

**Minutes of the Burford Town Council meeting held on
Wednesday 6th December 2023 at 7pm**

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 WODC, Cllr J Craven, Cllr Field-Johnson OCC, Maggie Andrews – Clerk. John Yeatman RFO. C. Edgar-Hiatt – Clerk.

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

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.

Cotswold Arms. West Oxfordshire District Council will look into the matter in the spring. The Council will revisit the matter in the spring. Resolved.

Guildenford Car Park. A meeting was held with West Oxfordshire County Council to discuss various repair works for the car park as well as increasing car park spaces. Councillors also discussed with WODC the flood risk and measures that could be taken to alleviate flooding as well as the possible addition of EV charging points to the car park. WODC will be installing data collecting counters at the car park to assess usage levels. There will be a consultation with businesses in the town on usage once this data is collected. This will be part of a 12 month survey of the car park which will help to resolve long standing issues at the car park.

Priory Lane Coach Park. Councillors were informed that Oxfordshire County Council are actioning a length limit on the coach car park in the town.

121 High Street. The Mayor continues to pursue the matter. Work has not started on the building.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

There were no apologies made.

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 email service.

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 circulated to Councillors), it covered:

Council Budget 2024/2025 under development. Proposals to save more than £9.8 million in 2024/25 have been set out by the administration as it seeks to set a balanced budget. The council continues to experience demand-led pressures and the effects of the growing nationwide costs of supporting children and young people; the rising cost of social care and care placements for both children and adults; and a national shortage of social care workers leading to a reliance on agency staff and higher costs.

After taking account of proposed savings, funding changes and other factors that help meet pressures, the county council currently has a £9.1 million funding gap. It will work to close this and present a revised draft balanced budget in the new year after the government has confirmed its financial settlement for local government before Christmas and further financial information has been received from the city and district councils.

Residents can [take part in the budget consultation \(for 2024/25\)](#) until 10 January using an online budget simulator. People will also be able to comment on the [council's proposed budget](#) with feedback captured using an online form or in writing by Freepost.

Childcare Costs. On Tuesday 24 October, the Oxfordshire local area partnership submitted a draft priority action plan to the Department for Education (DfE) to address urgent action required to improve the support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This follows Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission's local area partnership inspection of SEND services in July.

Burford bridge & HGV limit. The Oxfordshire County Council proposed HGV trial plan is still in the first stages of development. Currently OCC is gathering data for the plan. A further report on progress will be made at next town council meeting in January.

COUNCILLOR ASHTON REPORT. Circulated to all Councillors, covering:

HGV restrictions. Cllr Ashton is waiting to present a report on HGV restrictions in Burford to OCC on behalf of Burford Town Council. This is in relation to OCC's new proposed HGV restriction trial which will be carried out for several towns in Oxfordshire.

Funding Opportunities. There were several funding opportunities presented to Council. Community Orchard Fund and the District has been allocated £1000. Information is available on West Oxon's Your Voice about applications for this fund. The deadline is January 10th. Consultation on WODC's Nature Recovery Plan has begun and will close on 22nd December. The current WestHive funding round has closed and the next one will be open in Spring 2024. OCC has allocated £500,000 under its LEVI programme for Gul-e pilots. Burford may wish to apply.

7. OTHER MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

Tree Re Planting. Councillors were informed of several dead fruit trees in the existing orchard. Cllr Higgs proposed to Council to increase the number of trees planted at Coronation orchard and add an additional 15 trees. Councillors agreed to this. Council asked Cllr Palmer to head this project for the orchard.

WODC Plan & Local Consultation. Cllr Ashton discussed with Council the submission of land for development at Fulbrook. The Town Council has met with Fulbrook Parish Council to discuss the submission. Action will be taken, and a report from Burford Town Council in regard to this submission will be sent to West Oxfordshire District Council planning in the New Year.

Cotswold Gate. Burford Town Council is now the owner of the play area at Cotswold Gate development.

Burford Bridge Pavement. Repairs to the bridge have been postponed till the New Year. Oxfordshire County Council has postponed the pedestrian work on the bridge till Summer of 2024.

Coles Field. Cllr Ashton noted to Councillors that the appeal had been validated but the form of appeal had not yet been decided.

8. MAYORS REPORT

The Mayor told Council of his meeting with Susan Hughes from West Oxfordshire District Council to discuss matters regarding Guildenford Car Park. The Council is addressing

flooding in the car park as well as increased parking spaces. The Council is excited to be investigating with WOCC the possibility of installing EV charging stations at the car park. WOCC has agreed to do a 12-month survey of the area to help resolve the issues highlighted. On 12th November, the town held its annual Remembrance Day service and laying of the wreaths. As always, it was an important act of remembrance for the town. Cllr Higgs noted how well the bonfire and fireworks night on the 5th November 2024 had gone. It was a huge success and over 3000 people attended.

The Mayor wanted to thank everyone involved in the Civic Service on the 3rd December 2023. Special thanks to our Clerk, Maggie Andrews, for all her work planning the event. Cllr Higgs said how well attended it was by residents and was lovely to see so many parts of the community coming together at Christmas time.

9. TREASURER'S REPORT

Budget 2024/2025. The draft Budget for 2024/2025 was presented to Councillors. Councillors approved the proposed budget and Precept for 2024/2025 financial year. There will be a budget rise of 3% which is in line with the inflation. **RESOLVED.**

December Payments.

