

## **BURTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the monthly meeting held in the Jubilee Hall, Houghton, and also online via the Zoom videoconferencing platform, on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2023, 7pm.**

**Present:** Cllrs Robin Howells, John Evans, Scott Sinclair, Laurence Price, Paddy McNamara (Chairman), Vicky White, Nia Phillips, Peter Griffiths, John Mathias; Peter Horton (Clerk).

**Apologies:** C'llrs Fiona Hart, Derek Jones

### **Declarations of known interests**

None.

### **Opportunity for public representation on tabled agenda items**

Two local residents were present to raise issues concerning the boundaries of common land in Houghton. They were concerned that some maps showed the boundaries inaccurately, and that possibly the boundaries were threatened by local activity. The mentioned that vegetation on a bridleway had been cut back, and made comments concerning where they understood the boundary should be. They also raised concerns over a large Ash tree on the common, which they felt represented a safety concern, and should be felled. It was thought to be on the common land, jointly owned by PCC / BCC.

Matter to be tabled for discussion in June. In the meantime, the Clerk to investigate responsibility for the felling of the Ash tree as a H&S issue.

### **Approval of minutes of the April 2023 monthly meeting**

The minutes were approved as written (proposer C'llr John Evans, seconder C'llr Robin Howells), and held by the Clerk for subsequent signature by the Chairman.

### **Matters arising**

**Litter bins, Houghton.** P.C.C. had said they would schedule the work to relocate / replace the bins into their work programme, and would advise further in due course.

**Public toilets Burton Ferry.** Members were unhappy with the response received from P.C.C., in which they had refused to supply a copy of the legal covenant underpinning the provision of toilet facilities at the site. They felt it was rude and unprofessional. Clerk to pass the matter to C'llr Danny Young, seek his advice, ask him to take the matter up in P.C.C., and seek more information from them on the rationale for their refusal, citing concerns over the state of the supposed 'partnership' between P.C.C. and the community council. Possible Freedom of Information request to be held in abeyance for the time being.

**Playing Field.** This had been cut by George Bevan as requested. Members felt that it would need cutting again before the Coronation weekend. Clerk to email George Bevan to request this.

**One Voice Wales.** The Clerk confirmed that membership had been suspended.

**Telegraph pole and overhead line in Playpark.** The Clerk confirmed that he had been in touch with BT. The site had been visited by them, and they had advised that they would put in hand the necessary work.

### **Plans**

There were no plans for consideration this month.

## **Correspondence**

- 1) P.C.C. – bin changes in Houghton – dealt with in ‘Matters Arising’ above.
- 2) P.C.C. – Refusal to supply documentation concerning toilet provision – dealt with in ‘Matters Arising’ above.
- 3) Local resident – request to get involved in community garden project at Hill Crescent – dealt with in agenda item below.
- 4) Zurich – Insurance renewal – Members accepted the quotation (proposer C’llr Nia Phillips, seconder C’llr John Mathias). It was noted that the insurance schedule would need updating when the new playpark was opened.
- 5) Denise Mayr – Internal audit report for 2022/23 accounts – dealt with in ‘Accounts’ below.
- 6) P.C.C. – Update on progress with preparation for highway improvement schemes for Houghton area – noted. Clerk to request specific information on the proposals being prepared.
- 7) P.C.C. (via C’llr Danny Young) – details on proposals for pavement works in Houghton and Burton for the current year – Members had no objections to the Houghton proposals. Clerk to contact C’llr Danny Young and ask him to request further details of the proposals for Burton.

## **Accounts**

### **Supplementary decision to be made on Member allowances**

Regarding the new ‘consumables’ allowance, Members voted to pay this as a lump sum (£52 per Member for the 2023/24 financial year), to be repaid proportionately if member should leave during the year, and to be paid in conjunction with the regular member allowance (proposer C’llr Paddy McNamara, seconder C’llr Laurence Price). Any member wishing to waive the consumables allowance and / or the regular member allowance would need to notify the Clerk in writing. Payments to be made in May or as soon thereafter as convenient. All Members were asked to let the Clerk have their bank details, in order to facilitate BACS payments.

### **Payments**

Bateman’s Gardening Services (April)	:	£ 60-00
Birch Utilities (tree-felling)	:	£4560-00
Denise Mayr (internal Audit 2022/23)	:	£ 90-00
George Bevan (grass-cutting)	:	£ 80-00
Zurich (insurance)	:	£ 714-24
Laurence Price (member allowance / consumables allowance)	:	£ 208-00
John Evans (member allowance / consumables allowance)	:	£ 208-00
John Mathias (member allowance / consumables allowance)	:	£ 208-00
Fiona Hart (member allowance / consumables allowance)	:	£ 208-00
Scott Sinclair (consumables allowance only)	:	£ 52-00

The above payments were approved (proposer C’llr John Evans, seconder C’llr Robin Howells).

### **Income**

£100 cheque from B.D. Summons and noted in April minutes still with C’llr Paddy McNamara.

