



**Minutes of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held on  
TUESDAY 3rd MAY 2022 at 7.00 PM  
Mandeville Hall, Tan House Lane, Burwell, CB25 0AR**

Present:

Parish Council: Liz Swift (Chair), Lea Dodds, Joan Lonsdale, Gill Miller, Jim Perry, Michael Swift, Geraldine Tate, Hazel Williams, and Brenda Wilson. Apologies had been received from Parish Councillors Paul Webb and Jenny Moss.

Members of the Public: Debbie Cawley, David Watson, John Cornell, Terry Mansfield, Ann Jacobs, and Michael Parr.

1. Welcome – Liz Swift, Chairman Burwell Parish Council

Liz Swift welcomed all to the meeting and gave the following report:

I would like to welcome you to our Annual Parish Report for 2021/2022. I am pleased that we were able to meet in person for the Annual Parish Meeting this year, but disappointed that we were unable to hold the meeting in the refurbished Gardiner Memorial Hall as due to unavoidable delays, the building work is still ongoing. Full Council meetings have been held in person since May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021, and we have been pleased to conduct our business face to face while being aware of social distancing and providing adequate ventilation. However, many of our Working Group Meetings continued to be held using Zoom until recently. The four Working Groups meet every other month and make recommendations which can be actioned once approved by Full Council.

These Groups are Finance and General Purposes, Asset and Environment, Community Leisure and Sport and Safety. Following adoption of our Climate Change Policy and Climate Emergency Action Plan, we decided to establish a Climate Change Forum and the inaugural meeting was held in October 2021. The Forum consists of Parish Councillors and a representative from Pauline's Swamp Trust, Spring Close Management Group, Burwell Environmental Group and Wild Burwell. The Chair of each Group has written a detailed report on their activities for your information.

We are sorry to have received resignations from Robin Dyos and Don Harrison. We thank them for their hard work and dedication during their time as Parish Councillors.

The Recreation Ground and its facilities are still popular and well used. A full programme of Football Matches has resumed with some Junior games being played at Margaret Field due to a lack of suitable pitches.

Councillors were pleased to visit the Archaeological investigation at Newmarket Road and to look at the display of items that have been excavated. We have had presentations from This Land and Vistry East Midlands to explain who will be responsible for building the different phases of the proposed development.

Phase one of the Gardiner Hall Refurbishment project is nearing completion. We expect that Stage two which is the new extension can go ahead and grant funding is being sought.

We are aware that The Westhorpe Play Area needs to be updated. Once the work on the Gardiner Memorial Hall has been completed, this will be our next project with the aim to carry out the refurbishment during the period 2023/2024.

We were very pleased to be able to launch our delayed Village wide, year-long Safety Campaign at Burwell at Large in March.

We did hold a Strategy Day in July when we considered our 5-year plan looking at short-, medium- and long-term objectives.

We continue to be a proactive Council striving to benefit the residents of Burwell.

We acknowledge the work carried out by Yvonne our Clerk and Sarah, assistant to the Clerk as well as George, Debbie and Martyn and I would like to express my thanks to them and to my fellow Councillors for their help and support during my time as Chair of Burwell Parish Council.

## 2. Report from Assets and Environment Working Group

Joan Lonsdale, Chair of the Asset and Environment Working Group gave the following report:

The responsibility of the Working Group is to maintain all Council owned properties and play areas to an acceptable and safe standard.

All the Recreation Ground and play areas are now completed and we have received many compliments for variety of activities. It is there for very disappointing that we have several acts of vandalism resulting in the Council having to spend further money to carry out repairs. The Police are always notified, and we supply CCTV information.

We are lucky to have many trees in the Village, but they can be a concern to residents following bad weather. We have contacted ECDC Tree Officer for Parks and Spaces for guidance and it has been decided that an annual inspection carried out by a Professional independent should be carried out on all the trees on Parish Council land.

We are continuing, together with interested parties, to review the grass cutting regime on all Parish Council sites and to encourage wildlife diversity. The Parish Council is working with our grass cutting Contractor to satisfy all Residents views and the potential for an increased expenditure. It is more expensive to NOT cut the grass than to cut more frequently because the grass may be contaminated and more expensive to remove. Letting wildflowers grow sounds idyllic but the reality can be very different.

