

Bunbury Parish Council

MINUTES

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

Wednesday 21st June 2023 at 7.20pm

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

In attendance: Maximilian Clay - Clerk to the Council
Four members of the public

Jun23-1. Apologies

No apologies were received. Cllr Anderson was absent.

Jun23-2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensation Considerations

There were no declarations of interest.

Jun23-3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Council resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on the 10th May 2023 were a true record and that the Chair be authorised to sign them as such.

Jun23-4. Unitary Authority Councillor Report

Borough Cllr Posnett was in attendance and reported that she had now been appointed to various committees. B Cllr Posnett noted that several potholes in the village had been attended to and asked that any such problems be reported to her as well as to Highways because this approach reduces the time that it takes for the work to be attended to by up to almost two weeks (8 days instead of 21 days).

B Cllr Posnett also reported that, following an inspection of the drains in School Lane it had become clear that the whole system is blocked. She is exploring the possibility of funding works for a comprehensive clearance of the drains, from her Roads budget. It was noted that this work can only be done effectively in school holiday time to ensure that full access is available.

B Cllr Posnett added that a consultation about closing the libraries for a further 1.5 days per week forms part of the current strategic review and she reported that she would be attending the Planning Committee meeting scheduled for the 28th June and had registered to speak against the proposal for development at Parkside, Bunbury Lane.

Jun23-5. Public Forum

A member of the public thanked B Cllr Posnett and Cllr Thomson for all their work relating to the Parkside application and had been disappointed to see that the Officer report to the Committee was still recommending approval. She felt that the report was partial and selective in its reference to cases and policies.

Another member of the public spoke to reiterate the points that he had made about the demand for allotments at a previous meeting, and which had led the Council to consider the possibility of providing allotments, and to thank the Council for taking the matter forward.

Jun23-6. Members' Reports & Items for Future Agendas

- ◆ Cllr Gorman said that he would make a report about Village Day at the July meeting but that it had gone very well. He added that a creative workshop for children at the school had taken place and noted that this had been budgeted for payment by the Council.
- ◆ Cllr Barton reported that the Trees working Group had been surveying all the trees in the village and the Group would be meeting soon to develop its proposals.
- ◆ Cllr Brookfield reported that the Community police officer, Sharon Jones, had spoken to the developers working on the site by the medical centre about the problem parking on the lane

and as a result tape and cones had been put in place. This had improved the situation considerably but it was noted that work was now also being undertaken on the other side of the lane and that this had the potential to cause problems too.

Jun23-7. Planning

a. Responses to Application Consultations:

i. 23/1697N and 23/1761N - The Old School, College Lane, Bunbury

Listed Building Consent and Planning, respectively, for Proposed Installation of 14 Solar Panels to be installed to the roof pitch of existing dwelling.

During discussion some Councillors felt that the conservation aspect of the application should weigh more heavily (in terms of protecting the appearance of a listed building and the conservation area) while others felt that the drive for sustainability was more important. It was agreed by all that both positions were reasonable and that that such tensions were likely to come to bear on applications more and more. After debate, the Council resolved to object on conservation grounds.

ii. 23/1787N - Hygarth, Wyche Lane, Bunbury:

Create dormer loft conversion to the rear, to create additional bedroom living space. Partial render to the rear of the property and of created dormer, in keeping with the current front elevations.

This application had been determined (permission granted) before the meeting . It was noted that in an effort to reduce the average waiting time for decisions, the Planning Authority was sometimes dealing with applications that it seemed to consider straight forward with great speed and that this sometimes led to applications being determined before the Council could consider them and respond. The Clerk would write to the Head of planning to point out the problem.

iii. 23/1998N - Heath Farm, Whitchurch Road, Bunbury:

Change of Use of an existing barn to form a residential dwelling, a detached garage and associated infrastructure works (re-submission of application 21/0997N).

The Council resolved that the application was in line with policy and that no objection would be made.

b. Updates on Application Consultations considered previously:

It was noted that the applications for **Parkside** and the **Methodist Chapel** had still not been considered but that Parkside was scheduled to be considered on the 28th June. Cllr Thomson and the Clerk would attend the meeting and the Council would encourage as many residents as possible to attend too, as it was hoped that this would emphasise the strength of resident opposition to the proposal that had been noted at previous meetings. Further to the points made in the Public Forum it was noted that the Officer report did not seem to have considered the matter from the neutral point of view that should be expected and this would form part of the challenge when Cllr Thomson speaks at the Planning Committee.

Jun23-8. WhatsApp Group

Discussion of the Council's WhatsApp group was deferred to the next meeting so that Cllr Anderson could contribute.

Jun23-9. Allotments

The Council received a report from Cllr Thomson which had been circulated in advance of the meeting and which set out the position in relation to the provision of allotments. Local Councils (i.e. Parish and Town Councils) are under a duty to provide allotments if feasible and the suggestion had been made that the plot of land by Tweddle Close could be suitable.

It was noted that, were this land to be used for the purpose, it would need clearing because it was thought that during the construction of the nearby houses, a considerable amount of rubble and waste from the site was deposited on the surface.

