

BURGHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of the Parish Council was held virtually on Thursday 7th January 2021, commencing at 7.45pm.

Present: Mr T Ansell (Chairman), Mrs J Ansell, Mr P Lawrence, Ms A Gallagher, Miss M Cresser, Dr R Longton, Mr D Godwin, Mrs C Jackson-Doerge, Mr N Morse, Mr I Macfarlane, Ms L Sharp, Mr C Greaves, Mr B Neilson, Mr D Godding, Mrs S Awberry, Mr I Morrin, Mr B Neilson (arrived 19.54pm)

In Attendance: Clerk to the Parish Council, Assistant Clerk,

Apologies: All members were present

Open Meeting

No questions were presented due to no members of the public being present.

1.01 To report, approve and record apologies for absence (and the reasons) from members of the Parish Council

No apologies for absence were presented from members.

2.01 Declaration of any personal or financial interests

No declarations were made by members in relation to a personal or financial interest in any specific matter on the agenda for consideration.

3.01 Applications for Dispensations

There were no items upon the agenda that necessitated a member to present a written request for dispensations for a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest.

4.01 Minutes of the last Parish Council meeting

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 5 November 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

5.01 Clerks update

The Clerk provided a written report, advised that all necessary measures had been implemented in relation to the national lockdown imposed on Monday 4th January 2021.

6.01 To receive a verbal report from the Chairman

The Chairman advised that he had not attended anything since the last meeting.

7.01 Questions to the chairman previously submitted in writing

The following question was presented to the Chairman by Cllr I Macfarlane:

“Over the past 6 months the Council has received a significant number of individual questions from 4 members of the public. I understand that the Clerk has drafted a response or given advice in respect of every one of these questions. Whilst it is acknowledged that every elector should be able to ask questions of the Council, I would like to enquire as to the cost of drafting these responses, including time and hours? Furthermore, I would like to ask the Council if they consider this to be an effective use of public resources, specifically at a time of extreme worry and concern during a global pandemic?”

Members expressed concern, with the Chairman requesting that a detailed report is prepared, confirming the time spent and associated costs to date for presentation at the next meeting.

8.01 To receive a report from a District Councillor

A written report was previously circulated by District Cllr G Bridgeman.

District Cllr R Longton provided a verbal report to members of items of note.

A request was presented for clarification to be sought from WBC as to the level of additional required funding identified within their draft budget.

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9.01 To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Infrastructure Committee held on 26 November 2020 and approve the recommendations therein

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of Infrastructure Committee held on 26 November 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

i) To receive the plans for the proposed footway at Reading Road/Primrose Croft

Members expressed their support for the proposed footway as presented.

10.01 To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Community Committee held on 12 November 2020 and approve the recommendations there in

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of the Communications Committee held on 12 November 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

11.01 To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Asset Management Committee held on 19 November 2020 and approve the recommendations there in

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of the Asset Management Committee held on 19 November 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

ii) To receive an update in relation to the refurbishment works at the village hall

Members were verbally updated of progress to date in relation to the refurbishment works required at the village hall. Works are scheduled to commence on Monday 11th January 2021 for a period of 20 weeks. The village hall car park will be closed, at the request of the contractors, due to health & safety reasons.

12.01 To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Communications Committee held on the 19 November 2020 and approve the recommendations there in

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of the Communications Committee held on 19 November 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

13.01 To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Governance & Finance Committee held 4 November 2020 approve the recommendations there in

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of the Governance & Finance Committee held on 4 November 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

i) To receive the results of the public consultation in relation to the application for a PWL (Public Works Loan) and proposed precept increase

Members noted the report presented following public consultation for the application of a Public Works Loan (PWL), noting that 80% of respondents were in favour of the parish council applying for a PWL, and 73% of respondents were in favour of the increase in precept required for the refurbishment works at the village hall.

ii) To resolve the amount of precept to be served on West Berkshire District Council for the financial year commencing 1st April 2021

Consideration was given to the amount of precept to be served upon West Berkshire Council. In arriving at the required amount, members were reminded of the need to ensure that the general balances, aside from those earmarked for specific purposes, were maintained in compliance with current requirements.

Resolved: that a precept for the sum of £281,497, be served upon West Berkshire Council for the year commencing 1 April 2021.

Proposed by Cllr I Macfarlane, seconded by Cllr C Greaves and resolved unanimously.

Members noted the increase on last year's precept of 2.3% due to the application for a Public Works Loan of £100,000 and requested that local residents are advised via an infographic's poster in the next parish newsletter.

iii) To receive an update following the decision to invoke the Habitual & Vexatious Complainant policy

Members were advised of the decision taken by the Governance & Finance Committee to invoke the Habitual & Vexatious Complaints Policy on two counts. The complainants have

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been informed of the decision accordingly. A request for an internal investigation has been presented by one of the complainants which is being implemented accordingly.

14.01 Financial Matters

- i) Parish Council Bank Account Reconciliation Statement as 31 December 2020
The accounts reconciliation statements for the month ending 31 December 2020 were noted, being appended to the minutes.
- ii) Accounts for Payment
Items for payment, shown on the list attached to the minutes, were noted and as such sums are to be debited to the account of the Parish Council.
- iii) Village Hall Bank Account Reconciliation Statement as 31 December 2020
The accounts reconciliation statements for the month ending 31 December 2020 were noted, being appended to the minutes.
- iv) Accounts for Payment
Items for payment, shown on the list attached to the minutes, were noted and as such sums are to be debited to the account of the Village Hall.

15.01 To receive brief verbal reports from Parish Council Representatives attending meetings of Outside Bodies to which they have been appointed

Cllr Dr R Longton advised of his attendance at the AWE Liaison meeting, highlighting the success of the apprentice scheme.

Cllr T Ansell attended the Remembrance Day parade held, socially distanced due to lockdown.

Cllr D Longton advised of his attendance at the BMNAG meeting.

16.01 To note the minutes received for the BMNAG meeting held on 25 November 2020

Members noted the minutes, as presented, for the BMNAG meeting held on 25 November 2020. Members were advised of parking being proposed at the end of Bunces Lane to alleviate parents parking on Hollybush Lane.

17.01 To request items from the Committee Chairman requiring any action by the Communications Committee

No items were identified by the Committee Chairman for promotion or publication.

18.01 Matters for Future Discussion

Platinum Jubilee Celebrations in 2022.

19.01 Items for information

No further items for information.

20.01 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC:

To resolve, pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and the press leave the meeting during consideration of the following:

Close of meeting at 20.35pm