



BURNHAM ON CROUCH TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH TOWN COUNCIL, ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 13th JUNE 2023 AT 7:00pm AT THE CHAMBER HALL, COUNCIL OFFICES, CHAPEL ROAD, BURNHAM ON CROUCH, ESSEX.

Attendance: Chief Officer Nichola Payne & Assistant Clerk Kassie Taylor, 20 members of public

Present: Councillors D. Rawlinson (Town Mayor), F. Clegg, (Deputy Mayor), D. Bown, Mary-Ann Munford, N. Skeens, S. Stratton, P. Stanbury, J. English, D. Carter.

(Meeting commenced at 7:05pm)

25 WELCOME

Cllr Duncan Rawlinson, the town mayor welcomed everyone to the Annual Town Meeting 13th June 2023. The mayor reminded those present that local government electors, included on the current electoral roll in the parish of Burnham on Crouch, are entitled to speak and if required, to vote at this annual meeting. The council would be recording all parts of the meeting held in open session, for subsequent publication on the council's website. Members of the public attending the meeting with a view to speaking are deemed to be giving permission to be included in the recording.

Continuing to read "Over the past year the council have not been running at full capacity, with only 60% of the councillor seats filled and not having a full time Clerk in place, has resulted in a reduced service to the town. Whilst we have been able to remain quorate for most of the time the ability to conduct essential council business has been significantly reduced, and therefore it has been a challenging time to get projects off the ground.

With the successful employment of a new office team at the end of 2022 and now a full complement of new councillors following the elections in May 2023, we are confident we are in a much better position to be able to provide a full service to the residents of Burnham.

A considerable amount of work has been carried out behind the scenes to bring processes up to date, particularly around compliance and transparency.

This has resulted in calling for an interim Audit, and a complete review of council policies.

We look forward to seeing members of the public tomorrow and welcome your questions and or feedback on how we can improve Burnham for the Burnham people."

26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies from Councillor Una Norman.

Signed

Councillor Duncan Rawlinson
(Town Mayor)

27 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The chief officer reported that there was no minutes produced at the last Annual Town Council meeting held on the 24th May 2022 and could not be found, Cllr Nick Skeens asked whether they were missing or did the meeting not happen, were the Chief officer said she will look into this a member of the public advised that there was an audio recording of this and we will look into this.

28 ANNUAL REPORTS

Cllr Duncan Rawlinson read through the annual report for the year 2022/2023 Cllr Fiona Clegg, deputy mayor went on to report for the new year ahead 2023/2024. The reports are available on the council website should members of the public not in attendance wish to read those however in summary:

A review of all the policies took place on 12th June 2023 is underway and will be presented to the new council in May for final review and agreement.

- Standing Orders
- Code of Conduct
- Financial regulations
- Internal Banking Policy
- Sickness Policy

The local elections are now complete and 9 of the ten seats were filled. The ordinary vacancy for the north ward was successfully filled by Cllr Diane Carter via the extra ordinary meeting held on 12th June 2023. It is therefore now confirmed that your councillors for Town are as follows:

North Ward

Duncan Rawlinson (Mayor)
Fiona Clegg (Deputy Mayor)
Jane English
Paula Stanbury
Diane Carter

South Ward

Nick Skeens
Mary-Ann Munford
Doug Bown
Una Norman – not present
Stephen Stratton

Office Staff

Chief Officer – Nichola Payne
Assistant Clerk – Kassie Taylor

Your Councillors for District are as follows:

North Ward

Cllr Wendy Stamp
Cllr Una Norman

South Ward

Cllr Vanessa Bell
Cllr Doug Bown

Signed

Councillor Duncan Rawlinson
(Town Mayor)

29 MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Our representative Cllr D Bown reported he had no annual report as he has only been post since May 2023, next year a full report will be submitted.

30 ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

Cllr Wendy Stamp reported an in-depth report which was circulated around to all councillors and residents, the Chief officer pointed some positive reports which were:

- An allocation of 5k locality fund which was given to the parish councils along the Dengie then shared out within the Dengie. With our allocated money we have purchased some commemorative benches which will be placed in the dementia garden allocated outside the council offices.
- SEND - £3,500 – Music provision.
- St Marys School - £325 – Towards additional breakfast and lunchtime clubs' meal.
- St Cedd'S School - £2200 – To purchase Tablet computers/ for disadvantage children.
- Southminster School - £3728 – SEND & PPG Children support for homework and general support and lunchtime club.
- Motion moved regarding the infrastructure within the area.
- 150,000 Library cards been given out to all young children within the district.

