



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BUNTINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, THE MANOR HOUSE, BUNTINGFORD AT 7:45PM ON THURSDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2022.**

**Present:** Councillors, D. Wallace, G. Waite, Mrs P. Furness, M. Furness, S. Bull, G. Bonner, Mrs J. Danagher, S. Bowman, J. Ling, B. Lemay.

**Officer Present:** J. Jones (Town Clerk), A. Georgiou (Admin Officer)

**Also Present:** 2 members of the public.

Councillor Bonner left the meeting prior to the start.

**260. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies from County / District Councillor Jones.

**261. TO RECEIVE MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

No declarations.

**262. TO APPROVE AS A TRUE RECORD AND AUTHORISE THE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 27<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2022.**

Following a proposal, second and a unanimous vote it was

**RESOLVED**

**That the minutes are a true record and the Chairman authorised to sign them.**

**263. TO RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN.**

The Chairman reported that on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November he attended a site meeting with Proludic before the start of the Hare St Rd playground upgrade.

6<sup>th</sup> Nov - The Chairman attended the annual Buntingford FC firework display.

9<sup>th</sup> Nov - Was the AGM of Citizens Advice in Ware Priory. The Chairman attended and noted that Citizens Advice are facing some challenges with their budget. It was also noted that Buntingford has one of the highest rates of families in crisis within East Herts.

13<sup>th</sup> Nov - The Chairman attended the Remembrance service at the war memorial, the Chairman also attended the URC church to do the first reading.

14<sup>th</sup> Nov - Work began on the playground upgrade at Hare St Rd.

20<sup>th</sup> Nov - The Chairman attended the High Sheriff Civic Service at St Albans Cathedral.

21<sup>st</sup> Nov - Work started on The River Rib Restoration Project.

21<sup>st</sup> Nov - The Chairman attended the ground breaking ceremony for the new Buntingford First School, which aims to be carbon neutral. The Chairman stated that the new school was very initiative even in its construction phase.

The Chairman reported that the Chatter Tables, run by Councillors Mrs P. Furness and M. Furness, continue to flourish.

The Lights of Love ceremony and late night shopping event are taking place on 25<sup>th</sup> November.

The Charmain attended a debrief meeting with the Royal British Legion. It was noted that the Buntingford branch have their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary coming up.

Councillor Bonner re-joined the meeting (19:38).

**264. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE POLICE.**

The Police sent through a report which was circulated to Councillors.

It was noted that total crime was down from 27 incidents to 22 incidents since the last Full Council meeting.

There were 2 arrests for possession of controlled substances.

There were no burglaries in the town since the last full council meeting.

It was reported there were no major issues during Halloween and bonfire night.

It was noted that crime in the surrounding rural areas had seen an increase, but not in Buntingford itself.

The Police have now turned their focus to the world cup and issues it may bring.

A question was asked regarding the two recent online grooming cases that were reported at the last meeting. It was asked if the police have contacted the schools to ask them to warn students about the dangers of being online.

The Chairman suggested that the Council could ask the question. It was also noted that the next police priority setting forum is on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December.

**265. TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD 3<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER 2022.**

Following a proposal, second and a unanimous vote it was

**RESOLVED**

**That the report of the meeting of the Amenities Committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 be adopted.**

**266. TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 10<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2022.**

Following a proposal, second and a unanimous vote it was

**RESOLVED**

**That the report of the meeting of the Resources Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022 be adopted.**

**267. TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 27<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER AND 10<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2022.**

Following a proposal, second and a unanimous vote it was

**RESOLVED**

**That the reports of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 27<sup>th</sup> October and 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022 be adopted.**

**268. TO RECEIVE REPORT OF PAYMENTS MADE NOVEMBER 2022.**

A payment had been made for the upgrade of the Council website. It was asked when the upgrade is expected. It was noted that the timescale is not yet clear. The office will attempt to get a pre upgrade meeting scheduled in before Christmas.

There were concerns that the new website meant the newsletter would not be delivered to all properties in Buntingford. There are no intentions to stop delivering the newsletter. It was noted that it does take a lot of time to deliver the newsletters and the office have had trouble in the past finding someone to deliver them and have relied on Councillors to do it.

Following a proposal, second and a unanimous vote it was

**RESOLVED**

**That the reports of payments made November 2022 be received. (Copy attached).**

**269. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR.**

Although a County Council project, District Councillor Bull noted that he had been receiving a lot of emails regarding the new shared path on London Road.

It was reported that East Herts still have a huge problem with staff, specifically a lack of planning officers.