Work continues on the Gardiner Memorial Hall, and we are looking forward to being able to invite all new and existing users very soon.

## 3. Report from the Finance and General Purposes Working Group

Hazel Williams MBE, Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Working Group gave the following report:

Income to the parish council comes largely from the precept paid by each household as part of their council tax. Unlike the county and district council, who also receive extra money through the rate support grant from the government, all money the parish needs is raised from the precept, in addition to letting income from village halls, Community Infrastructure Levy from new houses that have been built and funding from grants that have been applied for.

The precept covers staff and office costs, maintenance of recreation, sports and play areas, cemetery, allotments, and grass cutting, tree maintenance, street furniture, and halls. It also pays for some capital expenditure throughout the village. There is a full list of how money has been spent during the year below.

One of the roles of the Finance Working Group is to plan ahead so that, as far as possible, there are enough funds to carry out the projects that the council proposes to do. This may mean that some projects must wait for future years. A revised Five-Year Plan was adopted this year.

Recent projects have included the work to extend and resurface the Recreation Ground car park, the construction of a new website and the completion of new accessible toilets for the public. Nearing completion is the major project of renovating and updating the Gardiner Memorial Hall. Grant funding as well as money from the precept will enable the main hall to be completed, although the new planned room to be added behind the present building cannot be built until more funding is available.

In the year 22-23 the Council will receive a precept of £183,602.00. A Band D property will contribute £75.60 towards this which equates to £1.45 per week. All of the money we raise is spent within the parish.

Plans include:

- The completion of the Gardiner Memorial Hall.
- Changes to our properties because of environmental considerations
- Support for the village-wide safety campaign
- Funding for maintenance of the tennis court surface, trim tracks, flood lighting etc.

#### 4. Report from the Community, Leisure and Sports Working Group

Michael Swift, Chair of the Community, Leisure and Sports Working Group gave the following report:

The Community Leisure and Sport Group has met 6 times during the year along with numerous subgroup meetings with other Village and outside groups and agencies. Fifteen recommendations were made to Full Council; all being approved.

To support the Council's Climate Change Policy and Emergency Action Plan, the Council established a Village Climate Change Forum which met for the first time in October when Councillor Jenny Moss was elected as Chair. The Forum is a mixture of local Councillors and representatives of other interested Village organisations which will hopefully, help the Council to meet its ambitious Climate Change targets.

The refurbishment of the Recreation Ground Car Park has now been completed and thought is being given to lighting the MUGA. This has been requested by several of our younger residents who would like to see a system like the one we have installed on the Skateboard Park. The use of land adjacent to the Car Park is now being considered for the long-awaited Community Garden.

The wonderful volunteering spirit of the Village was once again observed in the successful workdays held at both Pauline's Swamp and Spring Close. Funding for new signage at the latter has now been secured and the management group of the site is busy finalising the design and content of the new boards. We were pleased to be able to hold an Open Day at Pauline's Swamp recently which was successful with many visitors participating in the activities and enjoying the displays and the stalls.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations organised by The Council will be a Tea Party on June 4<sup>th</sup> for those who can remember her accession to The Throne in 1952 and a Village Picnic in the Park at the Recreation Ground on the Sunday.

Other future plans include the creation of a Burwell Repair Café and discussions with This Land regarding the earmarked Sports' Hub at Newmarket Road. Finally, the modernisation of the Westhorpe Play Area will be our main priority once the Gardiner Memorial Hall Project has been completed.

#### 5. Report from the Safety Working Group

Liz Swift gave the following report due to the Chair of the Safety Working Group, Paul Webb being unable to attend the meeting:

The last year has been challenging, as we all realise, but via 'zoom' meetings the group continued to make progress. The main topics of discussion in the current year have been:-

#### Moveable Vehicle Activated Signs

We now have three operational units within Burwell with 18 approved locations - more currently undergoing approval in Toyse Lane, North Street & The Causeway. Our intention is to regularly publish data from the MVAS units on our new Parish Council Website in conjunction with our Village Safety Scheme Reports.

#### Burwell to Exning Cycleway

Discussions have continued with principal authorities with Suffolk County Council taking the lead. The route is currently being finalised. The project will be funded by the Newmarket Road development in Burwell and the new Burwell Road development in Exning.

