

BURSTOW PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Meeting of Burstow Parish Council held** on Tuesday 6th October 2020 at 7.00pm in the Centenary Hall, Smallfield

OPEN FORUM: No members of the public attended

Attendance: Chairman Ian Wates, Cllr Ray Holdsworth, Eddie Lord, Fern Warwick-Ching, Andrew Gilbert, Ashleigh Bolton, Linda Herwig and Debbie Hale

Dist Cllr Harry Fitzgerald, Clerk to Council

Dist Cllr Kevin Bourne, Dist Cllr Colin White

- 001 Apologies received from Cllr Brock for reasons noted in the attendance book and accepted by Council and also from County Cllr Steeds
- 002 Cllr Lord declared an interest in Item 12 – To discuss and consider changes to the allotment charging schedule as he is aware that a number of Worth Parish residents are allotment tenants. Council accepted his declaration but did not consider it necessary for him to withdraw from proceedings.
- 003 None required
- 004 The minutes of Tuesday 10th March 2020 were signed as a true record of the meeting
- 005 Chairman's Announcements – The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and said how lovely it was to see all present. He commented that, while Council has operated throughout the pandemic, virtual meetings did not allow for the same level of interaction as those taking place physically.

Standing Orders suspended

- 006 Dist Cllr Bourne – he is hopeful that the proposed changes to the car park lease will get approval from the school governors at their next meeting. Until now the sticking point has been the duration of the lease. The Parish Council needs to borrow money to build the carpark and so needs a long lease over which to repay the loan. Having a 'buy back' clause should enable the governors to sanction a long lease agreement.
Dist Cllr Fitzgerald – he has been contacted by a resident concerned about the removal of the Chapel Road telephone box. The resident was worried that people may struggle to contact the emergency services via mobile as there is very poor reception locally. Cllr Fitzgerald reassured the resident that mobile providers all work together to ensure any 999 calls are patched through on any available network regardless of who provides the phone.
Cllr Fitzgerald informed Council that he is assisting with a neighbour dispute in the parish and that a Tandridge officer had been out to view a new climbing frame installed by a homeowner. The homeowner is now applying for retrospective planning consent.
He reported that as yet there is no update on the Dowlands Park planning appeal.
Dist Cllr White Informed Council he had no additional information to add other than Tandridge DC were still waiting to hear back from the Inspector regarding the proposed Local Plan.

STANDING ORDERS REINSTATED

- 007 SpeedWatch update - Cllr Bolton reported that the last Speedwatch session took place on the 6th April, before all sessions were cancelled as a consequence of the Covid-19 lockdown. In mid-July

permission was given nationally to allow the volunteer groups resume. The Smallfield group has implemented a number of safety measures such as anti-bac wipes to clean the equipment, hand sanitiser and no role swapping mid-session. Not all members have returned as yet, some have specific vulnerabilities and so have decided not to just yet. Since mid-August our volunteers have been back out on the various approved site, ensuring residents are reminded to keep within speed limits. Nationally, and across Europe, 'Project Edwards' took place for a week, commencing on the 14/9. This is a road safety awareness initiative, encouraging all road users to think about what they can do to avoid becoming involved in a fatal road traffic collision. The Police permitted the Smallfield Speedwatch group to operate from the Weatherhill Road site and Cllr Bolton will be requesting this be allowed monthly. Seven sessions were held throughout the week, the highest amount since the group began.

Speeding vehicles in the year to date – 614; of which 51 were a second offence and 10 were third time offenders. One vehicle was caught for the fourth time and the driver would be receiving a home visit from the police, hopefully re-educating them to moderate their speed.

