

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF THE PARISH OF BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH ON THURSDAY 27 APRIL 2017, AT 7.30 pm IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER OF THE COUNCIL OFFICES, CHAPEL ROAD, BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH, ESSEX, CM0 8JA.

Present: - Town Mayor: - Councillor Ron Pratt.

Town Councillors: - Vanessa Bell, Bob Calver, Mrs Una Norman, Mrs Wendy Stamp and Mike Wood.

Maldon District Council: - Ms Fiona Marshall, Chief Executive.

Local Electors: - As recorded on the signing-in sheets.

In Attendance: - Town Clerk, Miss Sarah Grimes.

Councillor Ron Pratt, the Town Mayor, welcomed everyone to the Meeting and thanked them for attending.

Sarah Grimes, the Town Clerk, stated that Essex County Council Elections would be held on Thursday 4 May 2017 and as such, this Meeting was being held within the ‘Purdah’ period. She outlined the code of practice.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs Helen Elliott, Peter Elliott, Mrs Louise Pudney, Neil Pudney and County Councillor Bob Boyce.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

3 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Councillor Calver pointed out a date error in Minute 3. It was

RESOLVED: - that, subject to the above correction, the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Wednesday 27 April 2016, be confirmed and signed.

4 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TOWN COUNCIL FOR 2016/2017

The Town Clerk formally presented the Annual Report for 2016/2017 and explained the format and the elements prescribed by Regulation and highlighted many aspects of the Town Council's activities as recorded in the Report. She also explained that Appendix 2, the Annual Financial Reconciliation for 2016/2017, was in the process of preparation and would be included in the final version of the Annual Report that, as is prescribed by Regulation, would be placed on deposit by the due date of 30 June 2017.

The Town Mayor thanked the Town Clerk.

5 ESSEX POLICE – MALDON DISTRICT

No report was presented. The Town Mayor stated that an invitation had been extended for a representative from Essex Police to attend the Meeting.

6 MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Town Mayor welcomed Ms Fiona Marshall, Chief Executive for Maldon District Council, to the Meeting.

Ms Marshall reported as follows: -

“Planning Matters**Local Development Plan**

The Hearing sessions for the LDP Examination were held in January 2017. Following this the Post-Examination Main Modifications were agreed with the Inspector. The consultation on these is open until 28 April 2017. The responses will be collated together and sent to the Inspector, so that he can take them into account in writing his report. He will submit his report directly to the Secretary of State, who will make the final decision on the Plan. The timetable is out of the Council's hands, with the added complication of the General Election.

Burnham Neighbourhood Plan

The Burnham-on-Crouch Neighbourhood Plan was submitted for examination on 18 October 2016, following which Maldon District Council held a six week public consultation on the Plan. The Plan was examined in Feb/March this year. The examiner recommends that subject to modifications the Plan now proceeds to referendum. The Planning & Licensing committee will consider the report on the NP examiner's recommendations on 25 April. Officers have recommended that the proposed changes to the plan as set out in the examiner's report are endorsed for approval by the Council; and that the Burnham-on-Crouch Neighbourhood Plan as modified goes forward to referendum within the neighbourhood area.

Maldon District Design Guide – Policy D1 Design Quality and Built Environment, LDP

Policy D1 Design Quality and Built Environment of the submitted Local Development Plan sets out ten criterion that all development must have regard to reflective of the unique character and distinguishing features of the District. Policy D1 LDP states that: In addition, all developments must demonstrate that they are in general conformity with the design principles set out in the emerging 'Maldon District Design Guide SPD' and any other relevant local development documents, neighbourhood plans or Village Design Statements (VDSs) adopted or endorsed by the Council.

The Maldon District Design Guide has been prepared by our consultants working with the Officer Working Group. The draft MDDG has been approved by Planning & Licensing Committee on 2 March to go out to public consultation. The public consultation is expected to commence at the beginning of May for 6 weeks and will include engagement with the parish, village and town councils and with developers, agents and consultants. Once approved, the Maldon District Design Guide is intended as a Supplementary Planning Document to the LDP and will be a material planning consideration in all development proposals.

