



AGENDA ITEM 4 - ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TOWN COUNCIL FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR MAY 2020 TO APRIL 2021 (Forty-Sixth Edition)

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

INTRODUCTION

This Report provides a summary of the activities of the Town Council that endeavors to protect, promote and improve services and facilities within the Town and thereby enhance the quality of life of its residents and visitors.

The Town Council is required to comply with the Local Government Regulations that stipulate that a Town (Parish) Annual Report should be published by the prescribed date of 30 June 2021. Annual Reports are required to include the following: -

- 1) Town Mayor's Overview of the Year
- 2) Town Council's Annual Report
- 3) Contact List of Town Councillors and Representatives of other Local Government, Parliamentary and European Parliamentary bodies (Appendix 1)
- 4) End of Year Financial Reconciliation (Appendix 2)

TOWN COUNCIL STRUCTURE

As a result of boundary changes in 2003, the Town has two similar Wards in population: - North and South. There are five Town Council and two District Council seats in each Ward.

LOCAL ELECTIONS

Details of all Town and District Councillors are given below.
The next District and Parish Elections will be held in May 2023.

TOWN COUNCILLORS

The ten Town Councillors are: -

North Ward – Mary-Ann Munford (co-opted on 8.9.20 following the resignation of Councillor Helen Elliott), **Neil Pudney** and **Wendy Stamp**.

There are **currently two vacant seats in the north ward** following the resignations of Councillors Fiona Clegg and Jane English.

South Ward – Vanessa Bell, Bob Calver, Kelvin Coles (co-opted on 2.3.21 following the resignation of Councillor Nick Skeens), **Jennie Donnelly** and **Ron Pratt**.

(See Appendix 1 for contact details)

TOWN MAYOR AND DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR

At the Statutory Annual Meeting of the Town Council held on Wednesday 15 May 2019, **Councillor Wendy Stamp was elected as Town Mayor and Councillor Nick Skeens was elected as Deputy Town Mayor.**

Coronavirus Act 2020

Coronavirus Act 2020 (c.7) Part 1 - Main provisions: Section 78 applies to local authority meetings. The Act states that the Secretary of State must introduce new regulations to implement the measures, which would apply up to 7 May 2021.

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 came into force on 4 April 2020. Regulation 6(c) removes the requirement for a Parish Council to hold an Annual Meeting in May 2020. Regulation 4 (2) carries the current appointment of Chairman on until the Annual Meeting in May 2021, although Councils may elect a Chairman at an earlier meeting should they wish to.

Councillor Stamp continued in office as Town Mayor until 24 July 2020.

At the Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on Friday 24 July 2020, **Councillor Fiona Clegg was elected as Town Mayor.**

At the Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on Friday 4 September 2020, **the resignation of the Town Mayor, Councillor Fiona Clegg, was received and accepted. Councillor Ron Pratt was elected as Town Mayor.**

At the Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on Friday 4 September 2020, **the resignation of the Deputy Town Mayor, Councillor Nick Skeens, was received and accepted.**

Councillor Vanessa Bell was elected as Deputy Town Mayor.

TOWN CLERK AND COUNCIL STAFF

The Town Clerk is Sarah Grimes, PSLCC.

The Town Clerk is supported by an administrative assistant. Kevin Money is the Responsible Finance Officer and Planning Clerk. The Town Council also employs a gardener/caretaker and an office cleaner.

A number of contractors are engaged by the Town Clerk to carry out specific items of maintenance and other works as approved by the Town Council and in accordance with its annual programme of works.

COUNCIL OFFICES

The Council Offices are open to the public between 9.30 am and 12 noon Monday to Friday.