- 008 Neighbourhood Watch update from Cllr Hale – It continues to be quiet in Burstow throughout lockdown, though tool and shed theft has continued. Surrey Police have been working closely with neighbouring police areas, to combat county lines crime. During the initial closure of schools, young people were knocking on doors asking if there was any work they could do for payment. This did cause anxiety among older residents. In early September there was damage to vehicle tyres reported and screws/nails were found strewn over part of Plough Road. Two vans thefts occurred, one in Chapel Road and the other on Plough Road. Both time three males travelling in a vehicle, stopped and attempted entry to the vehicles. One van was empty but the other had gardening tools and machinery stolen.
- 009 Correspondence – The Clerk reported that the project to retrieve resident's belongings from Fife, Scotland has been completed thanks to two volunteers who drove a van to the storage unit, stayed overnight and returned the next day. The residents are very pleased and the Parish Council has now paid out the grants it was holding on behalf of CAB to cover most of the expense.
- 010 COMMITTEE MEETINGG– to accept the minutes of meetings since 14th January 2020
a) Planning Committee – 26/3, 9/4, 19/5, 9/6, 28/4 14/7, 15/09
- 011 To discuss and consider changes to the allotment charging schedule
Charges for the allotments has remained at £0.35 per square metre since 2012. This price applies to all tenants, regardless of where they live. The only discount available is a rate of £0.10 per square metre for Burstow residents in receipt of a state pension. It is commonplace in many other areas to set a higher fee, e.g. allotments, hall hire, and then to apply a discount for people living in the parish and a smaller discount for people living in the district or county. Some examples of authorities that have different rates for residents and non-residents are St Stephens, Leigh, Brent, Fullford, and Richmond. The discount varies from 20% to 50% for residents. Other local authorities have a policy that only residents from the area are permitted to have an allotment tenancy. Costs associated with allotments have increased over the years and been absorbed by the Council and Covid-19 restrictions have seen a significant reduction in our hall hire income. BPC needs to look at alternative means of filling the gap. One way could be to increase the basic cost of an allotment plot and then apply discounts for residents of Burstow, Tandridge and Surrey whilst charging others a higher rate. There is no requirement to provide subsidised recreational activities for non-residents. **Cllr Bolton proposed** that the new rate per square metre should be £0.50. Surrey residents will receive a 10% discount, Tandridge residents 20%, Burstow residents a 30% discount and Burstow

residents in receipt of a state pension a 40% discount on allotment rent. **Seconded by Cllr Hale.**
Carried unanimously. The new charging schedule will come into force at the end of December when next year's rent falls due. Council unanimously resolved to implement the new charging schedule. The Clerk will write to the three allotment representative asking them to disseminate the information to plot holders.

- 012 Update on affordable housing
The Clerk reported that Worth Parish Council has submitted an 'intention to bid' under asset of community value status. We are now prohibited from disposing of the land before the end of the 6-month moratorium period. This expires on the 1st January 2021 and after which we are free to sell to whomever we choose. The only exception is if we were to sell to a community interest group. The planning application was due to be decided upon at the planning meeting on Thursday 1st October. ERHA withdrew the application. Should the application be unsuccessful, Burstow PC will maintain the area but there is no intention to sell the land to anyone else and it will be kept as an amenity area and not let out as allotments.
- 013 Update on village car park from Clerk
Hopefully progress is now being made and lease terms acceptable to both the school and the parish council agreed. Earlier in, September Surrey CC arranged a site visit to walk through the plans for the road safety improvements around the junction by the school. At the meeting I was asked for an indication on when the carpark was likely to be ready and informed the Surrey officer that it was looking as though the carpark would not be built. This was because the school governors did not feel confident is offering a lease longer than 12 years, with a break clause at 8. BPC would not be permitted to borrow funds for longer than the break clause, so for eight years. The repayments on this would be unaffordable without a huge and unacceptable increase in the precept. The Surrey officer informed the School head (she was also at the site visit) that without the carpark, the road safety improvements would not work and therefore would not be carried out. As a consequence, District Councillor Bourne, who is also a school governor, has come up with a suggestion that a longer lease could be offered with the inclusion of a buy-back clause. The Council solicitor has indicated that this would be acceptable.
- 014 Update on website situation
The Council needs a new website and this needs to be compliant with all the latest government regulations, of which there are many. Our current website will continue to be operational until early next year. One web provider has given a quote that is for a fairly low start-up fee but then goes to £45 per month. Cllr Lord is very knowledgeable, as is Cllr Bolton.
Cllr Wates proposed that a working party, comprising of Cllrs Bolton and Lord and the Clerk, be allocated a budget of £1,000 to set up a new website. Seconded by Cllr Gilbert and carried unanimously by Council.
- 015 To discuss catering arrangements at the Centenary Hall
Apple & Cor asked if they could move indoors as customer footfall has dropped a lot since the weather turned colder. They are using the café and meeting room in order to maintain social distancing. BPC continues to subsidise costs in order to benefit our residents. Currently we do not charge for room hire or utilities though we do receive a variable amount each week from sale of drinks. To ensure the building remains Covid-safe, members of the public are not allowed to use the coffee vending machine. The café staff will prepare and table serve drinks on request. To cover staff costs and washing up they are charging more than the £1 but the PC receives the basic £1 for each hot drink sold. Anette and Ben have agreed to shampoo the meeting room carpet each month to help keep it clean.
Cllr Bolton suggested the parish council makes regular social media posts to let residents know the café is now indoors and open.

016 Update by Clerk on Gingerbread House nursery

The Ofsted registration is proceeding and we now have a unit reference number, slow but sure progress is being made. We now have five members of staff on the payroll, getting the rooms set up and ensuring all paperwork and policies are in place as well as lesson planning. Both rooms have been given a fresh coat of paint, the half glazed doors installed and the various dwarf walls built. The kitchen and hand wash areas are also ready. A significant amount of new equipment was also needed.