31 PUBLIC FORUM

Cllr Duncan Rawlinson opened the session starting with questions received from Mr Nick Gilmore via e-mail which were:

1. Following the recent resounding success of the live-screening in Riverside Park of the King's Coronation Concert, should Burnham-on-Crouch Town Council work with Maldon District Council and others to explore more opportunities to improve and use this space for cohesive community/national events?

Cllr Duncan Rawlinson replied *"Agreed, yes, we will be putting more town events at Riverside Park, we have recently recovered over £18,000 from the VAT office which hadn't been claimed from the previous administration in the year 2021 this sum of money could be used for such funding"*.

2. Should Burnham-on-Crouch Town Council annually produce a report to subsequent Annual Town Meetings about the Policy implementation status of the made Neighbourhood Plan for its remaining duration, including a schedule of all completed, in progress and outstanding projects, their lead delivery owner(s), actual or envisaged benefits and their funding status/next steps?

Cllr Duncan Rawlinson replied, *"From my understanding and using this as an example we know the cycle path has always been on it, but nothing has happened, maybe a working party within the council should be set up for such matters"*.

Signed

Councillor Duncan Rawlinson
(Town Mayor)

3. With local elector's support Burnham-on-Crouch Town Council in exploring ways to make its meetings more accessible, such as by live-streaming these on YouTube as MDC does?

Cllr Duncan Rawlinson replied *"This council is not against the idea, depending on logistics and costs. MDC have already had a set-up within the chambers. We have now set up a new administration which includes a communications committee who will investigate this"* There was an agenda item previously to discuss the purchase of a webcam, however this was not followed through and subsequently dropped off the agenda.

4. Except where restricted by closed/confidential session, should all documents presented to, or discussed at, meetings of Burnham-on-Crouch Town Council be made available to the public on the Town Council's website either at least 2 business days in advance of the session, or, for items received/compiled at short notice, within 2 business days thereafter?

Cllr Duncan Rawlinson replied quoting the Standing orders policy and informing the public that we will aim to supply this information quicker.

5. Should Burnham-on-Crouch seek to boost tourism and get itself on the map by way of a nationally important cultural heritage installation on the Quayside? If so, should Burnham-on-Crouch Town Council seek to work with stakeholders to identify designs, funding, etc. and make this happen within the term of the current Council?

Cllr Duncan Rawlinson replied Yes and something we will investigate.

Sent in via post by Mrs Wells

Question:

Can you assure myself and the residents of Burnham that:

- Burnham sewage works are adequate with the inflation of the developments.
- That no raw sewage is being pumped into the River Crouch
- That the water quality is safe to swim in.

Cllr Rawlinson replied, *"I don't have an answer without looking into this, we perhaps need to organise a working party down up to look into this and get the Crouch Harbour Authority involved as well as the environment agency"*.

Cllr Skeens added that he has seen an inflow of raw sewage and indeed a dialog need to be kept up with Rice and Coles sewage farm and regular catch up with the local authorities.

Cllr Munford also added that a Riverwatch may need to be put place also for regular updates and putting pressure on for updates from the water authorities.

Signed

Councillor Duncan Rawlinson
(Town Mayor)

Questions were then put to the floor, allowing the residents present to ask questions:

Public question 1:

With all the new developments going up in the town, what is going to happen within the near future with regards to the Surgery?

Cllr Munford answered that she is part of the Burnham Patient Participation group with the members and the surgery itself and both herself and all other members share your frustration. The NHS doesn't have the resources now to manage the number of people within the Dengie. We need to welcome everybody new and invite them to engage with the town. I can assure you that they are looking at a possible additional surgery to be built in the area, not setting a time scale or where this will be built but will keep everyone informed of these updates. It has been very difficult to recruit GP's our current doctors commute here, which we are grateful for.

Cllr Skeens added that it is important to put the infrastructure in first before. The funding for infrastructure doesn't come till after the housing is built, we want to see commitments to infrastructure from the developers, we will insist on assistance for better health provision.