The contact details are: - Burnham-on-Crouch Town Council, Council Offices, Chapel Road, Burnham on Crouch, CM0 8JA. Telephone: 01621 783 426 email: office@burnhamtowncouncil.com

The Council also has a website

www.burnhamoncrouchtowncouncil.gov.uk (burnham.info)

MEETINGS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

At the Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on Friday 20 March 2020,

“It was RESOLVED: -

a) that authority of Council decisions be delegated to the Clerk, to act in the absence of Town Council, Committee and Sub-Committee Meetings, in conjunction with the Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor, General Purposes Co-ordinator and such other Town Councillors as may be necessary, in all matters except those specifically reserved by Statute for determination by the Town Council, during any period of restricted activity declared by the Government in respect of the Covid-19 virus; such delegation to enable the Council to fulfil its responsibilities to its residents.

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020) came into force on 4 April 2020.

This legislation enables meetings to be held remotely, and allow local authorities to hold and alter the frequency and occurrence of meetings without the need for further notice. The changes in legislation have been made in order to help smaller authorities in the performance of their duties as a result of the restrictions of movement and limitations on social contact necessary to limit the spread of the Covid-19 virus.

The Town Council has met (remotely) SIXTEEN times in 2020/2021: - ten Ordinary Meetings, which included the Budget Meeting to review levels of expenditure and income and to recommend the Annual Precept for the following year, and six Extraordinary Meetings. No Statutory Annual Council Meeting was held in May 2020 to elect the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor and to make appointments to internal committees and external organizations (in accordance with Regulation 6(c) and 4 (2) of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020)).

The Annual Town Meeting is normally held in April but has been re-scheduled to May because of the Purdah period prior to Parish and County Elections on Thursday 6 May 2021.

All Electors of the Parish (Town) are entitled to attend the Town Meeting at which they may ask questions of any of the Town Councillors or external representatives. Electors are invited by public notice posted on the Council’s notice boards/website.

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

Maldon District Council is the Local Planning Authority and the Town Council is a consultee in the Development Control and Local Development Framework procedures. The Town Council operates a facility for public speaking in relation to the consideration and determination of planning applications.

At the Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on Friday 20 March 2020,

“It was RESOLVED: -

a) that authority of Council decisions be delegated to the Clerk, to act in the absence of Town Council, Committee and Sub-Committee Meetings, in conjunction with the Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor, General Purposes Co-ordinator and such other Town Councillors as may be necessary, in all matters except those specifically reserved by Statute for determination by the Town Council, during any period of restricted activity declared by the Government in respect of the Covid-19 virus; such delegation to enable the Council to fulfill its responsibilities to its residents.”

All Town Councillors were consulted by email on planning applications received and, in accordance with the delegation process, in the absence of the Planning Committee, decisions were agreed by the Town Clerk, Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor. Planning Meetings resumed on 8 September 2020. The notes of applications considered during delegated authority on 5 May, 19 May, 2 June, 30 June, 14 July, 28 July 2020 and, the notes of the meetings held on 11 and 25 August 2020, between the Town Clerk, Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Planning Clerk, during the Town Council's summer recess (in accordance with Minute 293 of 24 July 2020) were received by the Town Council at its Meeting on 8 September 2020.

The Town Council has met (remotely) SIXTEEN times in 2020/2021 to consider planning applications.

DISTRICT, COUNTY, UK PARLIAMENT AND EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT REPRESENTATIVES

There are several tiers of Local Government/Government above the Town Council that are responsible for many services and regulations that have an effect on the lives of the residents of Burnham-on-Crouch and these are set out below.

DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

The four District Councillors are: -
South Ward – Vanessa Bell and Nick Skeens
North Ward – Wendy Stamp and Anne Hull
(See Appendix 1 for contact details)

COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Councillor Ron Pratt is the Town's elected representative to Essex County Council.
The next County Council elections take place on Thursday 6 May 2021.
(See Appendix 1 for contact details)

MEMBER OF UK PARLIAMENT

The Rt. Hon. John Whittingdale OBE is the Member of Parliament for Maldon.
The electoral wards used in the Maldon constituency are; Althorne, Burnham-on- Crouch North, Burnham-on-Crouch South, Heybridge East, Heybridge West, Maldon, Essex East, Maldon North, Maldon South, Maldon West, Mayland, Purleigh, Southminster and Tillingham from Maldon district. Bicknacre and East and West Hanningfield, Little Baddow, Danbury and Sandon, Rettendon and Runwell, South Hanningfield, Stock and Margaretting, South Woodham Ferrers, Chetwood and Collingwood, and Elmwood and Woodville from Chelmsford district.
(See Appendix 1 for contact details)

MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The contact details of the East of England Region Members of the European Parliament are given in Appendix 1 of this Report.

