

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 12 DECEMBER 2017

Present: - Town Mayor, Councillor Bob Calver

Councillors: – Vanessa Bell, Mrs Helen Elliott, Peter Elliott, Ron Pratt C.C., Mrs Louise Pudney, Neil Pudney, Nick Skeens, Mrs Wendy Stamp and Mike Wood.

In Attendance: - Town Clerk, Sarah Grimes.

Before the formal commencement of the Meeting, Councillor Bob Calver, the Town Mayor, announced that Councillor Nick Skeens would be taking photographs for inclusion on the Town Council's website. Members of the public would not be photographed.

194 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

195 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were none.

196 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor reported that he had attended: -

- i) an Emergency Planning meeting at the Crouch Harbour Authority,
- ii) Primary School PTA Christmas Fete,
- iii) the Town's Christmas Lights switching on and Candlelight Carol Service, which had been a great success. He thanked the Town Clerk for all her efforts in the organization of the event,
- iv) Farleigh Hospice Light up a Life Service, where he had turned on the Christmas tree lights,
- v) the Chairman of Maldon District Council's Service of Nine Lessons and Carols at St Leonards Church in Southminster,

The Mayor reported that he was Father Christmas at the D-Caf' Christmas Party in the Town Council Chamber and he had put in an appearance at the URC Christmas Tree festival and, not as the Mayor, but as a resident of Burnham, he had enjoyed the Festive Fayre.

The Town Mayor expressed his concern that Council business should not be conducted through emails. Whilst it was expected that Members of working groups would correspond amongst themselves, the Mayor stated that any matter a Councillor wishes to raise with the whole Council should be sent to the Town Clerk for her agreement and subsequent circulation.

Councillor Peter Elliott stated that he fully endorsed this view. Other Members concurred and it was **RESOLVED: - any matter a Councillor wishes to raise with the whole Council should be sent to the Town Clerk for her agreement and subsequent circulation.**

197 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

RESOLVED: - that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Thursday 23 November 2017 be confirmed and signed.

198 PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES

RESOLVED: - that the confirmed Minutes of the Planning Committee Meetings held on Tuesday 14, Thursday 23 and Wednesday 29 November 2017, be duly received.

199 TOWN CLERKS' REPORT

This was noted and in particular: -

2 FARLEIGH HOSPICE CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING

Members noted that trees would be collected on Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 January 2018. The Town Council had given its support to this project and the Farleigh Hospice Community Fundraiser had now requested the use of the Town Council's truck to assist with the tree collection. It was

RESOLVED: - that the Town Council's truck be made available to assist in the Farleigh Hospice Christmas tree recycling initiative, subject to the nominated driver holding a current, valid driving licence.

200 DIARY DATES

Members noted the following: -

- a) **Burnham Town Council Planning Meeting – Tuesday 12 December
7 pm in the Town Council Chamber.**
- b) **Burnham Town Council Meeting – Tuesday 12 December
7.30 pm in the Town Council Chamber.**
- c) Town Council Surgery – Saturday 16 December
10.30 am to 11.30 am in the Town Council Chamber
- d) **Town Civic Carol Service – Sunday 17 December
5 pm at St Mary's Church.**
- e) CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR CLOSURE
Wednesday 20/12/17 – office closes at 12 noon
Thursday 21/12/17 - closed
Friday 22/12/17 – closed
Monday 25/12/17 – Christmas Day
Tuesday 26/12/17 – Boxing Day
Wednesday 27/12/17 – closed
Thursday 28/12/17 – closed
Friday 29/12/17 – closed
Monday 01/01/2018 – Bank Holiday
Tuesday 02/01/18 – office opens at 9.30 am

201 CO-ORDINATORS' REPORTS

- a) General Purposes – Councillor Peter Elliott had nothing to report.
- b) Highways – Councillor Calver had submitted a detailed written report.
Councillor Neil Pudney expressed concerns that people are not using the crossing places near the Fiveways store.
- c) Environment – Councillor Mike Wood stated that he would report on quotations received under Agenda Item 23.
- d) Neighbourhood Development Plan – Councillor Peter Elliott stated that Members who are also District Councillors are turning down applications where they do not follow the Burnham Neighbourhood Development Plan.
Councillor Ron Pratt C.C. asked what progress had been made in the printing of the Plan. The Town Clerk stated that no response had been received from Maldon District Council in respect of funding the printing.
Councillor Mrs Wendy Stamp asked when a Neighbourhood Plan meeting would be held to finalise outstanding issues. The Town Clerk responded that she had spoken to the former Town Clerk and that he would be arranging a meeting as soon as possible.

