

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14 DECEMBER 2016

**Present: - Town Mayor, Councillor Ron Pratt.
Deputy Town Mayor, Councillor Mrs Una Norman.
Councillors – Vanessa Bell, Bob Calver, Mrs Helen Elliott, Peter Elliott,
Mrs Louise Pudney, Neil Pudney and Mrs Wendy Stamp.**

In Attendance: - Sarah Grimes and Paul Harris, Town Clerks.

198 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Mike Wood.

The Town Mayor formally welcomed Councillor Vanessa Bell to the Town Council.

199 DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

The Town Clerk stated that Councillor Vanessa Bell, elected to the South Ward of the Town on Thursday 8 December 2016, had signed her Statutory Declaration of Office as a Town Councillor and completed her Statutory Declaration of Interest in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the Code of Conduct for Members, adopted by the Town Council.

RESOLVED: - this was confirmed.

200 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were none.

201 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Ron Pratt reported that he had attended the following:-

- i) Farleigh Hospice 'Light up A Life' Service. This had been well supported and much appreciated by those who had been recently bereaved.
- ii) The Town Council and Churches Together in Burnham, Christmas tree Lighting Ceremony and Carol Service. The event was well attended. Town Councillors and the Town Clerk had taken part in the nativity story and local children had taken part in the countdown to the switching on of lights. Hot refreshments were provided around the tree and Santa, played by Philip Clegg, had given out gifts.
- iii) Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Awards Presentation.
The Mayor reminded Members that the Civic Carol Service would be held on Sunday 18 December in St Mary's Church at 5 pm.

202 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

RESOLVED: - that the Minutes of the Budgets Meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 28 November 2016, be confirmed and signed.

203 PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES

RESOLVED: - that the confirmed Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on Monday 28 November 2016, be duly received.

204 ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

The notes of the Meeting of the Environment Committee held on Wednesday 23 November 2016 had been circulated. The next Meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday 25 January 2017. Councillor Mrs Una Norman thanked the Town Clerks and Environment Committee members for their efforts.

RESOLVED: - Noted.

205 TOWN CLERKS' REPORT

The Town Mayor outlined the Parkrun Scheme and stated that marshals would be needed. Councillor Vanessa Bell expressed an interest.

RESOLVED: - Noted.

206 DIARY DATES

Members noted the following:-

- a) **Burnham Town Council Planning Meeting – Wednesday 14 December
7 pm in the Town Council Chamber.**
- b) **Burnham Town Council Meeting – Wednesday 14 December
7.30 pm in the Town Council Chamber.**
- c) **Civic Carol Service – Sunday 18 December
5 pm at St Mary's Church.**
- d) **CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR CLOSURES 2016/2017
Wednesday 21/12/16 – Close at 12 noon
Thursday 22/12/16 - Closed
Friday 23/12/16 – Closed
Monday 26/12/16 – Boxing Day
Tuesday 27/12/16 – Bank Holiday
Wednesday 28/12/16 – Closed
Thursday 29/12/16 – Closed
Friday 30/12/16 – Closed
Monday 02/01/2017 – Bank Holiday
Tuesday 03/01/17 – Open at 9.30 am.**
- e) **Burnham Town Council Planning Meeting – Wednesday 4 January 2017
7 pm in the Town Council Chamber.**
- f) **Wallasea Island Liaison Committee Meeting – Wednesday 11 January
7 pm in Rawreth Village Hall**
- g) **South Eastern Area Planning Meeting - Monday 16 January
7.30 pm in the Town Council Chamber.**
- h) **Burnham Town Council Planning Meeting – Tuesday 17 January
7 pm in the Town Council Chamber.**
- i) **Burnham Town Council Statutory Meeting – Tuesday 17 January
7.30 pm in the Town Council Chamber.**
- j) **Burnham Town Council Environment Committee Meeting – Wednesday 25 January
12 noon in the Town Council Chamber**
- k) **Local Police Community Meeting (NAPS) - Thursday 26 January
7.30 pm in the Town Council Chamber**
- l) **Burnham Town Council Planning Meeting – Monday 30 January
7 pm in the Town Council Chamber (subject to applications received).**

207 CO-ORDINATORS' REPORTS

- a) General Purposes – Councillor Peter Elliott reported that quotations for the 2017 lighting scheme would be sought in the early part of the New Year.
- b) Highways – Councillor Mrs Wendy Stamp stated that she had passed a pothole report to Councillor Bob Calver.

