MINUTES. Resolved: that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 6 September 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.

Cotswold Arms. No update – Clerk to chase.

Car park extension. Cllr Higgs has sent a comprehensive letter to the leader of the Cabinet stating our concerns about parking in Burford. This will be raised at the Cabinet meeting. Further surveys are to be carried out next year.

Priory Lane Coach Park. Cllr Higgs said our main problem was the very long coaches. He has spoken to Mr Albrighton at Burford school who might consider coaches parking at the school week ends and holiday periods. Meanwhile the no waiting signs have been erected on the school railings.

Two residents of Priory Lane then attended the meeting airing their concerns about access to their premises when the very long coaches park. Several detailed emails and photos have also been received from residents all of which have been sent to OCC. After much discussion a proposal was made to allow only coaches less than 12.5 long. The council agreed unanimously on this restriction and to apply for a Traffic Order.

Church Green waste bin. This was recently vandalised; after reporting this to WODC it was reinstated it.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were noted from Cllr 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.

Cllr Tunnell-Westmacott – Cemetery & Environment.

Cllr Rushton - Recreation Ground.

Cllr Cohen – BEAP.

Cllr White – Traffic.

Cllr Craven – Climate Change.

Cllr Taubenheim – Planning.

5. CLLR FIELD-JOHNSON REPORT. A full copy of the report was sent to all Councillors, It covered:

Ofsted report on Children’s SEND Services. Oxfordshire’s local area partnership (LAP) has apologised to families and committed to significant change to improve support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) following an inspection of services by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission in July.

The Conservative Opposition has called a special meeting of the Full Council to debate the issues. This will take place on 13 October.

Coalition running OCC collapses. The Fair DEAL Alliance of Liberal Democrats, Labour & Green parties, which had run the council since 2021 was shattered in September when Labour pulled out of the coalition.

New Cabinet. The Liberal Democrats & Greens have announced they will try and run the council as a minority administration.

Oxford Low Traffic Neighbourhoods 'Teacher Recruitment'. LTNs are among the factors making it difficult to recruit and retain teachers. The Oxfordshire Education Commission said the scheme, along with other transport issues and the cost of living and housing was 'fueling recruitment and retention issues in Oxford.' Teacher vacancies in the county are more than double the national average, according to the Department for Education figures.

Closure of Oxford's Botley Road. Network rail will no longer be able to reopen Oxford's Botley Road at the end of October 2023, as previously planned. Due to complications experienced during its £161 million redevelopment of Oxford station, Network Rail has requested that Botley Road remain closed to through traffic until the project is completed in October 2024.

Oxford United Stadium Proposals for council-owned land to be leased to Oxford United FC to build a new stadium near Kidlington have been approved by Cabinet.

6. COUNCILLOR ASHTON REPORT. Circulated to all Councillors. It covered WODC's role in approving GUL-e installation, Lionscourt for action regarding landscape planting, the Local plan Consultation, Using Spacehive for funding, Climate change - liaising with Cllrs Bruce & Craven and pursuing the empty property 121 High Street.

Cllr Ashton also reported on his visit with Cllr Taubeheim to the Burford Sewage Treatment works. Matters arising from this will be considered under Climate issues and details about the sewage treatment will be put in The Bridge magazine.

Cllr Ashton will attend the Executive meeting on 11 October at the Warwick Hall raising our concerns on infrastructure and HGVs.

Cllr Ashton circulated a paper on the results of the car parking survey. In summary, the surveys did not cover periods when the car park was being used for church or Warwick Hall events. They therefore show 'background' demand and the dominance of short duration visits by infrequent visitors who have come to Burford for tourism, eating, drinking and shopping. The use of the car park by those who live and work in Burford is low, although those who park all day do occupy a quarter of the car park capacity.

7. OTHER MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

Staffing committee and responsibilities. The Mayor attended a course on Management Performance for Local Councils, Training report. This was helpful in the light of appointing a new Town Clerk. The full council need to appoint a Staffing Committee to handle any issues and appoint 2 Councillors with specific responsibility for any disciplinary issues which may arise. Interviews have taken place for Town Clerk and after discussion Councillors agreed on a candidate subject to references.

WODC Local Plan & Consultation. A sub-group from the council was appointed consisting of Cllrs Tunnell-Westmacott, Rushton & Craven. Cllr Ashton will attend the Town & Parish workshop on 10 October submitting our views in advance. Views on 3 aspects are sought - draft local plan objectives & potential policy topics, the potential pattern of future development in West Oxfordshire and, a call for sites, ideas, opportunities for how land might be used in future.

Twinning. An email has been received from Caroline Borderie to twin with a town in France. Details were previously circulated to Councillors and after discussion it was decided not to twin with another town.

Cotswold Gate. We are about to finally take over the play area on Cotswold Gate. We have a responsibility to look after the admin of the play area and to try and integrate the new residents into the community and to give them a voice. David Buckland our lengthman has already agreed to check the play area on a weekly basis and Cllr Tunnell-Westmacott agreed to oversee the area from time to time and report any findings.

8. MAYORS REPORT

The Mayor & Mayoress attended a Battle of Britain Fish & Chip supper at the invitation of the Mayor of Carterton. He met Chairs & Councillors from Brize Norton, WODC, Witney & Carterton.