#### Speed Watch

Speed Watch has recommenced post Covid restrictions being lifted. We are now actively seeking additional Speed Watch volunteers to increase our activity.

#### Local Highways Initiative

The application for 20MPH Solar Powered school signage on Ness Road & The Causeway was rejected by Cambridgeshire County Council Highways. We are in discussions on this issue. Our Private Finance Initiative (solely funded by ourselves) for 20MPH solar powered school signs on Buntings Path was accepted and installation is imminent.

#### 6. Update on the Gardiner Memorial Hall Refurbishment

Liz Swift reported that in 2020 a small group of Councillors started to explore funding streams for the refurbishment of the Gardiner Memorial Hall and the building of the extension to be used as a small meeting hall with areas to be used as a business hub and green room when performances take place. Funding for the refurbishment was secured by Autumn 2020 and it was decided to split the project into 2 phases as they could be carried out independently. Some funding for phase 2 has been secured but this is subject to further funding being raised. A small team of Councillors is busy working on grant applications for phase 2. Planning permission for both phases of the project was obtained in August 2021. Phase 1 of the refurbishment is nearing completion. The hall has been renovated to modern climate change standards, in line with the Burwell Parish Council Climate Change Policy. The building will be heated by an Air Source Heat Pump and internally, has been completely insulated, with new toilets, kitchen and extended stage. The hall will have a modern LED lighting system, along with a modern audio visual system, enabling the hall, amongst other things, to be used as a village cinema. It is hoped that the official opening will be in early July, when residents will be invited to an open day to view the changes in the newly refurbished hall.

#### 7. Report from the Climate Change Forum

Liz Swift gave the following report on behalf of Jenny Moss, Chairman of the Climate Change Forum:

My colleague Paul Webb and myself had a meeting with Richard Kay at ECDC way back at the start of February 2020. He explained to us about the ECDC Climate Change Policy, and gave us a start on developing our own policy for Burwell Parish Council. Our starting point was to use the Holme Valley Parish Council Climate Emergency Action Plan as a template, with their kind permission, and after a lot of graft, Paul and I managed to come up with what we thought would be a good working document.

The Burwell Parish Council Climate Emergency Action Plan was approved by Full Council in early 2021, but the lack of dynamics due to meeting by Zoom let things slide for the better part of a year. During this time, many small groups had sprung up around Burwell: parishioners independently worried about climate change got together and formed groups such as Wild Burwell, Burwell Environmental Group and others. With meeting in person renewing everyone's vigour, it seemed a very good idea for the Council to work with these groups, and so a few months ago we formed the Burwell Climate Change Forum. This comprises of a handful of Councillors, and a representative from each of these groups.

Our starting point with the Forum was to look at the Climate Emergency Action Plan and to begin getting our teeth into it. The Action Plan has an introduction, a section that divides the local causes of carbon emissions into 7 basic categories, a breakdown of these categories and the Council pledges, followed by short, medium and long term aims, and the final preamble.

The seven categories are:

Energy Usage and Sources

Transport and Travel

Agriculture and Food

Housing, Infrastructure, Home insulation

Local Business

Waste and Resources

Environment and Land use

In almost all cases, the best that the Parish Council can actually do is to lend support, share knowledge, petition, and engage, but there are some more material things within its power, such as the setting up of a local repair Café, apply for grants for EV charging points etc. These things are co-ordinated by the Climate Forum, with recommendations going to Full Council where necessary. Members of the Forum have initiated an Open Day at the local allotments, encouraged environmental stalls at our local nature reserve Open Day, and drawn up a little information leaflet. We have representatives on the East Cambs Climate Partnership Forum and the Wicken Fen Forum. We try and submit a regular article to the local bi-monthly community magazine, and have had an article about the Forum in the local newspaper. We commit to maintaining the green areas of Burwell, and searching for alternatives to fossil fuels in the Parish. We lobby for carbon neutral new builds, and support the local environmental group hosting educational days in one of the Parish halls.

All in all, this doesn't sound like much, but little ripples make bigger waves. The Action Plan is available on the Burwell Parish Council website.