The Town Clerk/RFO reported that there had been a request for the Safer Essex Partnership to be included as a Standing Agenda Item and it was

RESOLVED: - that issues relating to the Safer Essex Partnership be reported within the Standing Item for Local Police Community Meetings (LPCM) (formerly NAP).

208 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Councillor Neil Pudney reported that he had attended an Overview & Scrutiny Meeting.

'Blue Light' Ambulances would be going to Southend and Broomfield.

Broomfield Hospital staff are being encouraged to use the 'Park and Ride' facility.

Councillor Peter Elliott reported that the previous Wednesday, Maldon District Council had passed a planning application for 1,138 houses in Heybridge. The application site is the largest of three sites allocated for development in the Submission Local Development Plan (LDP) which together comprise the North Heybridge Garden Suburb. This includes an £11,000,000 flood alleviation scheme.

Councillor Elliott stated that the five year land supply is probably up to eight years.

Councillor Mrs Wendy Stamp stated that it is a great shame that only 15.5% affordable homes were agreed.

Councillor Elliott stated that if the flood scheme was completed under budget, the 15.5% could increase to up to 20%.

The Town Mayor reported that he had attended the November Community Services Committee Meeting. Within the budget for growth proposals, the Council are budgeting for extensive works in Prom Park. The Budget was not yet approved.

Councillor Mrs Wendy Stamp asked what provisions there are for Burnham.

Councillor Pratt stated that he would report on Dengie Gateway Projects as soon as they are approved.

Councillor Pratt reported that the recommendation to move the South Eastern Area Planning Committee meetings to Maldon District Council would be on the Agenda for Full Council the following night. The Item had been deferred from the last SEAPC meeting to allow Officers to speak to the Burnham Town Clerks.

209 TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS

Councillor Neil Pudney reported that minutes of the Crouch Harbour Authority would be circulated in due course.

Councillor Bob Calver reported that minutes of the Joint Clubs' Committee had been circulated.

Councillor Ron Pratt reported that the Carnival Committee Christmas dinner had been enjoyable.

Councillor Mrs Una Norman reported that the Friends of Hester Place had been promised hedge plants.

Councillor Mrs Wendy Stamp reported that the Chamber of Commerce committee re-launch would take place in April and that the NAP group are being very active.

Councillor Mrs Helen Elliott reported that the Village Hall Committee is considering buying a pump to alleviate flooding in the car park.

In response to a question from the Town Mayor, Councillor Mrs Elliott reported that the future of the Chapel Group is under debate. No-one had attended the public meeting. The Mayor and Councillor Mrs Wendy Stamp both volunteered to become involved.

210 ACCOUNTS AND TRANSFER OF FUNDS

- a) Councillor Peter Elliott asked for clarification on the payment for the Civic Reception and the Town Clerk stated that this related to the March 2016 reception.
RESOLVED: - that the payment of Accounts for December 2016 be approved and signed.
- b) The comparison of actual to budgeted payments and receipts to December 2016 was noted.
- c) The Town Clerk/RFO reported on progress regarding the Town Council's banking arrangements. One mandate had to be re-submitted.

211 GRANTS AND DONATIONS

The balance of 2016/2017 Budget is £735

No applications had been received for this Meeting. However, the Town Clerk stated that there would be an Item for Members consideration within the Private Business section of the Agenda.

212 TOWN COUNCIL SURGERIES

SATURDAY 10 December - Councillors Ron Pratt and Mrs Una Norman.

SATURDAY 14 January - Councillors Ron Pratt and Mrs Una Norman.