Various aspects of the idea were discussed and it was also noted that grants may be available towards the costs that could arise and that the Allotments Society provides useful guidance, as well as templates that could be used further down the line. The Council resolved to form a Working Group to look at the detail and report back to Council - the group would be composed

of Cllrs Thomson, Barton, Gorman and Slater, the Clerk, and up to three residents interested in allotments, who would be recruited to complete the group.

Jun23-10. Correspondence and Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported that:

- He had been researching for a host for the gov.uk domain that the Council had decided to migrate to for its email account but had not yet found the right interface.
- Cheshire East Council had put forward a proposal to reduce the number of planning committees – at present there is one for the north of the county borough, one for the south and a strategic committee that considers large-scale proposals. The stated objective is to reduce the demands on officer time, in an attempt to help clear the lengthy backlog of applications. In discussion it was felt that the proposal would either give rise to longer meetings, and therefore not save any Officer time, or would mean fewer applications being considered through the democratic process. The latter was felt to be especially undesirable in the context of recent experience of the planning process and the Council resolved to make a submission asking for the proposal not to be implemented.
- The Library consultation mentioned by B Cllr Posnett at Item 4, above, is open for comment and Councillors can contribute as individuals via the Cheshire East Council website.

The Clerk also needed to report on a matter relating to the contract for lengthsman services but this needed to be done confidentially and so would be discussed at the end of the meeting, under reserved business.

Jun23-11. Chair's Cup

Cllr Parker reported that the plinth on the base of the cup had become too small to accommodate any further plaques with the names of the annual recipients and he proposed that the cost of a larger plinth with room for new plaques (and to which the existing plaques would be transferred) be investigated and the cost brought forward to the next meeting for approval. The Council resolved to proceed in this way.

Jun23-12. Defibrillators

Cllr Barton had submitted a written report in advance of the meeting which was received by the Council. In discussion of the proposals it was noted that the Cricket Club was not a suitable location for a defibrillator intended for general use because it could not be accessed for much of the time; it was therefore agreed to investigate alternatives, possibly an external wall of the school.

In relation to the proposal for a heated cabinet for the defibrillator at the Dysart, it was resolved that the Council will purchase an unlocked version, in line with national guidelines, and that a budget of around £550 be set plus the cost of an electrician if needs be. The Dysart would be approached to see if their electrician could install the cabinet and Cllr Parker would approach an electrician to get a cost as well.

In addition, Cllr Barton reported that in October there is a national 'Restart a Heart' day (around the 16th October). The principle of doing something such as awareness drop-in sessions was agreed and she and Cllr Slater would develop a proposal for discussion at the next meeting.

Jun23-13. Play Area Annual Safety Report

The report was received by the Council and this showed that there were no major risks but a number of necessary points for maintenance. Cllrs Brookfield and Parker and the Clerk were delegated to take forward the necessary works and will meet on site and report back with a schedule of work and costs in due course.

Cllr Gorman asked whether the play area financial reserve was being held in a deposit account and it was noted that the bank account containing the play area financial reserve had been closed by Barclays due to 'inactivity' and that it will be necessary to claim the funds and have them transferred to the main account; the Clerk is instigating this process.

Jun23-14. Finance and Governance

a. Schedule of Receipts and Payments

The schedule of receipts and payments was received, together with the annual schedule of

standing orders. Two additional payments, of £120 to Tilly's for Coronation Day picnic boxes and of £300 for the cost of providing the creative workshop at the school, were added to the schedule and the Council resolved to approve the payments and the annual schedule of standing orders.

- b. Annual Risk Assessment** - The annual Risk Assessment and Statement of mitigation was considered by the Council and after questions and discussion it was resolved to approve it.
- c. Annual Accounts** - The Council received a report of the end of year process and after questions and discussion it was resolved to approve the Annual Accounts, including the Bank Reconciliation.
- d. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR):**
The Council received and resolved to approve the Statement at Part 2, Section 1 of the Annual Return and resolved to authorise the Chair to sign it on behalf of the Council;
- e. Annual Accounting Statements in AGAR form**
The Council received and resolved to approve the information provided at Part 2 Section 2 of the Annual Return and resolved to authorise the Chair to countersign it on the behalf of the Council.

Jun23-15. Co-Options

Mr Leslie Bottomley had been nominated for co-option to the Council. It was noted that Mr Bottomley had previously served as a councillor but had had to withdraw for personal reasons. The Council resolved unanimously to co-opt Mr Bottomley, with effect from the next meeting.

Jun23-16. Councillor Training

As the date previously earmarked for training had had to be used for this meeting, a new date was needed. It was noted that it is important that all Councillors attend at the same time and so, subject to confirmation that Cllr Anderson would be able to attend, it was agreed that training would be held at 7pm on the 4th October 2023 for about two hours.

Reserved Business

Jun 23-10 (Continued from above)

Lengthsman Contract - The Clerk made a report of various discussions that had taken place between him, the Contractor and the Chair. An on-site meeting is planned and the Clerk and Chair will report back about this at the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.37pm

Signed as a true record by authority of the Council

Chair

Date