Strategic Design Codes – Policies S2 Strategic Growth, S3 Place Shaping

The Maldon District Design Guide has taken account of the design code work and the principles set out in the strategic master plan frameworks endorsed by Council to ensure that all development is sustainable and that design quality is delivered, including the allocations in Burnham.

Development in Burnham**Progress Update on Strategic Sites**

Site 2(i) Land between Chandlers and Creeksea Lane (180 units) – The Committee recommendation is to approve subject to S106 agreement. The S106 is currently being negotiated between Pigeon (the developer), ECC and MDC.

6 MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL (continued)

Site 2(j) Land between Maldon Road and Green Lane (180 units) – The Committee recommendation to approve subject to S106 agreement. The Agreement is currently with Persimmon for signing.

Burnham North (East) (S2k) (90 units). This is the only strategic allocation yet to come forward.

All the landowners/agents were active participants in the LDP process. All 3 sites contribute towards the District's Housing Trajectory.

Gladman Developments site – Southminster Road, West of the cemetery

The appeal was called in by the Secretary of State because it was in an area where a Neighbourhood Plan had been submitted and the scheme was for over 25 units. The Secretary of State allowed the appeal on 20 April 2017. MDC is reviewing the decision in detail and is carefully considering its next steps.

Pippins Road (known as Land South of Marsh Road) (75 dwellings)

The reserved matters application has been submitted; commencement on site anticipated later this year.

Economic Development**Dengie Enterprise Support**

Since its inception in 2015, DES has seen 63 clients in 2015/16 and 34 in 2016/17. This has assisted in the creation of 24 new businesses resulting in 46 jobs. Another 21 of these clients may still start up a business at some stage. The service also delivers a monthly Forum for clients, which is well attended, averaging 11 businesses per session, where they meet for a workshop on business themed subjects, and additionally compare experiences and problems on an informal networking basis.

DES has also had a re-brand in light of 'Sense of Place' which was launched at a well-attended Celebration of Success event in September 2016. MDC are currently seeking funding from the Magnox Socio-Economic Grant Fund to continue the service for at least a further 2 years.

Burnham-on-Crouch Chamber of Commerce Re-Launch

MDC Economic Development Team sits on the Executive Committee and was heavily involved in the successful organisation of the re-launch on 1 April 2017. In excess of 60 delegates attended, guest speakers were John Whittingdale OBE, MP, Cllr Miriam Lewis & Cllr Ron Pratt. Stands included free business support in the form of Dengie Enterprise Support and BEST Growth Hub; the funding support programmes, LEADER and LoCase; and 3 Dengie businesses, AB Marketing and MR Books that have recently set up the Local Business Clinic, and Create & Flourish.

Enterprise Centre

Following on from the Regenerise Report commissioned and published in 2016, investigation continues in relation to the feasibility of an Enterprise Centre in the Maldon District and external funding is currently being sought from Magnox to commission further and detailed works on preparation of a business plan for the proposed centre. This will provide recommendations for service model, location, management arrangements, and assess financial viability.

Maldon District Business Awards

The Dengie Peninsula won all of the awards – Crouch Ridge (Althorne) won the overall Business of the Year Award and the New Business of the Year Award, Dan Hull Prepared Foods (Althorne), the Fast Track Business, and Turvec (Southminster) the Young Entrepreneur.

6 MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL (continued)**Community and Leisure****Leisure Contract**

The performance of Leisure Centres in Burnham and Maldon continues satisfactorily and has seen an overall increase of 13% of users since the start of the new contract.

Burnham Caravan Site

The Council has agreed to enter into a 51-year lease for the provision and operation of a caravan site centred upon the old caravan site within Millfields. Whilst we hoped to complete the necessary legal documentation in 2016 the need for due diligence has led to the additional time delay in delivering this project. The new scheme (subject to planning consent) will deliver a high quality site within the Town which should have a positive impact upon the local economy.

Millfields Access Road

In context, the Council has requested the South Essex Parking Partnership to commence with the consultation process for the work of introducing a traffic regulation order on the full length of the access road (Station Road to the car park near the play site) which will mean enforcement action can be taken. It will be increasingly important to ensure the access road remains clear when the caravan site is both under construction and in use. The existing parking bays along the road will remain for the convenience of those using the Leisure Centre and children's play site.

