

BURFORD PARISH COUNCIL

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3 Longmeadow, Burford, Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire, WR15 8DT

BURFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Burford Parish Council held on Thursday, 9 January 2025 at 7.00 pm at Burford Village Hall, Burford, Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire, WR15 8JX.

PRESENT: Cllrs. S. Kitchen (Chair), B. Thomas (Vice Chair), L. Hickling, J. Yardley and Cllr. C. Roberts

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs. G. Long (Clerk)

01/25 APOLOGIES:

Members received and noted apologies for absence from Cllr. E. Beaumont and Cllr. A. Morris due work commitments.

02/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

The Council will receive disclosures of pecuniary and personal interests from Councillors on matters to be considered.

03/25 THE MEETING WAS SUSPENDED FOR PUBLIC SESSION:

No members of the public were present.

04/25 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2024.
Members considered the Minutes of the Parish Council held on 28 November 2024.
It was proposed by Cllr. Thomas and seconded by Cllr. Yardley and unanimously.

RESOLVED:

The Minutes of the meeting of Burford Parish Council held on 28 November 2024 were confirmed as a true and accurate account of the meeting. The Minutes were duly signed by the Chair as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

05/25 FINANCE.

Members received the bank reconciliation for the period ending 31 December 2024.
The account balances as at 31 December 2024 were confirmed as:

Current Account - £5,427.07

Deposit Account - £40,726.42

It was proposed by Cllr. Kitchen, seconded by Cllr. Thomas and unanimously:

RESOLVED:

To confirm and note that the Council's bank accounts had been appropriately reconciled to the period 31 December 2024.

To consider the list of payments as circulated – proposed by Cllr. Kitchen, seconded by Cllr. Yardley, all agreed.

Payments List		31 December 2024	
Date	Recipient	Details	Amount £
03/12/2024	123 Reg	Domain Renewal	77.94
05/12/2024	Hugo Fox	Website monthly charge	11.99
05/12/2024	Burford Village Hall	Hall Hire	26.00
09/12/2024	YuEnergy	November energy use	33.40
09/12/2024	YuEnergy	November energy use	1,524.06
22/12/2024	G Long	Salary December	<u>655.27</u>
		Paid out	<u>£2,328.66</u>
		(urgent decisions)	
07/01/2025	Hugo Fox (DD)	Website monthly charge	11.99
08/01/2025	YuEnergy (DD)	October energy use	1,524.06
08/01/2025	YuEnergy (DD)	October energy use	33.40
20/01/2025	G Long	Clerk Salary January	<u>655.27</u>
		Due for payment	<u>£2,224.72</u>

Income List		31 December 2024	
Payee	Details	Amount	
10/01/2025	TSB	Interest	<u>55.77</u>
		Income	<u>£55.77</u>

RESOLVED:

To approve the schedule of payments.

c) Summary of Receipts and Payments to 31 December 2024

RESOLVED:

To note the receipts and payments summary to the period ended 31 December 2024.

06/25 PROGRESS REPORT

- a) Funding for slide for playground and fence. Burford Trust have confirmed that they will make a donation to cover the full quotation costs for the slide and fence. It is anticipated that the slide and fence will be in place before 31 March 2025.
- b) Although chased, still waiting for a quotation for the repairs/replacement of wooden slats on three benches.

07/25 RESPONSIBLE AREAS

- a) Playground – an inspection of the playground has been carried out.
- b) Lighting – Prysmian carried out the testing on all the lights and provided test certificates. There were two lights they were unable to test due to not being able to gain access, access arrangements to be sought from owners of land to enable testing to be carried out.
- c) Lighting – Prysmian to be instructed to change all high wattage lights to low wattage lights and repair/replace any lights as per the test. Proposed by Cllr. Kitchen, seconded by Cllr. Thomas and all agreed.

08/25 BUDGET AND PRECEPT

The budget and precept of £40,000 2025/26 was presented and agreed, Proposed by Cllr. Kitchen, seconded by Cllr. Thomas and all agreed.

09/25 DOMAIN NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESSES

The Parish Council's domain name has been changed to burfordparishcouncil.gov.uk. Awaiting for Hugo Fox to advise when gov.uk email address can be changed.

10/25 REPORT ON NATURE RECOVERY CONFERENCE FOR TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

See report attached.

11/25 APPLE TREES

Millenium Orchard advised that one/two apple saplings would be available for Burford parish in winter 2025/26. Advice to be sought from Millenium Orchard as to location and variety of tree(s).

12/25 PLANNING

Planning applications for consideration: 25/04548/AGR Burford Mill Farm, Burford, WR15 8HH, formalise an existing farm track to allow use of the track all year round.

