

Bunbury Parish Council

MINUTES

of the meeting held at The Jubilee Pavilion, Bunbury, on

Wednesday 11th October 2023 at 7.20pm

Present: Councillors: Linda Barton, Pamela Brookfield (Chair), Peter Gorman, Nick Parker, Richard Slater, Mike Thomas and Andrew Thomson

In attendance: Maximilian Clay - Clerk to the Council
CEC Councillor Becky Posnett (part)
One member of the public

Oct23-1. Apologies

Cllr Bottomley had sent apologies and the reason for absence was approved.

Oct23-2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensation Considerations

There were no declarations of interest.

Oct23-3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Council resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on the 13th September 2023 were a true record and that the Chair be authorised to sign them as such.

Oct23-4. Unitary Authority Councillor Report

Borough Cllr Posnett reported that Cheshire East Council is under severe financial pressure. In addition to the initial budgetary deficit of £26m at the start of year, to have been addressed through cost savings, has been added to by £12.8m, exacerbated by substantial interest payments on debt relating to SEND expenditure. This is resulting in further cut backs and service reviews, including grass cutting, recycling centres and car parking charges (proposals for increases were currently out for consultation). The new charged-for garden waste scheme would require a 60% take-up to be financially viable and did not address the statutory requirement for the council to make proper arrangements for the collection of food waste. There is also a review of the estate which may lead to the relocation of operations from Sandbach to other, existing, offices.

CEC Cllr Posnett also reported that she had chased up the lack of drainage clearance on School Lane and that she would be representing CEC at the Remembrance Day service in Bunbury.

Oct23-5. Public Forum

No matters were raised.

Oct23-6. Members' Reports & Items for Future Agendas

- ◆ Cllr Thomson reported that the Allotments Working Group would be meeting in the week beginning the 23rd October.
- ◆ Cllrs Barton and Slater reported that all had been organised for the Re-Start a Heart sessions on the 14th October. The Clerk added that fifteen people had signed up so far.
- ◆ Cllrs Barton and Slater reported that the defibrillator cabinet at the Village Hall seemed to be allowing water in. Cllr Slater would try to resolve the problem by drilling a drainage hole in the cabinet.
- ◆ Cllr Gorman reported that he was publicising potential dates for the public meeting to achieve Objective 1 of the neighbourhood plan and was planning to have the Autumn Newsletter ready for distribution by the 27th November; this would mean that he would be looking for contributions at the next meeting. Write-ups of the forthcoming bulb-planting and Re-Start a Heart training were suggested.

- ◆ Cllr Parker (as Chair of the Playing Fields Charity) reported that grass cutting had been less frequent than normal but that it would be unertaken in the coming week.
- ◆ Cllr Brookfield reported that the buld planting in around the play area woodland would be going ahead on the 19th October, with 22 Year 3 children from the school participating.

Oct23-7. Planning

a. Responses to Application Consultations:

i. 23/3662N - The Old Methodist Chapel, Bunbury Lane, Bunbury

New four bed dwelling to the rear of the property on the car park.

In discussion a number of points were made:

- ◆ The house is now cramped on the site (as the site has been made smaller and the house moved east, as compared to the previously refused application), such that the proposed house abuts Hurst Close itself. The house would therefore be even closer to the single storey houses to the south-east, on Hurst Close, and therefore be out of scale and harmony with the area.
- ◆ The proposed position of the house hard onto Hurst Close and the access to the site is proposed by means of a new opening on the south eastern side of the development, onto Hurst Close. Both these factors would result in loss of established hedging, if not the loss of all the hedging.
- ◆ While the application states that there will 8 parking spaces there would actually be just enough room for two cars;
- ◆ The proposed opening is on a 95 degree bend in the road. This would create a serious danger because Hurst Close is the only access to the car park serving the playing fields, play area and Pavilion, and is the main pedestrian access.
- ◆ The proposed treatment of the north-eastern boundary is unclear but is significant because a public right of way passes alongside it. This path is extremely narrow and the current low wall allows light and free passage along it. Only the retention of a low wall would allow the path to continue to be used safely and confidently.

For all these reasons the Council resolved to object to the proposal.

b. Updates on Application Consultations considered previously:

23/2313N – Methodist Chapel. The previous application for two houses on the current site of the Methodist Chapel had been refused.

23/2511N – Foxdales. The application to demolish modern extensions and then re-extend had been refused.

23/1761N – Old School, College Lane. The application for Listed Building Consent for the installation of solar panels on the roof had been refused.

Oct23-8. Play Area Track

Two quotations had been obtained for the work one for over £12,000 plus VAT and the other for £4,500 including VAT (i.e.£3,750 excluding VAT). The Council resolved to accept the second quotation and to allow up to £4,000 excluding VAT for the project.

Oct23-9. Councillor Code of Conduct

Following discussion and clarification of a number of points, the Council resolved to adopt the Code of Conduct as drafted.

Oct23-10. D-Day 80

In discussion it was agreed that beacons are generally lit on Beeston Hill to mark such occasions and that as the day fell on a Thursday no major event would be appropriate. Cllr Gorman would raise the possibility of adopting D-Day 80 as the theme for next year's Village Day and the Chair would highlight the occasion to the local Royal British Legion but the Council resolved to take no other action.

Oct23-11. Annual Insurance

The Clerk informed the meeting that he had been able to get the quotation discussed at the previous meeting reduced by £200, to £4099.19 and that he had therefore renewed the insurance in accordance with the previous discussion

Oct23-12. Correspondence and Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported that:

- ♦ Cheshire East Council is holding consultations on parking charges and the procurement of non-commercial bus services. The Council resolved not to offer submissions but to leave it open to individual councillors to respond if they wished.
- ♦ The potholes on Wyche Lane will be repaired between 31st October to Friday 3rd November and the road will be closed then.
- ♦ A resident had reported that a lampost near the church had been smothered by vegetation and that, as a result, there is no light available. The Clerk is investigating and will follow up.
- ♦ He had prepared a summary of the process for the Public Forum – he invited comments from Members.
- ♦ Delivery of the cabinet for the defibrillator at the Dysary was due shortly.

Oct23-13. Remembrance Wreath

After brief discussion it was resolved to purchase a wreath for remembrance day for up to £45 and that the Chair would place it as part of the Remembrance Day service.

Oct23-14. Finance and Governance

a. Schedule of Receipts and Payments

The schedule of receipts and payments was received and the payments were approved by resolution.

b. Conclusion of Audit

The Council received a report of the conclusion of audit. Because the internal auditor had omitted to tick one of the boxes on the annual return, relating to satisfactory governance, the auditors stated that the Council should seek assurance that governance had been conducted satisfactorily. The internal auditor had confirmed that the absence of a tick had been an oversight and that he was satisfied as to governance arrangements.

Oct23-15. Items for WhatsApp Bulletin

The following items were identified for communication via the WhatsApp Group:

Renovation of the Playing Field track, the allotments group and the Objective I meeting.

Reserved Business

Oct23-16. Staff Matters - Maintenance

The Clerk reported that Andy Fairclough, who carries out general maintenance work for the Council, would be taking up a new job and so would be unable to continue with the maintenance contract with the Council. The possibility of merging the contract with the Lengthsman contract was a possibility as the reliability of the current Lengthsman contractor had been poor. Several possible alternative contractors were suggested and it was resolved that, once formal notice had been received from Andy Fairclough, they would be approached and a notice put out inviting interest in the role.

The meeting closed at 9.23pm

Signed as a true record by authority of the Council

Chair

Date