**270. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR.**

Not present.

**271. TO DISCUSS AND AGREE AN EVENT TO CELEBRATE THE CORONATION OF KING CHARLES III: DATE, FORMAT, FINANCE.**

It was suggested that the best day for the event would be Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May, as Saturday is the Coronation and the Monday would be a work/school night so people may leave early. The traders involved with the recent Jubilee event have all been contacted and are all available again on 7<sup>th</sup> May. It was suggested that the celebration event should be similar to that of the Queens Platinum Jubilee. Councillors agreed that this style of event would be suitable.

It was suggested that the free fun fair was very well received and it should be done again next year. It was also suggested that the schools could be more involved in the event.

There were concerns that the weather may not be ideal at the beginning of May and a contingency should be in place. It was suggested that if there is no firework display more of the field will be available for covered areas, as a safety zone will not be needed.

It was stated that the Community Centre is a good venue for such an event and provides the needed facilities for volunteers and staff.

The budget for the Platinum Jubilee event was £20,000 and the event came in just under budget. It was noted that it was circumstantial that another event of similar nature is happening so soon after the original event.

It was asked if the Council could incorporate the Carnival with the coronation, however it was noted that more organisers could slow down the planning process.

It was suggested that the budget should be £25,000 as the Council would like to see more funfair rides and allow them to stay slightly longer.

It was also suggested that more food outlets should be investigated.

It was noted that some members of the Chatter Tables remember the last coronation very well despite being quite young. It was suggested that this event will be remembered for years to come and the Council should make it as memorable as possible.

Following a proposal, second and a unanimous vote it was

**RESOLVED**

**That this Council budget £25,000 toward the Coronation event on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2022, to be held at the Seth Ward Community Centre to be funded from New Homes Bonus.**

**272. TO CONSIDER, IF AVAILABLE, QUOTATIONS FOR THE REPLACEMENT OR REFURBISHMENT OF THE OUTDOOR STAIRCASE AT THE SETH WARD COMMUNITY CENTRE.**

Council were reminded that a structural survey has been undertaken and work is needed on the staircase.

2 quotes have been received, one for a complete replacement totalling £28,000 and one for part replacement and part refurbishment totalling £23,476.

It was suggested that the Council seek a quote for a complete refurbishment of the staircase.

It was suggested that the council allow up to £15,000 for the refurbishment and if it comes back at more than that it will be brought back to Council.

Councillor Bonner left the meeting.

A member of the public raised concerns with the environmental impact refurbishing the staircase brings, with regards to the rust and chemicals used. It was suggested that this is the responsibility of the contractor and will be taken into account.

Following a proposal, second and a unanimous vote it was

**RESOLVED**

**That this Council refurbish the current outdoor staircase at the Seth Ward Community Centre with a cost not to exceed £15,000.**

**273. TO NOTE CASUAL VACANCY ON THE TOWN COUNCIL**

It was noted that Councillor Mrs T. Bonner recently stepped down from the Council. The Chairman wrote a letter to Mrs Bonner to thank her for her time on the Council.

Councillor Bonner re-joined the meeting.

**274. TO INVITE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO ASK QUESTIONS**

A member of the public stated that the Council have been aware that the lease for the doctors surgery is coming to an end for some time, and asked if anything has been done about it.

The Chairman reported that a walk around the town had taken place to try to identify another location for a doctor's surgery. It has become clear that Nevetts is the preferred site however Nevetts is owned by Herts County Council and they will want the best value for their property. The Town Council have pushed for discussion between the Doctors and Herts County Council, however are not aware of the outcome of such conversations.

It was noted that this issue is of deep concern to the Town Council, however the Council have little influence on the outcome.

A question was asked regarding the length of time it is taken to get Neale Drive open.

The Council have not spoken directly with the parties involved, but are getting information from County Councillor Jones.

A member of the public noted that there is still no update on the planning application for the pump track that was submitted over 1 year ago. The member of the public also noted that the hedge between their property and the proposed site has been cut and is now no more than 6ft tall.

The Chairman stated that the Council have chased up the planning authority multiple times to try and get an answer on the application. The Council do not want to go down the route of non-determination and want East Herts to properly assess the application.

A member of the public stated that the river work looks good, however there is a damaged railing. It was also stated that the new footway in the Bowling Green Lane car park has been completed to a good standard. The member of the public also agreed with councillor's comments regarding online grooming and agreed it should be addressed. The member of the public suggested that the increase in families in crisis in Buntingford could be due to the poor transport links and increase in social housing in the town. The Chairman stated that he mentioned the families in crisis to highlight the issue to the Council and was not sure if it is a social housing issue.