J Buckland	50.00
Castle Water Tolsey (082 Tolsey)	8.99
Castle Water (552 Cemetery)	7.12
Castle Water Rec)	452.56
P Higgs (R'brse Netwise)	21.01
McCracken & Son	187.20
Fire Fighters Charity	2040.00
WODC Tolsey business rates	0. 00
WODC Cemetery business rates	60. 00
Salary – Administrative Services	886.90
Salary – Administrative Services	465.72
Salary – Lengthsman Services	1375.15
Salary – Administrative Services	462.95
HMRC PAYE	664.80
Nest Pension	75. 04
A. Grotex Cleaning Services	120. 00
Systems & Solutions (Bytesafe)	20. 00
BT business bill	73.19
Richoch UK (Photocopier Rental)	39.92
Oxpest Pest Control	360.00
D Buckland reimbursement petrol costs	50. 00
J Buckland Grounds Maintenance Work	60.00
Petty Cash	50. 00

The above was approved and passed for payment.

Bonfire & Fireworks Fund. The fund was presented to Councillors and approval was made. **Signatories.** The RFO suggested the new town clerk be added as an account signatory and internet banker, and the retiring town clerk be removed as a signatory.

Charity Matters. The Council has very few traders renting the market space at the Tolsey. Cllr Ashton suggested a different tariff for renting in the winter to summer. The RFO suggested that the Council advertise the commercial space for rent. Councillors agreed to look in to this further and discuss again at next month's meeting.

10. CORRESPONDENCE.

Public Bench Memorial. A resident wishes to have a bench placed in the town. A place by the river has been identified for it. Cllr Ashton has asked permission from district council and will chase the matter.

Request to Move Waste Bin. Councillors received a request from the owner of 29 Lower High Street to remove the bin by the new door to the flat. Councillors decided not to recommend this.

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning.

23/02857/HHD. 8 Forest Grove. Councillors are not opposed to this planning application.

23/02864/FUL. Hollyhock Cottage, Witney Street. Councillors felt that there was insufficient information regarding sanitation, electricity and essential works to the proposed shepherd's hut. Councillors object to the proposal.

23/02968/FUL. 23/02969/LBC. Flat 31 Lower High Street. Councillors have no objection to this planning application.

Recreation Ground.

Cllr Rushton circulated her reports. It covered the following:

New Playground Equipment. The Cherry tree has been removed to make way for the new playground equipment. The contractors are concerned about accessing the site for the new play equipment installation. They have suggested a temporary road put down to preserve the grass. This will add an extra cost to the project. The contractors have also advised that hard core will need to be put down on the basketball area prior to laying new surfacing. These extra costs came to a further £11,500 for the matting and re surfacing. Further quotes for these two extra instalments will be sought.

Cllr Rushton is waiting on further quotes for the new path to the playground and the playground sign.

Rec Maintenance. The hedgerows along Tanners Lane & A40 junction have still not been cut back by OCC. The Clerk will chase this again.

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

Bowls Club Planning Extension. Councillors have no objections to the Bowls Club proposed extension.

Tree Survey. Councillors agreed that a tree survey of Burford Town Council land would be finalised in the New Year. Councillors accepted Mr Ed Weir's quote for work to be carried out on the churchyard. Councillors accepted Tree Tech's quote for tree work to be carried out on the recreation ground. The Clerk will request a re-quote from McCrackens, to include additional items, and request more information regarding Tree Tech's quote for the cemetery. This will help to decide on the Council undertaking the most urgent work before a tree survey is done.

Pavilion. A report on the Pavilion was given by Cllr Taubenheim which was received and noted.

Environment. A report on Environment was given by Cllr Tunnell-Westmacott which was received and noted.

Leaves on the pavement are making it slippery. Cllr Ashton will investigate whether WODC is responsible for this matter.

Cemetery. A report on the Cemetery was given by Cllr Tunnell-Westmacott, which was received and noted.

Climate Change. A report on Climate Change was given by Cllr Craven which Councillors

received and noted.

Biodiversity Plan. Cllr Craven explained about the new Biodiversity Plan and how Burford Town Council can get involved. The Council's duty will be added to the Climate Change policy which will be presented to Council in January's meeting.

Traffic. A report on Traffic was given by Cllr White which Councillors received and noted.

Other reports. None.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

Cllr Higgs noted that Shilton Road has now been approved as a 20-mile limit road.

Cllr Lofthouse wanted to highlight that residents are concerned about the restricted supplies at the Post office.

Cllr Palmer has received a complaint from a resident requesting a bin next to the bus shelter be moved. The Clerk will make the request to West Oxfordshire District Council.

Cllr Cohen highlighted the problem of parking on the hill. Could residents park considerably in this area. The double yellow lines will be repainted on the hill in dry weather which will be next year. Councillors also highlighted the frequency of poor parking in the town with concern over parking on double yellow lines and zig zags. Councillors asked the Clerk to request a traffic warden make visits to the town. The Clerk will enquire with Oxfordshire County Council if this is possible.

Cllr Higgs proposed that the Council will address management of the Christmas lights and festivities in the New Year.

Cllr White wanted to note that the Chamber of Trade did not include many of the Christmas festivities of the past this year.

Cllr Cotterill noted the passing of Councillor Jim Couchman

15. CHARITY MATTERS

There were no charity matters to discuss.

The meeting concluded at 9.15pm.

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