

**Minutes of the Burford Town Council meeting held on
Wednesday 3rd April 2024 at 7pm**

Members of Council Present: Cllr P Higgs – Mayor, Cllr M Taubenheim – Deputy Mayor, Cllr J Tunnell-Westmacott, Cllr D Cohen, Cllr J White, Cllr P Bruce, Cllr D Cotterill, Cllr S Palmer, Cllr J Craven, Cllr J Rushton, Cllr S Lofthouse, District Councillor H Ashton WODC, J Yeatman RFO, C Edgar-Hiatt – Clerk & RFO.

24.01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

County Councillor Field-Johnson sent his apologies.

24.02 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 Higgs was reimbursed £79.99 for the Council’s Microsoft package.

Cllr Tunnell-Westmacott – Cemetery & Environment.

Cllr Rushton - Recreation Ground.

Cllr Cohen – BEAP.

Cllr Taubenheim – Pavilion.

Cllr Craven, Cllr Bruce – Climate Change

Cllr White – Traffic.

24.03 MINUTES. Resolved: The minutes of the Town Council meeting of 6th March 2024 was approved and confirmed as a true and correct record of the meeting and was signed by the Mayor.

24.04 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: No members of the public were present.

24.05 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.

24.05 a. Guildenford Car Park. Cllr Ashton gave an update to Councillors on the repair work being done on the car park. The drains, data survey, paint work and flood barriers have not been completed. Cllr Ashton to chase with West Oxfordshire County Council.

24.05 b. Priory Lane Coach Park. Cllr Higgs reported to Councillors that no quotes for a TRO have been submitted to Council by Oxfordshire County Council and consequently Burford Town Council has not been able to finalise the TRO for submission. Cllr Higgs will monitor the situation with OCC and report to Councillors at next meeting.

24.05 c. 121 High Street. Cllr Higgs has not heard any news on redevelopment of 121 High Street from the owners. Cllr Cotterill proposed that the Council write to Historic England with a record of the state of the building. Clerk to action this. Cllr Ashton agreed to contact again planning enforcement at WODC in regards to whether anything more can be done to help neighbouring residents with the damage that is occurring from the derelict building.

24.05 d. WODC Local Plan & Consultation. Cllr Ashton gave a report on the matter. OCC is reviewing the criteria for submissions and once finalised will be circulated to Council. A request for comments from Council will then be made. Council is currently developing a written response. Councillors are discussing with proposed site owners as well as local services to gauge whether new developments would extend the capacity of services in the town.

24.05 e. Pavilion Health & Safety Review. Cllr Taubenheim proposed that a building surveyor be sought for the Pavilion prior to a Health & Safety review, to understand the state of the building. From the building survey, a business plan will be written, stating future plans for the Pavilion, gauging its current uses and seeking the communities’ views on the Pavilion. Councillors agreed to move ahead with this. Cllr Taubenheim to seek a building surveyor to visit the site.

24.05 f. Christmas Organisation Review. Councillors discussed the planning of Christmas in the town. Councillors agreed to continue to fund the lights on The Hill, and the remaining Christmas decorations would be provided and managed by the Chamber of Trade. Cllr Higgs noted that the Town Council holds an annual Christmas Civic Carol Service at the church with a reception after that the whole community is invited to.

24.05 g. Bonfire Review. Councillors agreed to continue to hold an annual bonfire. Councillors agreed to adopt a no treated wood policy, adhering to the Clean Air Act – 1990, and will only be using untreated wood

and garden waste provided by the Council. There will be no fly tipping of wood on to the bonfire and a notice of this will be present at the bonfire and will be put in the Bridge. Councillors agreed to fence off the bonfire location permanently. Councillors agreed to investigate using chestnut fencing around the bonfire area to protect children and animals from the scrap metal that is currently on the area. Cllr Palmer to obtain a quotation for the fencing and report at the next meeting.

24.05 h. Contract Renewals, Recreation Ground. Councillors agreed on the Football Club renewal contract for 2024-25 at £150 per month. Councillors also agreed on the Bowls Club renewal of subscription at £20.00 plus water rates.

24.05 i. Litter Picker Kit. Councillors were asked if they would consider purchasing a litter picker kit for BEAGles to do litter picking in the town. Councillors agreed to make a donation of £100, under S137 provision towards the BEAGles purchasing a kit. Clerk to gain donation request form and issue receipt. Cllr Craven to request donation request form from BEAGles.

24.05 j. Policies. Councillors approved and adopted the existing policies.

24.06 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT. Councillor Field-Johnson was absent from the meeting, however a report was provided prior to the meeting for Councillors to review. Highlights of the report included:

OCC has announced that the Oxford city Zero Emissions Zone pilot generated £702,940 income from charges and fines over its first full financial year of operation.