### **Internal audit**

The Clerk informed Members that the internal audit of the 2022/23 accounts had been completed, and a report received and circulated to all members. The report was accepted (proposer C’llr Robin Howells, seconder C’llr John Evans).

## **Any necessary discussions of arrangements for Coronation Community event to be held in Houghton Playing Field**

Members were very appreciative of all the work done in preparation for the event. C’lIr Nia Phillips reported that matters were well in hand, and arrangements for use of the Hall had also been made.

C’lIr Scott Sinclair mentioned that a local group of young residents had agreed to assist with fund-raising, by distributing flyers for the event. Members appreciated their contribution. As a general comment, C’lIr Paddy McNamara expressed concerns about a possible lack of community spirit in the area. It was thought that the forthcoming Coronation event might be an opportunity to test this. Members thought that a discussion of this possible trend could be the focus of an agenda item in a future meeting.

## **Discussion of progress on proposed project at Houghton Play area**

**Formal playpark installation contract.** C’lIr Paddy McNamara confirmed that he had verbally given the go-ahead to Adventure Playgrounds Wales, and they expected to commence work within 9 weeks. Clerk to formally sign the contract order and return to A.P.W. accordingly.

The benches installed by Nik Prenga were now complete. In addition, C’lIr Paddy McNamara had three other benches that would need to go in the wild area, and require small concrete pads, this to be arranged at some future point.

Fencing work was in hand.

C’lIr Laurence Price asked if he could arrange to lay turf on the bank where the Leylandii trees had been, to delineate the boundary. C’lIr Paddy McNamara to look at this with C’lIr Laurence Price, but in principle Members were content with this proposal.

Regarding the old slide, C’lIr John Mathias to confirm the arrangements for the removal of the slide and surrounding matting by a local resident, who had asked if he could have the slide and matting. C’lIr Paddy McNamara to ask C’lIr Fiona Hart to add this onto the overall risk assessment for the project. C’lIr John Mathias to confirm the detailed arrangements with the Clerk, for information.

Regarding press releases for the project, Members decided to arrange these at the conclusion of the project.

## **Discussion of development of land at Hill Crescent for community use**

C’lIr Paddy McNamara reported that the matter was in hand with P.C.C. Property Services / Legal departments, who were currently dealing with the final formal agreements and lease preparation. In the meantime, P.C.C. had also forwarded a list of local residents who were interested in getting involved with the development of the site.

Clerk to ask C’lIr Danny Young to make any efforts possible in P.C.C. to expedite the grant of the formal lease.

## **Discussion of National Grid Community grant scheme**

Members decided to leave any application for this grant scheme in abeyance.

## **Discussion of responsibility for maintenance of pump adjacent to Burton Church**

C’lIr John Mathias confirmed that he now intended to leave the pump in its current location in the field. He had removed ivy from it, and cleaned it up. It was accessible from the adjacent church land. He confirmed an intention to put a new metal gate there, and carry out necessary repairs to the stonework / pointing around the pump. It was confirmed that the pump was understood to be a community well.

## **Update on Houghton road improvement scheme**

Dealt with in ‘Correspondence’ above.

### **Any other business**

**Dog-fouling.** C’lir Robin Howells reported an apparent improvement in the situation with dog-fouling in the New Wells Road area, possibly due to recent publicity regarding the matter.

**Junction of Ashdale Lane and Main Road.** C’lir Vicky White reported serious lack of visibility on the left hand side of the junction when emerging from Ashdale Lane, due to an encroaching hedge on the junction. Clerk to report to P.C.C. as a H&S issue.

**Tree-planting on verge in Church Road.** C’lir John Mathias reported that a tree had been planted in the verge on the main road near the junction with Church Road. Agenda for June to discuss possible problems that could result from this.

**Potholes.** Members reported ongoing problems with potholes around the junction between the main road and Church Road in Burton. Clerk to report to P.C.C.

**Impending speed limit changes.** C’lir Laurence Price asked for an agenda item to be tabled to consider the effect that forthcoming speed limit changes might have along the main road, and the possibilities for influencing the approach to future speed limits along the main road. Agenda item to be tabled for June. Clerk to try and get information in the meantime from P.C.C. on the approach currently envisaged.

**Badger Wood.** The Clerk confirmed that he had contacted P.C.C. to request a new planning enforcement investigation, and also the Police Rural Crimes Officer to request that the matter be looked into. The Rural Crimes Officer had confirmed that the matter was already under investigation by them in conjunction with N.R.W.

**P.C.C. Section 106 payments in connection with residential development.** C’lir Fiona Hart had been led to understand that Section 106 payments made by developers to P.C.C. in connection with new development being undertaken could be directly accessed by local communities. She understood that this had recently happened in Hook. Matter to be tabled for discussion in June, and Clerk to make enquiries regarding the matter with P.C.C and Hook C.C.

The meeting ended at 8-20pm. Next meeting to be held at 7pm on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2023.