13/25 TRAINING

Clerk attended a zoom course of New Clerk Finance. Clerk to attend a zoom course of Year End and Audit.

14/25 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

15/25 COUNCILLORS REPORTS AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Virtual meeting – PCC West Mercia Police. Councillors were requested to advise if there are any comments/questions to put forward at the meeting.

16/25 REPORT ON URGENT DECISIONS SINCE LAST MEETING

No urgent decisions.

17/25 CONFIRM DATE OF NEXT MEETING

20 February 2025 at 7 pm.

18/25 CLOSURE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.55 pm.

Signed: _____



Date: _____

20-02-2025

Agenda item 25/11

Key points from Nature Recovery Conference Programme 6/12/24

Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021 (the EA) amends section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (the NERCA) to replace the 'duty to conserve biodiversity' with a duty **'to conserve and enhance biodiversity'**. *The new extended duty requires public authorities to include the enhancement of biodiversity alongside conservation by way of creating 'the general biodiversity objective'.*

Baroness Natalie Bennett, Vice Chair NALC.

Encouraged change to improve our environment. Will speak on behalf of Local Councils in the House of Lords.

Chris Borg, Policy Manager NALC.

Local (parish and town) councils are crucial to the Shropshire LNRS (a plan to make our natural environment healthier and more beautiful for people and wildlife). Local councils should promote and complete key LNRS surveys and should also communicate to residents all key outcomes and milestones from preparation of the Shropshire LNRS.

Dr Jack Reed, University of Exeter

Researching how Local Councils can help delivery of Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Most feedback points to the importance of the participation of Town & Parish Councils.

Mandy Thorn, Shropshire Community Foundation

We are a not-for-profit place-based organisation working for the best interests of local communities across Shropshire – we are rooted in those communities and focused on empowering local organisations through strategic grant giving. We can help develop and manage funds to support strategic projects that address biodiversity loss and land degradation.

Lynn Parker, County Co-ordinator for Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin LNRS.

The LNRS is a legal requirement of the Environment Act 2021. Its intention is to bring together a cohesive plan to reverse the decline of biodiversity and provide guidance and direction. Examples include:-

- Create ponds and wetlands to support biodiversity and reduce flood risk
- Encourage wildlife friendly gardening
- Re-naturalise water courses
- Produce guidance for local authority contractors on greenspace/ grassland management for nature
- Engage local community volunteers to take part in wildlife friendly activities.

Peter Carty, Going Wild in Bishop's Castle.

How Bishop's Castle declared a Climate Emergency and have gathered together various nature based local organisations to restore and improve biodiversity. Activities include "no-mow May", erecting swift boxes, and maintaining the Church yard for wildlife.

Janet Cobb, Parish Clerk and Middle Marches Community Land Trust board member
MMCLT's objectives are to acquire and manage land for Nature Recovery; work with and support landowners, farmers and occupiers large and small; work with organisations, communities and individuals; act as an Advice Hub.

Allan Wilson, Vice Chair SALC

Hi-lights the Powers and Duties of Parish Councils. Encourage them to do something, however small or imperfect, and support local interest groups.

Susan Crichton, Chair Wheathill Parish Council

Showed film and photos from their Pine Marten Project.

David Morgan, Lyth Hill Residents

Having noticed a decline in several bird species, the residents have initiated projects improving verges and creating a hay meadow and wetlands.

Charles Green, CPRE Shropshire

Talked about their "Hedgerow Heroes" project creating and restoring hedgerows throughout the county.

Charles Edwards, Shropshire Hills National Landscape Trust

Financially supports community Nature Recovery Projects in the Shropshire Hills area. (Sadly, we are outside the boundary for this.)

Harriet Carty, Caring for God's Acre

How to manage a burial ground for Nature. Start small and build up.

Karen Thompson Bland, Welshampton & Lyneal Parish Council

Overcoming difficulties in trying to restore verges within the parish.

Dr Charlie Bell, Stepping Stones Project

Creating wildlife corridors by restoring hedgerows and linking separate wildlife sites within the Stepping Stones area (includes The Stiperstones NNR and the Long Mynd SSSI).

Julie Burroughs, Vice chair/secretary Friends of Apley Woods

Entertaining talk about successful projects to, a) improve the water quality of a local pond by encouraging people to feed the correct foodstuffs to the ducks (not bread); and b) to improve the habitats in a forgotten piece of woodland adjacent to a new housing estate.

Helen Ball, Shrewsbury Town Council

Impressive presentation of how the Council manages its open spaces, parks and verges for nature recovery with a budget of £250,000. It has invested in appropriate machinery for managing verges as meadows and uses livestock on outlying areas which it owns. It has also introduced beavers in a suitable enclosed area and created boardwalks so that they can be viewed by the public.