Public question 2:

What is going on with the buses within Burnham Town?

Cllr Bown replied as the council's representative on the DHBUG and agrees with the terrible state that the buses are in, and the timetable needs to be more regular in this town and has assured this will be brought up at the next meeting. For some reason we tend to get the poor-quality busses out here, and the pot holes are causing more and more damage to the busses.

Public question 3:

When an e-mail is sent into the council website, do we have an automated response?

Our chief officer replied, we will investigate setting this up.

Public question 4:

Is there an option for the councillors to have assistants, that can work with them to ease the load?

Chief officer suggests the CVS community volunteer group which you can join, the council often goes to them to see who in the local area is interesting in helping.

Cllr Skeens has been interested in getting the younger residents involved more so they can understand how important the town council is and get them involved in future events.

Councillors recommended residents being involved in the working groups and numerous volunteering groups as we are all volunteers and more support from the town will help with assisting the councillors.

Public question 5:

Can you set up a follow up of Public Suggestions, standard response, and appointed councillor to deal with it, which is measurable?

We will investigate setting the website with an automated response and time scale for replies. Also, our communications committee is setup to welcome everyone's suggestions rather than reporting on social media. We will look at a tracker option for

Signed

Councillor Duncan Rawlinson
(Town Mayor)

the website. Cllr Clegg states that a lot of comments are put on social media via the community groups, and not actually through the council, the suggestions need to come into us, so they are governed by the council and not social media. Cllr English suggested that people can use a read receipt which shows that the other person has read the email. The office can log jobs on behalf of the public via the other authority websites and provide reference numbers so that individuals can keep track of progress.

Public question 6:

Is there a provision for Health support in the town?

There is a group called Health Alliance providing a hub for residents, which allows them to receive a service if they do not have the funding, you can find more information at www.the-pha-org. which shows how these hubs work, the nearest one is Southend. Cllr Munford confirmed that we have now set up our health and wellbeing committee group and part of that is updating a working database of support services, this feeds into MDC connect, there is an awful lot of support groups out there that people don't know about it, and this will help get people where they need to go for assistance.

Public question 7:

How much is it going to cost the town with supporting the EV charging points?

Cllr Rawlinson clarified that the charging units is a large subject matter that is taking a lot of work to understand if this is something that we can indeed do.

Cllr Clegg is part of the T23 group which specialises in Tourism, Essex County council have approved that this area will receive 6 charging points with the district which hopefully we will received some of this funding. Ways of charging can be done by either lamppost or within the car parks allowing minimal expenditure.

Cllr Skeens clarified that public charge points are in the interest of the town, for tourism.

There are a few roads in burnham that don't have parking facilities outside their home who would like to have electric vehicles but can't, so carpark charging units would suit these people.

We need to move with the times and encourage electric car charging point making it eco-friendly and encouraging tourism in our town.

Public question 8:

During the pandemic, councillor Munford bought a vax bus into the town, people were forced into having it done. There have been proven fatalities from the injection, in the past we would have withdrawn that vaccination.

We don't feel that this a town council issue, and we are waiting for investigations from national bodies to be published.

Public question 9:

Planting pine trees on the Riverside Park allowing shade on the park and making the air pure with planting these on the park.

This is something we will investigate.

Signed

Councillor Duncan Rawlinson
(Town Mayor)

Public question 10:

Can we provide more speed signage in the town, mainly along the high street? Could we have dummy camera signs to deter the illegal parking.

We have a weekly TRU cam in the town via our community engagement team which we can going forward get them to target areas, which we are open for suggestions.

The schools could also be involved in doing posters to make people aware of the speed throughout the town.

Essex police are also in the process of doing more surgeries enabling residents to come in for coffee mornings.

Implementing a 20mph into the town was also discussed which again is a great opportunity to stop the speeding within the town.

Public question 11:

How high is the drug use in Burnham?

Councillors are aware that drug use is in every town and village, however without the proper knowledge from the local services an opinion is that we don't consider this to be a big issue in comparison to other areas.

32 CLOSURE OF THE MEETING @ 8:23pm

Signed

Councillor Duncan Rawlinson
(Town Mayor)