213 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP) and NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NP)

- a) Local Development Plan - the Town Mayor stated that the continuation of the LDP Examination is scheduled to take nine days, starting on Tuesday 10 January 2017. The District Council is working to address fifty-one questions.
- b) Neighbourhood Plan – All Members had received a copy of the Report from the former Town Clerk and the Neighbourhood Plan Review Group Clerk. English Heritage had been granted an extension but the process is still 'on target' for the appointment of an Examiner.

214 RSPB WALLSEA ISLAND WILD COAST PROJECT (standing item)

Members noted that the next meeting of the Liaison Group would be held on 11 January 2017, at Rawreth Village Hall at 7 pm.

215 LOCAL POLICE COMMUNITY MEETING (LPCM) (formerly NAP)

All Members had received a copy of the Chairman's notes from the meeting held on Thursday 24 November 2016. Members renewed their commitment to the Safer Essex Roads' Scheme.

216 PEDESTRIAN CROSSING IN CHURCH ROAD

All Members had received a copy of Councillor Mrs Wendy Stamp's update on the progress of the above scheme.

The Town Mayor stated that the scheme is an agenda item for the next Local Highways Panel meeting. The LHP would be asked to underwrite the difference between the RES funding and new quotations. Councillor Mrs Wendy Stamp stated that the Town Council should ask for target dates and the Mayor confirmed that a completion date had been requested.

217 ORIGINAL BUDGET 2017/2018

Pursuant to Minute 205 of the Budgets Meeting, held on Monday 28 November 2016, all Members had received the revised calculation schedules for the above.

The Town Clerk/RFO stated that there had been a £200 increase to the budget line for Audit Fees.

The Town Mayor stated that £8,200 is required from Reserves to balance the Budget and as a fundament this is wrong.

Councillor Mrs Wendy Stamp stated that she would be happy to support the increase of £5,000 for additional CPO hours and to raise the Precept slightly to improve the services the Town Council offers. However, she felt that the Council needs to be conscious that it reassures the public that it is “on top of this Budget”.

Councillor Peter Elliott stated that the Budget provides for a £12,500 contingency reserve and that he was against a Precept increase as there had been a big increase the previous year. Councillor Elliott stated that there are strong financial pressures on people.

Councillor Mrs Una Norman disagreed and read out a statement in support of an increase in order to improve services such as grass cutting, improvements on the Quay and additional CPO coverage. Raising the Precept to £188,000 would equate to approximately 50 pence per household per month.

Councillor Vanessa Bell stated that public confidence in the Council is at an all time low and she commented on the absence of a Festive Fayre.

The Town Mayor responded that he questioned the “all time low” and that the Festive Fayre was never the responsibility of the Town Council.

Councillor Mrs Helen Elliott stated that the Town Council has a responsibility to Council Tax payers and that the Precept should stay the same.

Councillor Bob Calver stated that the Town Council must deliver the services it promises. The amount that could be achieved without a Precept increase was limited and a £4,000 contingency fund would not be sufficient.

Councillor Vanessa Bell asked Councillor Peter Elliott to clarify the contingency position.

Councillor Elliott stated that if the £8,200 required to balance the Budget is taken from the £12,500 contingency then the Town Council has a £4,000 surplus with no Precept increase.

Councillor Elliott stated that he believed £4,000 to be sufficient, a contingency had been built into each line item at the Budgets Meeting and the Town Council should spend the public’s money responsibly. Councillor Elliott proposed that the Precept should remain at £170,000.

Councillor Mrs Wendy Stamp stated the need for responsible budgeting. She further stated that the Town Council needs to plan ahead. More assets have been taken over from the District Council, such as Providence Car Park, which will require re-surfacing.

After further debate it was

RESOLVED: - that the Budget for 2017/2018 be agreed and the Town Council’s Precept for 2017/2018 be set at £188,000.

218 TOWN COUNCIL PRECEPT FOR 2017/2018

Pursuant to Minute 206 of the Budgets Meeting, held on Monday 28 November 2016, Members were requested to determine the Town Council’s Precept for 2017/2018.

Having regard to the discussions in Minute 217 above, it was

RESOLVED: - that the Town Council’s Precept for 2017/2018 be set at £188,000 and that Maldon District Council be notified accordingly.