It was noted that the Town Council have no input on social housing. It was also stated that you have to be a resident from East Herts to get affordable housing in East Herts, however on occasion other council's purchase housing on the open market and move their social housing residents to these homes.

Although not present at the meeting a member of the public had raised concerns with the Herts Lynx busses parking on the Luyne Rise and complained about the noise of their reverse beepers.

It was stated that the service has proven to be a success and the Council would not want to lose it.

It was noted that the buses are parked legally.

It was stated that Herts Lynx are providing a public service and need proper facilities, such as a kitchen and toilet.

It was asked if the Council can ask the Herts Lynx drivers to use the Community Centre car park whenever possible, and also turn off their engines when sitting in the vehicles.

The Clerk agreed to respond to the complaint stating the Councils position.

The Chairman stated that the River Rib restoration project is now underway, as is the upgrade to the new play area at Hare Street Road playing field.

Meeting Closed: 20:54

Next meeting of the Full Council 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Accounts paid:	Nov-22	Full Council Meeting:	24th November 2022				
2	Committee	Budget	Payee	Details	Amount	Budget total	Budget Bal.	Notes
3	<b>Expenditure</b>							
4	Resources	Web site/newsletter	2 Commune	New web site	750.00	1500.00		Allocated reserves
5	Resources	PCSO funding	Police Crime Commissioner	2/4 PCSO	4449	16000	2948	
6	Amenities	Town Planting	Matthews	Railing planters	700			Locality budget
7	Resources	Manor House maintenance	Executive Carpets	Clean carpet	164			
8	Resources	Manor House maintenance	Bunton	Plumbing MH	516.66			
9	Resources	Manor House maintenance	Dynorod	Plumbing MH	429.16			
10	Resources	Manor House maintenance	Barclaycard	Defib pads	61.14			
11	Resources	Manor House maintenance	D Warner	Clear gutters	250	10500	8581.23	
12	Resources	stationery	Barclaycard	Archive boxes	27.46			
13	Resources	stationery	Barclaycard	stationery	4.16			
14	Resources	stationery	Barclaycard	stationery	5.16			
15	Resources	stationery	Barclaycard	stationery	6.65			
16	Resources	stationery	Barclaycard	stationery	15.82			
17	Resources	Stationery	County Supplies	Stationery	2.26	750	539.5	
18	Amenities	Mower fuel	A Jones	Fuel	15.93			
19	Amenities	Mower fuel	Petty Cash	Fuel	13.91	100		Allocated reserves
20	Resources	refuse collection	EHDC	Refuse collection	598			
21	Resources	refuse collection	EHDC	Refuse collection	598	2300	282.4	
22	Council	NHB	BTFC	Grant fireworks	3500.00			NHB
23	Amenities	Churchyard maintenance	CGS	Churchyard maintenance	306.00	8000.00	5705.00	
24	Resources	Hospitality	Petty Cash	Hospitality Civic Service	13.90			
25	Resources	Hospitality	Petty Cash	Hospitality remembrance day	14.05	1500.00	288.64	
26	Amenities	Dog/Litter	County Supplies	Bin bags	16.85			
27	Amenities	Dog/Litter	Barclaycard	dispenser bags	248.00	3000.00	-1074.18	
28	Resources	Communications	BT	Broadband/landline	49.94	750.00	350.48	
29	Resources	Cleaning	Barclaycard	Cleaning	10.79			
30	Resources	Cleaning	Barclaycard	Cleaning	12.50			
31	Resources	Cleaning	Barclaycard	Cleaning	36.64	700.00	267.01	
32	Resources	Electricity	British Gas	Electricity	254.41	7000.00	4670.60	
33	Resources	Software	Sage	Support	23.20	750.00	-224.96	
34	Resources	Copier	Sharp	Copier maint/lease	84.56	350.00	97.87	
35	<b>INCOME</b>							
36	17/10/2022	Kashec	Rent	248.00	01/11/2022	Regency House Publ.	Rent	111.00
37	28/10/2022	HMRC	VAT refund	2859.33	02/11/2022	AK Comms	Rent	403.00
38	28/10/2022	Kashec	Rent	240.00	03/11/2022	JWS	Rent	247.50
39	31/10/2022	Brainstorm	Rent	304.00	03/11/2022	Nutrition Cons	Rent	273.00
40	01/11/2022	Ecomal	Rent	150.00	04/11/2022	Carers	Hire	35.00