

BURGHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of the Parish Council was held virtually on Thursday 4th February 2021, commencing at 7.45pm.

Present: Mr T Ansell (Chairman), Mrs J Ansell, Mr P Lawrence, Ms A Gallagher, Miss M Cresser, Mr D Godwin, Mr N Morse, Mr I Macfarlane, Ms L Sharp, Mr D Godding, Mrs S Awberry, Mr B Neilson, Dr R Longton (arrived at 8.00pm) Mrs C Jackson-Doerge (arrived at 8.20pm)
In Attendance: Clerk to the Parish Council, Assistant Clerk,
Apologies: Mr C Greaves, Mr I Morrin

Open Meeting

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

1.02 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.

2.02 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.

3.02 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.

4.02 Minutes of the last Parish Council meeting

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 7 January 2021 be approved as a true and accurate record.

5.02 Clerks update

The Clerk provided a brief verbal report to members.

6.02 To receive a verbal report from the Chairman

The Chairman advised of his attendance at Wellington Cottage to determine the land boundaries and progress the encroachments issues with the solicitor accordingly.
The Chairman also advised of his attendance at the village hall for a site meeting with the architects and builders to determine progress to date.
The Chairman expressed his Congratulations to the Parish Clerk in obtaining her First-Class Honours Degree in Community Governance. Further congratulations were expressed in securing grant funding of £34,000 towards the refurbishment works at the village hall. Congratulations were expressed to the assistant clerk in securing grant funding of £1,000 for the installation of a defibrillator at Co-op.

7.02 Questions to the chairman previously submitted in writing

No written questions were submitted to the Chairman prior to the meeting.

8.02 To receive a report confirming the time spent by the Clerk, and associated costs to date, in responding to Freedom of Information requests and email requests for information

Members received the report presented by the Clerk noting the time, and associated costs in responding to Freedom of Information and email requests. **(Appendix A)**

9.02 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.

10.02 To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Infrastructure Committee held on 7 January and 28 January 2021 and approve the recommendations therein

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of Infrastructure Committee held on 7 January and 28 January 2021 be approved as a true and correct record.
Members noted the recommendation presented for a donation of £165be presented to the Methodist Church to assist with required signage for residents to utilise the parking area whilst the village hall car park remains shut.

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- i) To give consideration to the future development of the NDP

The NDP group have been asked to prepare and present a detailed argument to the Infrastructure committee regarding the value in the continuation of the NDP. A recommendation is to be presented to full council at the next meeting.

11.02 To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Community Committee held on 14 January 2021 and approve the recommendations there in

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of the Community Committee held on 14 January 2021 be approved as a true and correct record.

- i) To note the decision to reinstate an allotments sub-committee

Members noted the decision to reinstate an allotments sub-committee. The Terms of Reference for the sub-committee are to be reviewed to determine the overall remit and role of the sub-committee. Membership is also to be determined alongside parish councillor representation.

12.02 To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Asset Management Committee held on 21 January 2020 and approve the recommendations there in

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of the Asset Management Committee held on 21 January 2021 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 commenced on Monday 11th January 2021 for 20 weeks. The village hall car park remains closed due to health & safety reasons.

13.02 Financial Matters

- i) Parish Council Bank Account Reconciliation Statement as 31 January 2021

The accounts reconciliation statements for the month ending 31 January 2021 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 January 2021

The accounts reconciliation statements for the month ending 31 January 2021 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.

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

Cllr Cresser advised a virtual meeting had been held with the Burghfield & Mortimer Volunteer Bureau.

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

Members requested the following items were to be included within the next newsletter: Village Hall update, The 6 Bells, Meals for NHS, Skate Park refurbishment, Fencing at Auclum Green.

16.02 Matters for Future Discussion

Platinum Jubilee Celebrations in 2022.

17.02 Items for information

No further items for information.

18.02 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 20.32pm

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Appendix A:

Report on time spent responding to FOI's (Freedom of Information Requests) and Emails requesting specific information

Overview:

The following question was presented to the Chairman at the January full council meeting:

“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 requested a report outlining the times and associated costs.

Requests received:

To date the following have been received:

Number of questions requiring specific or detailed information	229
Total number of hours spent answering queries raised	183
Total cost to the parish:	£8,549

The split of requests received is as follows:

Freedom of Information requests	64
Email request for specific or detailed information	128
Formal Complaint	34
Total:	256