202 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Councillor Mrs Helen Elliott – nothing to report.

Councillor Neil Pudney stated that he would be attending a Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting at Essex County Council the following day and that he had spoken to the staff at the Burnham Clinic would had stated that the Clinic is not closing. Councillor Pudney had emailed John Niland, Chief Executive of 'Provide', in respect of this issue.

Councillor Peter Elliott – nothing relevant to Burnham from the Finance and Corporate Services Committee meeting other than it was moving towards the settlement of the 2018/2019 Tax Base.

Councillor Ron Pratt – nothing to report.

Councillor Wood asked if the original contract price for the Caravan Park was to be maintained.

Councillor Pratt stated that this had been a protracted matter on both sides.

Councillor Peter Elliott stated that he had not been made aware of any change on the contract price at Finance Committee meetings.

Councillor Mrs Stamp asked if the Town Council had been involved at any stage.

Councillor Wood responded that the Council had been consulted and had made a representation.

Councillor Pratt stated that the District Council had decided that the best use of the site was for the promotion of tourism, with a well run caravan park.

Councillor Skeens stated that this is a great loss and the area is one of the highlights of the park.

Councillor Peter Elliott stated that people like green spaces but the decision to reinstate the caravan park would benefit Burnham and that it would be properly run.

203 TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS

Councillor Vanessa Bell stated that both she and the Town Clerk were still awaiting the fireworks invoice from Burnham Week.

Councillor Bell expressed regret that Mr Corbett and Mr Davis had resigned as the Town Council's Footpaths' Representatives.

Councillor Mrs Stamp reported that Essex Police had launched a new campaign called 'Extra Eyes' and that further details could be found on the Essex Police website.

Councillor Mrs Louise Pudney had nothing to report.

Councillor Pratt reported that the Christmas Fayre had been a great success and he commended the Carnival Committee for their considerable efforts. The only issue had been that the bus companies had seemed unaware of the road closure, despite having been consulted as part of the road closure application process.

Councillor Skeens stated that he had a BMX meeting the following day and that he had regular contact with the BMX volunteers.

Councillor Skeens reported that a script had been drafted for the Little Ships plaque and that Alan Bellchambers was still researching the history of the Little Ships. Progress was also being made with the 'Vanguard' project. Funding could be raised through the Association of Little Ships and the Lottery Fund. Councillor Skeens stated that Councillor Peter Elliott was talking to Maldon District and Maldon Town Councils regarding the wider aspects of the project.

Councillor Mrs Stamp asked if it was the intention to ask MDC to contribute and Councillor Skeens stated that the intention is to come up with a workable plan first.

Councillor Mrs Stamp asked if this could be worked into the MDC Budget and Councillor Peter Elliott stated that it was too late but that there may be something within the repair Budget.

Councillor Peter Elliott stated that he had been involved with meetings of the Website Working Group and Little Ships.

Councillor Neil Pudney had nothing to report.

- 204 ACCOUNTS AND TRANSFER OF FUNDS**
- a) **RESOLVED: - that the payment of Accounts for November/December 2017 be approved and signed.**
- b) The comparison of actual to budgeted payments and receipts to December 2017 was noted.
- 205 GRANTS AND DONATIONS**
- The Budget for 2017/2018 was £460.**
No requests had been received for this Meeting.
RESOLVED: - Noted.
- 206 TOWN COUNCIL SURGERIES**
- RESOLVED: - that Councillor Mrs Wendy Stamp attend the Surgery to be held on Saturday 13 January 2018.**
- Councillor Peter Elliott stated that he would be holding a District Councillor Surgery on 6 January 2018.
- Councillor Mrs Stamp stated that she would like to move Town Council Surgeries out into the community and asked if she could hold hers at the Farmers' Market.
- Councillor Peter Elliott stated that some issues are personal and people want privacy.
- The Town Mayor stated that there is a broader issue of taking the Council out into the community and it was
- RESOLVED: - that 'Town Council Outreach' be included as an Item on the Agenda for the next Meeting of the Town Council to be held on Tuesday 23 January 2018.**
- 207 RSPB WALLASEA ISLAND WILD COAST PROJECT (standing item)**
- Councillor Peter Elliott reported that the next meeting of the Local Liaison Group was scheduled for January 2018.
- 208 NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION PANEL**
- Councillor Bell reported that there had been a dreadful fire at the Elm Farm stables and that many horses had been killed. The incident was being investigated as arson. All Members expressed their disgust at the incident and it was
- RESOLVED: - that the Town Mayor write to the owners of the Elm Farm riding stables expressing the Town Council sympathies.**
- Councillor Mrs Stamp outlined crime figures for Sept/Oct and stated that the rise was "a bit worrying."
- Councillor Mrs Stamp stated that two additional sites had been nominated for TruCam monitoring within the Town - Maldon and Southminster Roads and a request for Green Lane and Southminster Road junction and Station Road over the Railway Bridge to be included. The Town Clerk would contact Adrian Rayner and ask him to speak with Adam Pipe to see if this could be done.
- Councillor Mrs Stamp had requested a detailed breakdown of the CPOs' schedule.
- Councillor Bell stated that the CPOs had been in Riverside Park recruiting for the Parkwatch scheme. Councillor Mrs Stamp stated that the Town Council had not been informed. The Town Mayor stated that more feedback is required from the CPO team.