All the presentations can be viewed in their entirety on the SALC website by following the link <https://www.alcshropshire.co.uk/local-nature-recovery>

APPENDIX

Report on OPCC Focus Group 23 Jan 2025

The topics to be discussed were as follows:-

Responsive policing

For those of you who've been a victim of a crime and called West Mercia Police, from your initial first contact to the end of the criminal justice process, what more could the officer have done to reassure you the crime would be investigated thoroughly and justice served?

Visible policing

How do we improve visibility and engagement, so that the resources we have both within the police and within our community groups work together more effectively?

Accessible policing

According to the quarterly figures from the Confidence Survey for 2024-2025, 92% of those surveyed said they were confident they could access West Mercia Police in an emergency, but what about in a non-emergency situation? (e.g. advice, support, an update on a reported crime)

Fit for purpose estate

West Mercia Police covers a wide and diverse area across the three counties of Shropshire, Worcestershire and Herefordshire with a limited budget... How can the force make better use of its estate to ensure it is more community focussed, whilst at the same time enabling officers and staff to carry out their roles effectively and in a manner that is socially sustainable with minimal environmental impact?

According to the numbers shown on the screen, there were 48 people attending the session (presumably that included staff members), though only a few made comments. Some people recounted their mostly bad experiences with certain police officers, 1 or 2 in embarrassing detail, though there were positive comments too. John Campion suggested that those detailed complaints would be discussed less publicly after the main session finished.

The Chair of Ludlow Town Council said that things had improved since certain changes had been made there and she was keen for that to continue. She even said that the Ludlow PCSOs could police Burford, but that is obviously not a decision she can make!

Apparently, one of the changes made is that when the call-bell is pressed at the police station/office and there is a member of staff inside, then they will respond directly instead of the call being directed to the central call centre. This call re-direction should only happen if no-one is in the Police station/office.

There seemed to be little I could contribute to the first 3 topics, so I concentrated on the final one. (See separate document in which I outlined my comments and

suggestions.) As soon as I reached the second paragraph, John Campion smiled and I realised that our difficulties here in Burford had already reached him, so I commented accordingly. After allowing me to finish, he assured me that the matter was in hand and that changes would be made "soon". After the session, I followed up with an email to the OPCC office requesting a definition of "soon" and received the following reply:-

Dear Lynda,

Thank you for taking the time to attend PCC John Campion's focus group on Thursday. The PCC hopes you found it informative whilst being a good opportunity to share your views and experiences.

Your concerns on the use of resources to police Burford in Shropshire have been noted.

The PCC is focused on ensuring West Mercia Police is maximising its resources and delivering value for taxpayers' money, a key priority within his police and crime plan.

It's clear the current situation in Burford is not delivering on that commitment and that's why the force is currently carrying out a full-scale review of its operational model to ensure that resources are shared across more areas, enabling the force to respond to wherever the demand is.

Thank you once again for getting involved. Your views will help shape a session between the PCC and Chief Constable in February which will be made available for you to watch.

Kind regards,
Amy Miles
Engagement Officer

I have had no further update so I assume the session has not yet taken place.

Fit for Purpose Estate (final topic)

To fulfil this aim I believe that West Mercia Police should ignore the county boundaries within its total area, put all the funding in one pot and then reallocate resources in a more logical fashion, using the centres of population as the hubs for the Community Police Officers, who would cover the areas surrounding their particular hub, irrespective of the inner county boundaries.

I live in Burford, Shropshire, adjacent to and effectively a residential area of Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire, as well as sharing a boundary with Herefordshire. The Community Police Office for Tenbury is located in Burford (Shropshire) yet Burford's SNT is based at Bridgnorth, 21 miles (and 40 minutes) away. It is not an efficient use of resources that community officers are sent from Bridgnorth instead of using those actually based within the Parish.

I have spoken to officers on the ground who share our frustration at this obvious waste of resources, both human and financial, and although I understand that representations have been made further up the hierarchy, they have apparently been ignored or dismissed by those responsible. I can only assume that this is because it would make accounting to the Local Authorities more difficult and that this is felt to be more important than the needs of the local communities!

I am sure that similar problems are faced by other cross-border communities within West Mercia Police's area and my comments are not meant as a criticism of our SNTs, who are doing their best within a framework which is making their job even more challenging than necessary.

I appeal to John Champion to consider this proposal seriously, which I believe would be more cost effective than the current system. It is surely not beyond the capabilities of senior staff to create and implement a more efficient structure along these suggested lines, or perhaps they could utilise AI to do the job, provided that the correct parameters are utilised.