

# Bunbury Parish Council

## MINUTES

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

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 7.20pm**

**Present:** Councillors: Pamela Brookfield (Chair), Peter Gorman, Matthew Randall, Richard Slater, Phil Spencer, and Andrew Thomson.

**In attendance:** Maximilian Clay - Clerk to the Council and 3 members of the public.

### **Mar25-1. Apologies**

Councillors Nick Parker and Mike Thomas tendered apologies and the Council resolved to approve the reason.

### **Mar25-2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensation Considerations**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **Mar25-3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Council resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025 were a true record and that the Chair be authorised to sign them as such.

### **Mar25-4. Unitary Authority Councillor Report**

Borough Cllr Posnett reported that:

- ◆ the timetable for devolution and the establishment of the Strategic Mayoral Authority was not yet clear but there was an aim to have a mayoral election in May 2026.
- ◆ the Strategic Transport Consultation will focus on issues beyond public transport but also the use and development of roads and strategic road routes.
- ◆ CEC's request to Government to increase council tax by 9.99% had been declined and so the increase will be limited to 4.99%. In order to balance the books for the current year they have had to enter into an agreement with Government for exceptional financial support of £17.6m relating to current expenditure. CEC has sought special financial support of £25m for next year and £28m for the following year. The support is a form of interest-bearing loan. Services have been cut back and only statutory services are now being provided. The dedicated schools budget has a deficit of £116m.
- ◆ the A49 speed camera had returned to normal operation, following an outage.

### **Mar25-5. Public Forum**

Members of the public:

- ◆ lamented the length of time taken for comments on planning applications to appear on the planning site (currently about two weeks);
- ◆ reported that the Bunbury sign on Schol Lane is out of square;
- ◆ reported that the forthcoming exhibition about village history at Nantwich Museum will feature contributions from Bunbury.

### **Mar25-6. Members' Reports & Items for Future Agendas**

- ◆ Cllr Gorman reported that:
  - the sign for Footpath 21 on Wyche Lane had fallen down but this had been reported;
  - 20mph signs (distributed by the Council) have started to appear on bins;
  - The newsletter had been edited prior to printing and he felt that this was unacceptable.He suggested that having a stall at Village Day and how we communicate this Council's views on planning applications be discussed at a future meeting.
- ◆ Cllr Spencer reported that:
  - speed-gun training had been carried out on the 8<sup>th</sup> March; three people are now required when using the speed gun and he felt that there was a need to add approved locations for use of the speed-gun and would take this forward with Cllr Brookfield. Locations need to

be identified by their What Three Words reference;

- one of the residents on Bunbury Lane whose hedge had been encroaching onto the pathway had cut their hedge back following the Council's request for them to do so but one remained untouched;
- he had photographed incidences of poor parking and forwarded these on to the police.

Cllr Randall was concerned that on weekdays the Crewe domestic waste and recycling centre had not been functioning as well as it had done before recent closures of other centres and the introduction of the requirement for appointments for weekend use; he was concerned that this would lead to an increase in fly-tipping.

### **Mar25-7. Planning**

#### **a. Responses to Application Consultations:**

##### **i. 25/0429/Hous - Marribonne, Bunbury Lane, Bunbury.**

*Rear extension above first floor level with remodelled pitched roof and chimney stack.*

In discussion it was felt that a small amount of overlooking could result from implementation of the plans but that overall there was nothing objectionable about the plans and it was resolved to offer no objection.

##### **ii. 25/0474/Hous - Rosemount, Wyche Lane, Bunbury.**

*Renovation of Rosemount and Lorne Cottage to provide a single dwelling with front extension, replacement of outriggers and outbuilding.*

There was no objections to this proposal and the Council resolved to offer no objection.

#### **b. Updates on Application Consultations considered previously or other planning matters:**

The National Infrastructure Bill had started its progress through parliament. The bill would streamline planning processes, including by removing certain consultees and by enabling applications to be automatically dealt with by Officers on a fast-track, delegated basis if they conform to national guidelines and any Local Plan. This may cut out or remove the role of parish councils.

### **Mar25-8. CEC Transport Consultation**

Following discussion it was resolved to submit a response outlining the Council's concerns:

- the village, in common with most rural villages, is now isolated for anyone reliant on public transport;
- such isolation can have a negative effect on residents' mental health, especially in the context of our aging population;
- the village is considered to be a Local Service Centre by the Local Planning Authority but this is clearly not a role that it can perform if it is inaccessible to anyone not living within the village itself who does not have their own transport;
- the lack of public transport (even when there was a partial service) means that employment opportunities for those without private transport who wish to take up jobs within a standard working pattern (within an 8am to 5.30pm window) are non-existent. This is a particular concern at a time when housing developments add to the population negatively affected in this way;
- The lack of such public transport provision works against the sustainability objectives of both national Government and CEC.

### **Mar25-9. Funding the Longer-Term Maintenance/Replacement of Play Area Equipment**

The designated fund for longer-term maintenance and replacement of play area equipment is limited and a larger fund will be needed in the future. The issues were explored in discussion and it was agreed that the main consideration would be carried forward to the next meeting, to allow members to develop ideas for raising funds.

### **Mar25-10. Parking Problems**

It was resolved that discussion of this matter would await the report of the Traffic Management Working Group but it was noted that photographing cars parked poorly or dangerously, including the registration number, and sending the photos to our PCSO is helpful as such incidences will be followed up by her.

## **Mar25-11.Clerk's Report**

The Clerk reported that:

- the Cheshire Association of Local Councils had written to Cheshire East Council (and other Cheshire councils) lobbying for parish councils to be included in consultations about devolution and the introduction of a mayoral strategic authority and reassurance had been received that parish councils would be included, although the means by which this would happen had not been set out;
- the Newsletter was ready for distribution and the distribution list was reviewed;
- the Bunbury Jubilee Playing Fields Committee (BJPFC) had been asked by the Bowls Club for agreement to replace the canopy on the west side of the pavilion and financial support towards the cost. It was resolved that the Council would fund the cost of materials and seek reimbursement from the BJPFC;
- the Gaskell's bin is not being used and he will propose cancelling the contract at the next meeting;
- The suppliers of the Jubilee Tree plaque were not admitting liability for the deterioration of the plaque. Cllr Slater offered to restore the plaque and install it on the timber protective guard around the tree and the offer was gratefully accepted by the Council.

## **Mar25-12.Finance & Governance**

- a. **Receipts and Payments** – The Council received the schedule of receipts and payments and resolved to approve the payments.

## **Mar25-13.Items for the WhatsApp Bulletin**

It was resolved to include a 'tree of the month' and a call for volunteers for Speed Camera training and operation (the latter would also be included in the next edition of the Newsletter).

**The meeting closed at 9.31pm**

*Signed as a true record by authority of the Council*

*Chair*

*Date*      **23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025**