This matter has been linked to the caravan site project and will now progress.

Dog Fouling

We are actively working with BTC on this issue, they are in the process of erecting posters around Burnham to help raise the profile of the Community Protection Team and more importantly the Park Watch Scheme, we are also looking to hold workshops in Burnham on a quarterly basis where they can meet members of the team and discuss issues that they have. Burnham has the highest number of Park Watch members with over 200 persons registered. It is hoped the public will assist in reporting fouling incidents and help identify careless owners.

Burnham Market

The market continues to operate successfully and is well supported by traders and customers. The existing arrangement will continue until March 2018, the Council will re-tender to operation later this year to ensure no interruption in service provision occurs.

TIC

Burnham Tourist Office opened on 23 August 2016 and is open 5 days a week including weekends and Bank Holidays (Sat, Sun, Tues, Thurs & Fri) – 10am till 3pm. The most common types of enquiry relate to Heritage, Coast and Countryside then Transport. The 'Visit Maldon District' website hits are growing month by month and were over 40k in March.

Sense of Place

MDC is currently developing some 'Sense of Place' promotion aids that are complementary to business brands, quick and easy to implement and at little or no cost to the business, including a seal, and templates for letter heads, reverse of business cards and adverts. There will also be a standalone Sense of Place website linked to the corporate website from where these can be accessed.

The Dengie Gateway project is nearing completion and will finish with the launch of a number of coastal hubs this summer along our 75 mile coastline. In Burnham we hope to install a larger feature on Millfields celebrating our coastal heritage and public suggestions are being sought for suitable projects.

6 MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL (continued)

Achievements to date include the launch of the District brand 'sense of place', new tourism website, Coastal hubs (information points) and new coastal signage. The Council is also committed to improve the Town Pontoon and funding has been allocated for the upgrade. Discussions on the link to the possible new Lower Crouch Crossing are underway to ensure funding is used effectively.

Waste Contract

The first nine months of performance of the new alternate weekly waste collection service has been successful. The tonnage of waste recycled from June 2016/17 compared to the amount recycled from the same period 2015/16 is as follows:

- There has been a 18% increase in the dry mixed recycling (glass, cans, plastics and paper);
- There has been an 91.2% increase in food waste collection;
- There has been a 4.1% increase in garden waste collections
- There has been a 25.5% decrease in refuse tonnage collected

It is predicted that the overall recycling performance for 2016/17 will be 57.5% compared to 47.1% last year. In terms of recycling performance across Essex Councils and based on last year's totals, this would place Maldon second behind Rochford (who provide a free weekly collection of garden waste).

Finance**Central Government Funding**

In the period between 2015/16 and 2019/20 the Council's core funding from Central Government will have been reduced by 51% (£1.25m). The budget setting process has become more and more difficult each year and Members and Officers have had to make difficult decisions in order to protect front line services.

The Council must deliver further savings of £1.04m over the next three years to the end of the decade to close the gap between forecasted income and expenditure. We are starting the budget setting process for future years now and are in the early stages of planning and delivering a significant transformation programme, aimed at moving us to a financially sustainable position and protecting front line services to our residents. Current areas in the scope of this project include:

- Systems Review and Information Management
- Income Generation
- Working closer with our communities to deliver our priorities
- Open for Business."

Councillor Mike Wood asked if there was any danger of the caravan park tender not being accepted. Ms Marshall responded that there are issues with technicalities and contract terms and that success would depend on that.

Councillor Vanessa Bell stated that the Parkwatch scheme had fallen away due to insufficient volunteers.

Councillor Mrs Una Norman expressed concerns at the lack of privacy in the Maldon Council reception area.

Ms Marshall responded that there are private interview rooms.

6 MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL (continued)

Councillor Mrs Norman felt that staff should appreciate the sensitive nature of certain issues and that people may not think to ask for a private room.

Ms Marshall stated that she would take that back to the Customer Services Team.

Councillor Mrs Wendy Stamp stated that the Sense of Place branding “had been fantastic” for the C of C re-launch.