Councillor Bob Calver stated that the Town Council should issue a press release to inform residents where the additional budget is being spent, i.e. additional hours for the Burnham CPO service and addressing dog fouling and anti-social behaviour.

219 QUORUM AT PLANNING AND OTHER COMMITTEES

Members were reminded that at the Statutory Meeting of the Town Council held on Thursday 13 October 2016 the following Item was considered, Minute 162 refers: -

Following an article in the March 2016 edition of the “Clerks and Councils Direct” publication, subsequent investigations and consultations with the EALC, it had been established that a Town/Parish Council with TEN Councillors is required to have FOUR of TEN Members present in order to be “Quorate”.

This is a legal requirement and as such it could be implemented immediately.

However, in order to regularise the Town Council’s Standing Orders, and to overcome the potential lack of a quorum at Planning Committee Meetings, Members were requested to consider the following: -

AMENDMENT OF STANDING ORDERS – QUORUM AT TOWN COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Standing Orders in respect of the number of Town Councillors required to be present at Meetings in order for there to be a “quorum” be amended as follows: -

TOWN COUNCIL – FOUR OF TEN (as prescribed by Regulation);

PLANNING COMMITTEE – THREE OF NINE, OR THREE OF EIGHT, OR THREE OF SEVEN (this Meeting to determine);

OTHER COMMITTEES/SUB-COMMITTEES/PANELS – A MAJORITY OF THOSE PRESENT SUBJECT TO A MINIMUM OF THREE.

(to stand adjourned until the next Meeting of the Town Council to be held on Tuesday 8 November 2016): -

“That the Town Council adopt and implement the above recommendations with effect from all Meetings subsequent to 8 November 2016.”

At the Meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 8 November 2016, only the quorum for Town Council Meetings was Resolved in accordance with the above, Minute 191 refers **“RESOLVED: - that i) all Meetings of the Town Council require a quorum of four, with effect from all Meetings subsequent to 8 November 2016 and that the Town Council’s Standing Orders be amended accordingly and ii) a decision on the quorum for Planning Meetings and other committees/sub-committees/panels be deferred to the Meeting of the Town Council to be held on Tuesday 13 December 2016, to allow more Members to be present.”**

Consideration of the quorum for Planning and other committees etc. was deferred to this Meeting. Members at the November Meeting felt that the above recommendation warranted re-consideration when more Members were present.

Members were therefore requested to re-consider the recommendations above to: -

a) limit the number of Members nominated to serve the Planning Committee – i.e. seven or eight or nine with a legal quorum of three (rounded up from a “third” of the membership), and

b) Other Committees/Sub-Committees/Panels – as detailed above.

(To stand adjourned until the Statutory Meeting of the Town Council to be held on Tuesday 17 January 2017)

219 QUORUM AT PLANNING AND OTHER COMMITTEES (continued)

The Town Clerk stated that if the Town Council determined to limit the number of Members nominated to serve the Planning Committee, i.e. seven or eight or nine with a legal quorum of three (rounded up from a “third” of the membership), whilst all Members could attend, only the nominated Members could vote.

Councillor Mrs Wendy Stamp proposed that the Quorum for Planning Meetings should be four. Councillor Mrs Una Norman concurred.

Councillor Peter Elliott stated that the Town Council should have more flexibility.

After further debate, Members agreed that further clarification was needed before determining the quorum for Planning Committee Meetings and Other Committees/Sub-Committees/Panels and it was

RESOLVED: - that the Item be deferred to the Statutory Meeting of the Town Council to be held on Tuesday 17 January 2017, to allow for clarification to be sought from the EALC as to Members voting rights if the Town Council adopts the recommendation to limit the number of Members nominated to serve the Planning Committee and other Committees/Sub-Committees/Panels.