Oxfordshire will receive £3.6 million to triple its number of public electric vehicle (EV) chargers after the county's Local EV Infrastructure (LEVI) bid was approved. Money from the [Department for Transport](#) will seed fund a major rollout of infrastructure worth over £10m that will see more than 1,300 public chargers delivered in the county by the end of 2025. The rest of the funding will largely come in the form of investment from the EV chargepoint operators themselves. The programme aims to create a reliable, easy-to-use, contactless EV charging network spanning the county. This will give more people the opportunity to switch to an EV – regardless of where they live or their parking situation.

A reminder that Oxfordshire's household waste recycling centres (HWRCs) will no longer stay open late nights on Thursdays. The seven centres, operated by OCC, had previously opened until 8pm every Thursday between April and September.

24.07 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT. District Cllr Ashton gave a report to Councillors which was received and noted. Highlights of the report included:

Nature Recovery Scheme conference will be held on 16th April and Councillors have been invited.

HGV – Discussions are still being had with the WODC Steering group.

Polling Stations. Over the next few months, the arrangements for polling stations will be reviewed and Towns/Parishes plus local residents will be consulted. This is a normal process but Burford will need to respond with a view on whether current arrangements should be changed.

Electoral Review. Following parliamentary and county electoral boundary reviews, the District's wards will be subject to review over the next 12 months. Parishes are aggregated to create Wards where the number of electors per councillor should be within 10% of the average, but parish boundaries are not being reviewed.

Burford Ward elector population is around 7% above the average. However, it still might be affected as the sequence for decision making is:

1. How many councillors should be in the District. (To be decided in January 2025)
2. How many councillors should be per Ward? The standard recommendation is to have 3/ward. (I will argue that the District should keep the ability to have 1, 2 or 3-councillor wards, and that Burford should remain a 1-councillor Ward)
3. Whether the election should be "all out every 4 years" or "thirds". We have this now – i.e 3 years when one third of the councillor seats are up for election, and one year when there is no District election. (In the latter case, the fallow year coincides with County elections ("all out").

The warding arrangements will be decided after consultation by June 2025. If we do not adopt a standard 3/ward, then the system must revert to "all out" every 4 years. In any event there will be an "all out election" in 2027.

24.08 RISK REGISTER. Cllr Bruce presented the new Risk Register. Councillors are to review the Risk Register over the next month and report at May meeting. Playparks are now being monitored weekly. Cllr Higgs proposed to Council that the Shilton Road play park be monitored by Mr J. Buckland, which was approved for a trial month and will be reviewed again in May meeting.

24.09 MAYORS REPORT

The Mayor, Cllr Higgs, gave a report which was received and noted.

24.10. TREASURER'S REPORT

24.10 a. Mr Yeatman, RFO gave a finance report to Council detailing draft year end expenditure, account balances and a full reconciliation of funds.

A VAT reclaim had been submitted for the 2nd half of 2023/24 and audit information had been received from Moore UK with a submission deadline of 30th June 2024.

** Castle Water (082 Tolley)	Yes		6.78	D/D
** Castle Water (568 Rec)	Yes		44.14	D/D
** Castle Water (552 Cemetery)	Yes		6.78	BACS
** Clear Councils (Extra play equipment cover)	Yes		84.59	BACS
** OALC (2024/25 membership)	Yes		340.74	BACS
** Paid in March after BTC Meeting				
WODC (Cemetery Business Rates)	Yes		65.75	D/D
Salary payments	Yes		2873.28	BACS
HMRC PAYE	Yes		723.13	BACS
Nest Pension	Yes		137.43	D/D
AW Grotex (Cleaner)	Yes		120.00	S/O
BT Business Bill	Yes		72.24	D/D
Treetech	Yes		1327.56	BACS
AK Timms Ground Maintenance	Yes		52.88	BACS
Lyreco Stationery	Yes		107.34	BACS
Staff expense train tickets for training	Yes		17.50	BACS
Proludic	Yes		176366.81	BACS
S J Aplin Playgrounds Ltd Tree stump Removal Play Area	Yes		500.40	BACS
Witney Signs Playground Signs x 2	Yes		1303.68	BACS
Scribe Account Software Annual Subscription and Set Up	Yes		1388.40	BACS
P Higgs (MS365 licence)	Yes		79.99	BACS
K Kilburn (Playpark Opening)	Yes		32.70	BACS
WODC Waste April to September 2024	Yes		1040.00	BACS
Frank P Matthews Retail Ltd Trees Orchard	Yes		621.00	BACS
B Buckland (Petrol)	Yes		20.05	via RFO
BEAGles	Yes		30.00	BACS
Total Payments			187363.17	
Income				
Cemetery Receipts			425	
Interest			415.00	
Football Fees			150.00	
Playpark Donation			500.00	
Refund from Orchard Trees Delivery			63.00	

Bollards Donations				1000.00		

The above was approved and passed for payment.