The Town Mayor stated that “the Gladman site was such a bad decision, please seriously consider a judicial review”. Ms Marshall responded that this was being considered.

The Mayor reported issues with GP appointment availability in Burnham and Ms Marshall stated that she is proactively involved with the Maldon hospital scheme and that it is “incredibly frustrating”.

The Town Mayor asked for questions from residents.

Q. I have the same point as last year. Please will you address issues with the website? (cited tourism). It needs attention.

A. I will take that back.

Q. Gladman decision – I was one of a group attended every day of the Appeal. You would not have been proud of the conduct of the case. I am glad that there is light at the end of the tunnel for the LDP and NP. However, the Town is disappointed at the length of time taken. Could you commission an independent report?

A. When the Plan went to independent examination in 2015, MDC thought it was sound. It has felt that it has done its best every step of the way.

The Town Mayor thanked Ms Marshall for attending the meeting.

7 ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

Councillor Bob Boyce MBE C.C., the Town’s representative on Essex County Council, had sent a brief written statement, which the Town Clerk read out to the Meeting.

“I haven’t got a lot to report other than to say goodbye. It has been an absolute privilege to represent Burnham and the Dengie for the past twenty years but as you may have heard due to being deselected I will not be standing in the forthcoming county elections.

The difficulties that face local governments are getting no better and there are constant claims on the county’s resources. The social care issue is and will continue to be a major problem for the County but on a more positive note you will be aware that the pedestrian crossing should soon be installed outside Ormiston Rivers.

May I thank yourself and David for all the support you have given me in the past. And wish the residents of Burnham the best for the future.”

The Clerk stated that she had omitted to read one sentence due to the Purdah rules.

8 REPRESENTATIVES TO EXTERNAL BODIES/ORGANIZATIONS

The Town Clerk stated that all representatives’ reports had been included/covered in the Annual Report considered under item 4 above.

9 RESOLUTIONS

The Town Clerk informed the Meeting that the following proposed Resolutions, for which seven clear days written notice had been given, had been received and stated that the Town Meeting could vote to accept or reject. If the proposed resolutions were accepted they must be referred to the Town Council for consideration at the next appropriate Ordinary Meeting. The proposals were:

a) Mr Nick Gilmour –

1. “All increases in the Precept above the level of inflation (RPI) + 1% point should be put to a referendum of local residents, save where the increase is due to a specific project or programme of activity which was demonstrably evident and specifically costed in a majority of members' pre-election manifesto commitments, or forms part of the adopted Neighbourhood Plan costed implementation strategy.”

This was debated and the following points were raised: -

- Cllr Mrs Norman – I understand his point but there are so many things that come along that need funding.
- Town Mayor – research is needed. It costs around £4,000 to run a referendum. There are Government restrictions that haven't yet been applied to parishes.

RESOLVED: - that the proposal is not accepted.

2. “The Town Council should actively support and ensure the delivery of a distinctive and nationally significant public art installation at an appropriate location on the Quay which builds on the area's non-sailing heritage and would demonstrably attract the most tourists to Burnham-on-Crouch over its lifespan and sustainably supports the local economy, including pro-actively facilitating funding, design, construction and maintenance by relevant parties with a target unveiling date of no later than 30 April 2018.”

This was debated and the following points were raised: -

- The Quay is the responsibility of Essex County Council.
- The target date of 30 April is unachievable.
- The coastal communities grant is out to consultation.

RESOLVED: - that the proposal is not accepted.

b) Allison Barton –

“It is proposed that Burnham town council should actively support the BOLD, (Burnham's Own Leisure Development) campaign to give the town better sporting facilities to include a swimming pool, gym and possibly a climbing wall.”

A brief presentation was given.

RESOLVED: - that the above Proposed Resolution be accepted and referred to the Town Council.

10 OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Town Mayor reminded Members of the details for Rev. Tony Jones farewell Service.

11 CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

Councillor Ron Pratt, the Town Mayor, thanked everyone for attending and taking part in the Meeting. He stated that it had been a privilege to be the Town Mayor and thanked the Deputy Town Mayor, his colleagues on the Town Council, the Town Clerk and all the Town's volunteers, for their hard work.

The Meeting was closed at 9.12 pm.