There will need to be some work on the outside areas to get them up-to-scratch. Planning consent has been granted for the new window and extensions to path and canopy. Once this is done some additional fencing will be required. Given the baby room is now quite light from the new glazing, unless Ofsted require the new window I would recommend that we don't put one in. Once work starts on the path and canopy, consent for the window will be 'in extant' and if a window was required at some point in the future then permission would already be in place.

Since the end of July the staff have been coming in to the nursery and carrying out a huge amount of work to ensure we are ready to accept children. I would like Council to know that they all took it upon themselves to do this voluntarily and for no pay because they are so excited to have the opportunity to work with the parish council offering a much needed facility. Without all their help there is no way we would have been able to get this far in the time available.

017 General update from the Clerk regarding Council business since the last meeting.

Vulnerable residents – since mid-March when the government advised certain groups of people to shield the Parish Council has been very active in helping not just Burstow residents but also those from Horne. Initially Tandridge DC asked if we would also help with Outwood but then a local group stepped forward and we didn't need to help. We have received the £10,000 small business grant and also £3,000 to help with the vulnerable resident support. I applied for and should receive a further £1,500 that can be used to assist residents with financial hardship due to Covid-19. Council will need to consider how this will be advertised and then funding allocated to applicants. There were 196 addresses on the shielding list and every single address received a letter outlining the help at hand and each one was visited by a volunteer to check on the residents and to offer assistance. Where regular help was needed a volunteer was paired with the person and they kept in contact directly to arrange. Gradually the help needed lessened but volunteers stand ready to help again if needed.

Hall Hire – Unsurprisingly hall hire income is way under what was predicted. Once permitted, the hall reopened at the beginning of September. Not all activities were allowed to resume and others felt that it wasn't yet safe to do so. The children's dancing school is operating on a reduced timetable, the Thursday Over 50's table tennis is taking place in bubbles of six, yoga is due to come back in October and the fitness class on a Wednesday evening is on again. Groups that have not been able to start, or have stopped again due to indoor team sport restrictions are Short Mat Bowls, Monday morning Table Tennis, Forget Me Not's, Aviation, Market, Thursday and Friday night adult dance classes, and the Thursday fitness class. Other less regular bookings such as the budgie groups and tea dances have given notice that they won't be returning until 2021 at the earliest. The NHS QR code has been downloaded and registered. We currently have three areas registered as separate entities, the main hall, the café area and the nursery. For the office we are using a register book. A 'fogging' machine and anti-viral liquid has been purchased. Currently, three times a week, the Caretaker and Keyholder 'fog' the building, ensuring that all surfaces are coated with a fine mist of anti-viral substance, ensuring the building is Covid-secure. After every activity the group leader is responsible to wiping down all 'hot' points in the room used and toilets. There have been no known cases of Covid-19 in relation to the hall.

MP's Road traffic survey – Our MP, Claire Coutinho, is launching a survey of HGV use in Burstow, Smallfield and Horne. Once we have details of when the survey is live we need to publicise as much

as possible to try and get plenty of responses. Ms Coutinho is also raising the issue of flooding in the area and has been in contact with the Chief Exec of the Environment Agency

Fruit & Veg growing - Smallfield Surgery and Horley Primary Care Network are looking to develop a space for a community project to grow fruit and vegetables, with the aim of promoting healthy eating in the area. At the moment they are looking for someone who is an experienced grower to lead the initiative. There's an advert in the latest parish magazine so if you know anyone who might be interested please signpost them to the October edition for contact details.

Surface Water pumps. Over the weekend, when there was significant rainfall, the pumps failed, leaving the car park under water. Engineers are due to visit Tuesday morning and I will update you further at the meeting.

Surrey CC's Unitary Status application – the Government has withdrawn its White Paper and so Surrey will not be seeking to become a unitary council.

Repair café – Until Covid restrictions are eased there will not be any sessions booked in.

121 Finance

To receive Schedule of Payments to be ratified and authorised, list as laid before all Councillors. At the end of the meeting, Cllrs Bolton and Holdsworth will sign the prepared cheques

Payments ratified £

Payments authorised £

Direct debits £

Unanimously authorised by Council

- 122 Urgent items – Cllr Herwig asked if there was any plan to hold a VE Day event at some point in the future, Covid-19 allowing. Council agreed that it would look to hold it at the first possible opportunity.
- Cllr Hale asked if the VE Day bench had been ordered. The Clerk reported that she had not, as she wished to check with Council if they still wanted to go ahead with the purchase when income had been so depleted. Cllr hale asked that it be put on the next agenda for discussion.
- Cllr Bolton informed Council that Liz Cutter has taken on the Chairmanship of the Flood Action Group.

Signed..... Dated.....