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Director of Service Delivery - Richard Holmes
Director of Resources – Chris Leslie
Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance - Paul Dodson

POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

Roger Hirst took over governance of the Fire and Rescue Service on 1 October 2017. The next Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner elections take place on Thursday 6 May 2021.

ANNUAL PRECEPT

The Town Council's principal source of income is from its Annual Precept.

The Precept is set once a year and it is collected by Maldon District Council as an integral part of the District's Council Tax. The Precept includes specific major items and a contribution to the Town Council's financial reserves to enable it to respond to non-budgeted items, should they occur during the financial year. At the Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 15 December 2020 it was

“RESOLVED: - that the Town Council's Precept for 2021/2022 be set at £203,441 and that Maldon District Council be notified accordingly.”

AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS

The Town Council's appointed independent Internal Auditor is Harvey Smith & Co. of Burnham-on-Crouch. The External Auditor is PKF Littlejohn LLP. The Accounts for 2019/20 have been audited by both Auditors and published in accordance with the appropriate Accounts and Audit Regulations for Local Councils.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Town Council is aware of many special occasions that will be officially commemorated and celebrated, but from time to time, local groups, organizations and others, contact the Council to suggest an occasion that might be worthy of being honoured through a celebration.

The Council is involved with a number of receptions and events throughout its municipal year -

- to recognise, honour or pay tribute to outstanding achievement;
- to acknowledge the importance of events that make a major contribution to the community;
- to promote new initiatives and prestigious events;
- to mark significant local events and anniversaries;
- civic/ceremonial occasions organized by the Council.

Coronavirus restrictions have resulted in the cancellation of local and national events during this municipal year. During the period of delegated authority, the decision was taken that all Town Council run events be cancelled for the foreseeable future due to the Covid-19 public health emergency. The Town Mayor attended a small service at the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin to mark Remembrance Sunday.

COMMUNITY, PARTNERSHIP WORKING, MALDON DISTRICT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN & BURNHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

COMMUNITY

The Town Council works closely with a number of local organizations and individuals to maintain and enhance the local environment and makes provision, within its Annual Budget, for financial support to local organizations and charities.

Burnham is fortunate to have a number of very dedicated residents who put in hundreds of hours of voluntary work for the benefit of the community and the Town Council wishes to record its sincere appreciation of all these volunteers and groups.

During the past year, Burnham has lost residents who made a distinct and considerable contribution to the Town and its wellbeing. The Town Council extends its sincere condolences to all those families in Burnham who have suffered a personal loss in the last twelve months.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

The Town Council often works in partnership with other Authorities and organizations, in particular Maldon District Council. The relationship between the Town Council's Officers and Officers of the District Council is excellent.

The Town Council has made provision within its 2021/2022 budget for the Community Protection Officer Service for Burnham and it continues to work with a number of other organizations for the benefit of residents, such as the Maldon & District Citizens' Advice Bureau.

The Town Council is consulted, during every Municipal Year, on many issues, by the Government, Government Agencies, and Essex County Council, Maldon District Council and many other bodies and groups. Wherever possible, the Town Council considers the subject matter and gives a suitable response. If this is not possible, authority is delegated to the Clerk, in consultation with a nominated Town Councillor/s to respond on the Town Council's behalf.



SARAH GRIMES, PSLCC
TOWN CLERK

MAY 2021