#### 8. Burwell Safety Campaign

Liz Swift on behalf of Paul Webb gave the following report on the Safety Campaign:

The Campaign was launched at Burwell at Large, with the main objectives through education to increase the safety in our village for all residents **WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE BURWELL SAFER- THINK SAFE, BE SAFE**. It will phased to run throughout the year and consists of FOUR Major Components:-

**Speed – Your Journey, Their Safety, Our Village** – reduce speed in the village & launch 20's Plenty in Burwell – Car window stickers available at our office.

**Parking** – Think Safe, Be Safe – promote considerate parking & adherence to new highway code changes.

**Paths, Equestrians, Pedestrians & Cycleways** – Reduce local car journeys & promote safe cycling & walking etc.

**Personal Safety** – Promote awareness of personal safety issues & resources.

You may see the scheme promoted throughout the village, and at Carnival in June, and at the Family Fete Day in early September.

Please see our Safety Scheme updates on our dedicated webpage on the Burwell Parish Council website.

#### 9. District and County Reports

Yvonne Rix Clerk to the Parish Council gave the following reports on behalf of District Councillors David Brown and Lavinia Edwards who were both unable to attend due to prior engagements:

Report from David Brown:

The latter part of the 2021/2022 municipal year has seen life at the District Council return to in-person meetings, rather than all meetings taking place remotely because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The on-going impacts of the pandemic have, however, continued to place pressures on the budget to cope with staff absences. In spite of these budgetary pressures, we were able to freeze the District Council element of Council Tax for a ninth consecutive year.

The planning service has had a busy year, with a noticeable increase in applications, further details are available on the East Cambs website.

For the 2021/2022 municipal year I was appointed to the following committees and outside bodies: Finance and Assets Committee; Planning Committee; Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) Audit and Governance Committee; Swaffham Internal Drainage Board; the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Future Parks Accelerator Project; and a substitute member on the CPCA Transport Committee and the Anglia Revenues Partnership. I also served as an observer to the board of East Cambs Trading Company (wholly owned by ECDC). I had the honour of being elected Chairman of the Finance and Assets Committee and being elected Vice-Chairman of the CPCA Audit and Governance Committee.

I have continued to work with Burwell Parish Council on a number of issues, including the allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy funds by the Finance and Assets Committee to refurbish Gardiner Memorial Hall.

Planning issues continue to be a significant part of my role as District Councillor, and I have been involved in a number of applications in Burwell, representing both applicants and objectors. I have continued to argue the case for a roundabout to service the Newmarket Road development and will continue to do so.

Last year I spoke of the Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro, and our hopes for a station in Burwell. Following the mayoral elections, the incoming Mayor has cancelled that project and we await news of future plans for transport in the Cambridgeshire area.

Report from Lavinia Edwards:

At the start of this municipal year 2021/2022 meetings were still being held remotely via Zoom due to Covid.

They are now all being held in public with site visit resumed for Planning applications in April. The District element of the Council Tax has now been frozen for the ninth

consecutive year. The Council has continued to work hard keeping services going and working with organisations and supporting business's with Covid 19 business grants. For this year I have served on the following committees and outside bodies: Audit Committee, Licensing Committee, Planning Committee and Swaffham Internal Drainage Board.

This year I have been involved in helping Burwell residents with a range of issues from planning concerns, waste collections, traffic/road conditions, housing issues and financial difficulties.

10. An opportunity to raise questions and concerns regarding the village to the Parish Council members

Ann Jacobs asked if there would be a hearing loop at the Gardiner Memorial Hall. Liz Swift confirmed that one was being installed.

David Watson spoke about his concern that gas boilers were to fitted in the new dwellings on the Newmarket Road development. He asked those present to write to East Cambridgeshire District Council in order to raise an objection to the installation of gas boilers and to ask that a more sustainable heating system is installed. He also gave those present an opportunity to sign letters he had drafted to both the District Council and the local MP, Lucy Fraser objecting to gas boilers being installed for this development.

Brenda Wilson asked for confirmation that the cancelled Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro that had been mentioned in the report from David Brown was not the public transport plan discussed during the recent A to B1102 presentation given recently to the Parish Council. Liz Swift confirmed that it was not the same.

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 7.58 pm.