209 ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

The Town Mayor reported that Councillor Bell had undertaken all the research on this Item. Further to Minute 178 of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Thursday 23 November 2017, Councillor Bell reported that she had met with the Environment Officer at Maldon and had been studying the 'in Bloom' model across the country and that she believed them to be very effective. Councillor Bell stressed that "these groups are about more than flowers."

Councillor Bell read out the draft terms of reference for "I ♥ Burnham", a working group that would replace the position of Environment Co-ordinator. Councillor Bell outlined the Purpose, Accountability, Meetings/Membership, Activities and Review for the proposed group.

Councillor Skeens agreed that this proposal was all about encouraging the volunteers back, supported by the Council.

Councillor Pratt stated that the proposal was "brilliant" but he suggested removing the '♥' and asked if the group could be called Burnham-on-Crouch in Bloom. He stated that secretarial support should come from within the group, which should be self contained and involve all three Schools, Friends Groups and flower bed volunteers and should liaise with the Town Council's Environment Co-ordinator.

Councillor Peter Elliott concurred and stated that that the Environment Co-ordinator role should be maintained and that the Chair of the group should not be a Councillor to enable it to be more independent from the Town Council.

Councillor Mrs Stamp requested a Recorded Vote for this Agenda Item. She stated that the Town Council would be negating its responsibility by handing it over to volunteers and without a Councillor as Chair of the group.

Councillor Bell stated that having a Councillor in the Chair was for accountability. She stated that she wanted to avoid the 'in bloom' tag as it is outdated, has zero appeal to young people and does not accurately describe the scope of those groups.

Councillor Skeens agreed that it is a tired phrase and he too did not like the 'I ♥ Burnham' and stated that 'Pride in Burnham-on-Crouch' would be better. He stated that Councillors' involvement would allow issues to be progressed by the Town Council and that volunteers were happy to help but want to feel that the Council is behind them.

Councillor Peter Elliott stated that he would not vote to replace the co-ordinator role and expressed concern that this would take the Council back to having an Environment Committee.

Councillor Pratt stated that the group should report to the Environment Co-ordinator.

Councillor Wood stated that the Agenda Item should not be debated, in accordance with the Resolution at the previous Meeting.

Councillor Mrs Stamp stated that the Minutes had been agreed and that Councillor Wood should have spoken earlier before the Minutes were agreed and signed.

Councillor Wood stated that the current volunteer groups are working well and that Councillor involvement on working groups is not needed.

Councillor Bell stated that utilising social media is crucial to volunteer involvement and is the way forward.

Councillor Pratt proposed that Councillor Bell's format be adopted with the amendment that the Environment Co-ordinator role is not disbanded and that the Co-ordinator plays a role in working with the group or that the group reports to the Co-ordinator, who is the Town Councillor appointed to that group.

This was seconded by Councillor Bob Calver.

FOR: - Councillor Bob Calver and Councillor Ron Pratt C.C.

AGAINST: - Councillors Vanessa Bell, Mrs Helen Elliott, Peter Elliott, Mrs Louise Pudney, Neil Pudney, Nick Skeens, Mrs Wendy Stamp and Mike Wood.

RESOLVED: - The Proposal was lost.

209 ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE (continued)

Councillor Peter Elliott proposed that the Town Council keeps the Co-ordinator role and endorses the formation of a group of volunteers, and Councillors if they want to be involved, similar to the 'Burnham in Bloom' group with seed funding to start the group.

This was seconded by Councillor Mike Wood.

FOR: - Councillors Bob Calver, Mrs Helen Elliott, Peter Elliott, Ron Pratt C.C., Mrs Louise Pudney, Neil Pudney and Mike Wood.

AGAINST: - Councillors Vanessa Bell, Nick Skeens and Mrs Wendy Stamp.