220 REPRESENTATIVES TO OFFICES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Members were requested to review and appoint representatives, as necessary, to the following Offices/organizations following the election of a new Councillor for the South Ward of the Town on Thursday 8 December 2016 and it was

RESOLVED:-

New appointments are shown in bold italics.

| INTERNAL OFFICE | APPOINTEE/S |
|---------------------------|---|
| Footpaths & Rights of Way | <i>Councillor Vanessa Bell</i> Mr Iain Corbett & Mr Barry Davis |

| | EXTERNAL BODY/ORGANIZATION | APPOINTEE/S |
|----|--|--|
| 2 | Twinning Association (L'Aiguillon-sur-Mer has ceased to operate) | <i>Town Mayor (as President of the Town Twinning)</i> |
| 11 | Station House Management Committee | Town Mayor, Councillor Mrs Una Norman, <i>Councillor Bob Calver,</i> plus Mrs Tracy Saunders, AGA, ESSCRP, ECC(Arts), BTF & Town Clerks |
| 27 | Riverside Park Task Force | Councillor Bob Calver, Councillor Mrs Una Norman, Councillor Mrs Wendy Stamp and <i>Councillor Vanessa Bell</i> |

221 POST OFFICE NETWORK CONSULTATION

All Members had received a copy of the above. Discussions regarding future funding for the post office network would shortly be taking place and to inform this work the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is conducting this consultation. The latest date for responses is 21 December 2016.

The Town Clerk stated that Members may wish to nominate a Councillor to assist with the completion of the consultation and it was

RESOLVED: - that Councillor Mrs Una Norman be nominated to assist the Town Clerks with the Town Council’s formal response to the Post Office Network Consultation.

222 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2017/2018

The Town Clerk reported that the approved schedule of meetings had not yet been received from Maldon District Council and it was

RESOLVED: - that this Item be deferred to the next Meeting of the Town Council to be held on Tuesday 17 January 2017.

223 CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR CLOSURE 2016/2017

Members were reminded that in accordance with the Town Council's usual practice, the opening/closing times as detailed below, were approved in January 2016 as an integral part of the Calendar of Meetings for this year, 2016/2017.

Wednesday 21/12/16 – Close at 12 noon

Thursday 22/12/16 - Closed

Friday 23/12/16 – Closed

Monday 26/12/16 – Boxing Day

Tuesday 27/12/16 – Bank Holiday

Wednesday 28/12/16 – Closed

Thursday 29/12/16 – Closed

Friday 30/12/16 – Closed

Monday 02/01/2017 – Bank Holiday

Tuesday 03/01/17 – Open at 9.30 am.

RESOLVED: - This was Noted.

224 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

The Town Mayor reminded Members that this Agenda Item should be confined to urgent items that require discussion and/or determination by Council before the next scheduled Meeting of the Town Council.

225 QUESTIONS

Q. Will the Town Council have a strategic business plan for each 'business' it runs, i.e. Station House?

A. This will take time.

Q. When dealing with planning applications for windfall property, particularly where there is a piecemeal approach to the number, will the Town Council consider recommending the imposition of conditions to control the impact of construction site noise on existing residents?

The suggestion is that this is controlled by restricting the hours that noisy work can be carried out e.g. from 7:30 am until 6 pm Monday to Friday and 8 am to 1 pm on Saturdays. No noisy work should be carried out on Sundays and bank holidays. These times would not restrict other activities such as electrical wiring, fixing doors painting/decorating.

A. The Town Council is only a consultee. What you ask for is within the standard conditions of Maldon District Council.

Q. What was the rationale behind the budget provision for Past Mayors' Badges?

A. This has been debated by Council previously. Many Councils provide these in recognition of past years' service. Last year the budgeted funds were used to provide the Queen's 90th Birthday commemorative coins.

Q. NAPS and the Community Speedwatch team are working hard. What is the progress on the Burnham 30 mph roundels? Southminster has a 20mph speed limit.

A. Southminster's application took two or three years. The Town Clerk will write to Essex County Council for an update.

226 SEASONS GREETINGS

The Town Mayor, Town Councillors and Officers wished all residents of the Town and their families and friends a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

227 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED:- that “under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public and press be excluded from the Meeting for the following item (228) of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 13 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

228 LAND MATTERS

The Town Clerk reported on the above and on an Item referred to in Minute 211.

229 CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

Having considered and determined all items of business, the Meeting was closed at 9.34 pm.