24.10 b. Proludic, Playground Installers. Councillors approved the total Proludic invoice of £176,366.81, subject to the invoice being inspected and approved by the Playground Committee. All quotes from Proludic have been approved in various meetings, net of tax, with tax payable from reserves to be reclaimed afterwards. An omission of £500.40 for a stump grinder in the March minutes which had been approved by Councillors, has been added to the April minutes as approved.

24.10 c. Payroll Services to Adopt. Councillors agreed for the Council to appoint a Payroll Service to take charge of the payroll administration. The Payroll service appointed is PATA Payroll Service. The RFO noted that the extra expenditure for Administration was not included in the Budget of 2024 to 2025 however it was noted that there had been an underspend of Administration for 23/24 of £1306. This amount will cover the new Scribe accounting software of £1388.40. The new Payroll service for 24/25 of approximately £350.00, will be covered in the 24/25 budget. Resolved.

24.10 d. Internal Controls. The Internal Controls policy was approved. Cllr Bruce was nominated as the Internal Controls officer. Resolved.

24.11. CORRESPONDENCE.

The Hill. A resident wrote in regarding the double yellow lines on The Hill. Councillors reviewed and noted the comments.

Tree 7 Tanners Lane. Further research is being carried out and will be reported on at May meeting.

24.12. COMMITTEE REPORTS

24.12 a. Planning.

24/00633/HHD 154 The Hill. Burford. Councillors approved this planning application.

24/00622/FUL Bowls Club at Recreation Ground Tanners Lane. Councillors approved this planning application.

24.12 b. Recreation Ground.

A report on the Recreation Ground was given by Cllr Rushton which was received and noted.

New Playground Equipment.

The new playground is up and running at the Recreation ground. The opening event was a great success with many parts of the community attending. A report has been submitted to The Bridge.

The playground committee will close after the 18th April, when it has its last meeting.

Rec Maintenance. SSE have completed their survey of the trees on Tanners Lane where the Rec Committee had expressed concerns about the trees being close to electricity cables. Cllr Rushton received a telephone call from the surveyor to say that there was nothing of concern as cables are not rubbing against the trees. SSE will not take any further action. A written report was promised but has not yet been received, Cllr Rushton to chase.

Tree Survey. Clerk to chase tree survey quotes for a full-scale tree survey on Council land.

Trees, Tanners Lane. Clerk is waiting on Highways to report on the overgrown hedge on A40/Tanners Lane.

Bowls Club Tree Trimming. The Bowls Club has cut back the conifers in the car park. The Bowls Club will be having there open day, 21st April 2024.

Shelter. There is still a lot of graffiti and litter at the shelter area. Cllr Rushton will research the cost of painting the shelter and remove graffiti. Councillors will monitor the situation.

Stones. Cllr Taubenheim has asked residents to remove the stones on the recreation ground.

24.12 c. Pavilion. A report on the Pavilion was given by Cllr Taubenheim, which was received and noted. Cllr Taubenheim will gain quotes for a building survey on the Pavilion.

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

24.12 e. Cemetery. A report on the Cemetery was given by Cllr Tunnell-Westmacott, which was received and noted. Clerk to write again to Kits Quarry to reiterate dead tree on their land.

24.12 f. Climate Change. A report on Climate Change was given by Cllr Craven which Councillors received and noted. Cllr Bruce and Cllr Craven completed and submit the Local Nature Local Nature recovery plan LNRS Phase 1 survey.

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

24.13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

Cllr Higgs acknowledged Cllr Cohen’s resignation from Council. An official goodbye and thanks to Cllr Cohen will be given at the Mayor’s reception in June.

Cllr Lofthouse commented on the skips on parking spaces. Cllr Palmer is looking into the matter with Oxfordshire County Council.

Cllr Cohen requested Council to add the removal of the redundant bus stop on the high street to the final TRO.

Cllr Ashton mentioned the installation of EV charging points at Burford School which will be available to the public.

Cllr Rushton has noted that builders need to make good the ground after skip removal. Cllr Higgs to request this with the builders. I raised the issue of the verges on The Hill, which have been repaired and re-seeded by David, but have already been damaged again by cars. Cllr Rushton suggested that the area be taped off with notices ‘ground under repair’.

Cllr White requested news on the pedestrian crossing on The Hill. No progress has been made with Oxfordshire County Council on this matter.

Cllr Cotterill requested the Clerk to check with OALC if they require a representative from Burford for their executive committee.

Councillors approved Cllr Cohen to remain a representative of the Council at various clubs and organisations.

Cllr Higgs noted that there will be a vacancy for a member on the Town Council and a notice will be put out in June 2024. Also council have been advised by OALC that all public unregistered land should be registered by the end of 2025. Cllr White agreed to investigate and report.

Council will be reviewing committees at next month’s meeting.

24.14. CHARITY MATTERS

Mr Yeatman, RFO detailed the year end account balance and a full reconciliation of funds.

The meeting concluded at 21.44

Chairperson’s Signature.....

Date.....

DRAFT