He attended a training course with OALC on Management performance Training for Local Councils.

Along with Councillors and the Town Clerk he attended a commemoration event at Burford Freemasons who kindly donated a replacement bench in Sheep Street.

He thanked them on behalf of the town for their kind donation and for the donation to our new playpark from both Wychwood Lodge & the Buttercroft Lodge.

9. TREASURER'S REPORT

The RFO reported the 2nd quarter expenditure, account balances & reconciliation papers, all circulated to Councillors.

The 2nd half of the precept was received on 22 October 2023. The VAT claim has been submitted for the 1st half of 2023/24 for £5,724.27.

The S106 Local Leisure payment of £12,835.45 was received on 28 September 2023.

Registration with the Information Commissioner has been renewed.

October payments.

D Buckland reimbursement (overalls)	29. 99
Signway Ltd (7.5t signage)	330. 00
WODC (Rec bin emptying Apr-Sep)	2089. 15
M Williams reimbursement (speed sign battery)	47. 99
Cotswold Connect Ltd	88. 80
WODC Tolsey business rates	00
WODC Cemetery business rates	60. 00
Mrs M Andrews	1042. 61
Mr D Buckland	1375. 15
J Yeatman	542. 70
HMRC PAYE	633. 84
Nest Pension	75. 04
Anna Grotex cleaning services	120. 00
Systems & Solutions (Bytesafe)	20. 00
BT business bill	63. 58
McCracken & Son	2426. 40
Margaret Johnson	85. 96
A K Timms	17. 28
Hickmans	29. 21
Moore (Audit fees)	504. 00
WODC (Trade waste)	936. 00
OALC (Training course)	36. 00
ERP Tolsey side light)	130. 00

D Buckland cemetery walling rebuild	100. 00
Petty Cash	25. 00
Castle Water Rec	216. 93

The above was approved and passed for payment.

10. CORRESPONDENCE.

Bull – Right of Way. Several comments have been received regarding the Right of way through Bull. The doors are often locked preventing the public from using this Right of Way. This has been reported to Katie Walther the Countryside Access Officer West, OCC.

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning.

23/02339/HHD. Arnridge, Barns Lane. No objection.

23/02329/HHD. Winston, Barns Lane. The Council would prefer to see a permeable surface for the parking area, otherwise no objection.

Recreation Ground. The full report circulated to Councillors.

Football. The toilets have been left unlocked on occasion and not in a clean state. This has now been addressed.

We had asked for the top pitch to be moved further away from benches and trees – grass cutting, and bin collection vehicles are finding it difficult not to drive over the edge of the pitch. If the pitch is moved it means it would be too far down the slope and so the FC have been advised that vehicles may well have to drive over the side of the pitch.

New playground project.

WODC have confirmed that no planning permission is required if no equipment exceeds 4m. WODC have confirmed S106 funds of £12835.45 to go toward the youth element of the equipment.

Investigation ongoing for the removal of a large cherry tree.

Bowls Club. The Lawn bowls season has now finished and the Short Mat season has started. Hedgerows are still causing problems on Tanners Lane/A40. The clerk to chase OCC.

General. Tree Tech will meet with Cllr Rushton & the Groundsman regarding a second quotation for various tree work.

Southern Electric – tree cutting enquiry since some trees are close to overhead power lines. BT do not maintain trees which may be affected by their telecom cables. To be included in the quotation from Tree Tech.

The BHS have asked to plant a tree on the Rec in memory of the late David Day. Councillors agreed. Site and variety of tree to be decided.

Pavilion. Interior ceiling panels re-sited after water damage.

Environment. Weeding continues around the Priory Wall and on the bridge.

Cemetery. A collapsed wall along the driveway has been rebuilt. A working party to tidy plots and memorials to be arranged. Action Cllr Tunnell -Westmacott.

The ashes of the late Ray Adams will be placed in the Garden of Remembrance.

Climate Change. Cllr Craven's report covered the following. After a recent sub-committee there was a proactive follow up with three of the most active Councils – Budleigh Salterton, Devon, & Bourton on the Water. Liaison with Hannah Kenyon Publica Group, the WODC climate change representative. WODC are in the process of updating their climate and biodiversity plans and will be consulting on these. Waiting to hear the next steps on our submission for Burford Expression of Interest for the EV Microhubs.

Stuart Cole at EVTeam@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Traffic. Cllr Ashton will liaise with Matthew Albrighton at Burford School regarding the possibility of EVC points.

Other reports. None

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

We are still pursuing the matter of a Bugler for the Remembrance service at the War Memorial.

Some road traffic signs have been removed from the area outside Starbucks, some remain. Action Cllr Bruce.

Cllr Ashton will follow up with Bill Oddy at Publica, the matter of A boards and street furniture which is still impeding the pavement to pedestrians on the High Street.

The white lines at the junction of the main car park and Guildenford have completely faded. This has been reported but to date they have not been repainted. The Clerk will report to Highways again.

It is noted that Fulbrook Parish Council are pushing hard on the bridge repairs with OCC.

Cllr Taubeheum will put details in the Bridge magazine that a Cub leader is required.

Pre-school roof repairs. The RFO will suggest names of Charities to the Pre-school committee for funds.

15. CHARITY MATTERS

Details of the procedure are in hand for a new trader under the Tolsey on Mondays.