RESOLVED: - that the Environment Co-ordinator role is kept and that the Town Council endorses the formation of a group of volunteers, and Councillors if they want to be involved, similar to the 'Burnham in Bloom' group with seed funding to start the group.

Councillor Mrs Stamp stated that whilst she is an ardent supporter of an Environment Committee, she would like to thank Councillor Bell for the hard work that she had put into her written proposal.

Councillor Wood reported on other Environment issues not covered under Minute 201 c) as follows: -

i) Bramble hedge on Maldon Road – this would be cut by the Town Council's contractor. Councillor Wood stated that the Town Council would be within its rights to invoice MDC for this work and proposed that this be done.

This was seconded by Councillor Pratt and it was

RESOLVED: - that the Town Council submit an invoice to Maldon District Council for the fee to cut the bramble hedge on Maldon Road.

ii) hanging baskets – he had seen Mrs Milton who had confirmed that the Ormiston Garden Project would not be involved in the preparation of hanging baskets for the 2018 season. Maldon District Council would require instruction by the end of January in order to proceed with plants for baskets.

Councillor Pratt requested clarification. He asked if Ormiston had suspended its garden project. He stated that Mrs Milton is a volunteer and that it was a much bigger issue if Ormiston had withdrawn its support. It was

RESOLVED: - that the Town Clerk write to the Principal of Ormiston Rivers Academy to ascertain if the Academy is withdrawing from the Hanging Basket 'project'.

iii) the Town Council's contractor is prepared to cut all grass areas in the Town currently maintained by Essex County Council and Maldon District Council. However, this may not be financially viable. Members agreed that this may be worth exploring.

210 TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE

Councillor Skeens, the Town Council's website Editor, gave a brief power-point presentation on progress with the website. He stated that the site is 'picture led' and that he was aiming to go live by February 2018. Councillor Skeens confirmed that Peter Layzell would continue to update the existing website. The Town Council's I.T. consultant had provided information regarding the 'hosted exchange'. The Town Clerk stated that he had been unable to attend the Town Council Meeting and Members agreed that further clarity was needed on this issue. It was

RESOLVED: - that the Town Clerk set up an informal meeting with the Town Council's I.T. consultant and that all Members be invited to attend.

Councillor Mrs Stamp thanked Councillor Skeens for his efforts and stated that the website will be "user friendly".

The Town Clerk stated that the Service Level Agreement had been signed before it had been approved by the Town Council and that the Website Editor was not authorized to sign the Agreement. The document had now been circulated to Members. It was

RESOLVED: - that consideration of the Service Level Agreement be deferred to the next Meeting of the Town Council to be held on Tuesday 23 January 2018.

211 PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER

Further to Minute 186 of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Thursday 23 November 2017, Councillor Bell reported that the District Council would not support the introduction of a PSPO requiring dogs to be kept on leads along the sea wall.

212 TOWN LITTER PICK

Councillor Bell stated that she wished to withdraw the proposal.

Councillor Wood stated that he could not understand why and that a litter pick was a good idea.

Councillor Bell stated that it was not within her remit to organize.

Councillor Mrs Stamp asked if this would be taken up by the Environment Co-ordinator.

213 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

214 QUESTIONS

Q. Will you pass on to District Councillors what a terrific job they did at the South East planning Committee, especially Cllrs Peter Elliott, Ron Pratt and Penny Channer, who played a pivotal role?

A. Yes.

Q. Regarding the proposed increase in the Essex Police component of Council Tax, will the Council debate to determine its position on such a move?

A. The Police and Crime Commissioner is attending the February Meeting of the Town Council.

Q. Is there any further information on the Southminster Road closure?

A. This has been temporarily suspended.

Q. Given the increasing numbers of residential properties, a new caravan site with 40+ residential places and increased road parking restrictions, will the Council please appoint a Councillor Co-ordinator to lead a Working Group to review the car parking provision in the Town in line with Policy PI 17 of the Neighbourhood Plan?

A. This cannot be answered at this Meeting. Parking within the Town will be an Agenda Item for a future Meeting.

215 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED: - that by virtue of the provisions of Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded during discussion of the following business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

216 STAFF MATTERS, LAND MATTERS AND TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES

i) Staff Matters – the Appointments Panel reported on issues following a recent change in staff.

ii) Land Matters and Town Council Offices – the Asset Management Panel reported on matters relating to the Allotment site in Arcadia Road and the Town Council Offices.

217 CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

Having considered and determined all items of business, the Meeting was closed at 10.02 pm.