**BURTONWOOD & WESTBROOK PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 18 June 2025 at

7.30 pm – Burtonwood Community Centre

Present Chairperson Ward

\* J Webb (IND) Old Hall

Vice Chairperson

\* N Catlow (IND) Westbrook

 Council Members

 J Guthrie (L) Burtonwood

\* T Murray (IND) Burtonwood

\* K Burgess (L) Burtonwood

\* J White (IND) Burtonwood

\* K Cox (IND) Burtonwood

 C Mitchell (L) Burtonwood

 B Gallagher (L) Westbrook

 M Rufus (L) Westbrook

 K Eglinton (L) Westbrook

 Barrie Morgan-Scrutton (L) Westbrook

 Brian Morgan-Scrutton (L) Westbrook

\* D Peers (IND) Westbrook

 A Guthrie (L) Westbrook

 D Gallagher (L) Westbrook

 \* Denotes Councillor present at Council

Also present Clerk to the Council – Julie Pickles

 A Doyle

 M Owen

 M Hattersley

 JM Leponis

 J Leponis

 L Evans

C17 Apologies

An apology for absence had been received from Councillors Judith Guthrie, Alan Guthrie, Ceri Mitchell, Brian Gallagher, Diane Gallagher, Marc Rufus, Kate Eglinton, Barrie Morgan-Scrutton and Brian Morgan-Scrutton.

C18 Code of Conduct - Declarations of Interest

Councillor Daniel Peers declared an interest in minute reference (C22.3), Councillor Peers did not speak to or vote on the item.

C19 Community / Policing Issues

 PCSO Stephen Heaps was not in attendance, but his emailed reports had been circulated prior to the meeting.

 Councillor Kevin Burgess reported on anti-social behaviour in Old Alder Lane, it was noted that new signage had been erected.

Councillor Burgess has also attended a meeting on 2 June in the village related to the new traveller site that had appeared over the May Bank Holiday, it was believed that other local matters were discussed.

C20 Minutes of the Previous Meeting (21 May 2025)

 **It was resolved by the Council that the minutes from the meeting held on 21 May 2025 were read and approved as a correct record**

C21 Matters Arising

 Nil

C22 Finance Sub-Committee - Agenda (18 June 2025)

The Chairperson (Cllr Jason Webb) reported verbally on the Finance Sub-Committee meeting attended by himself, Councillors Nigel Catlow, Jan White and Theresa Murray.

**Resolved that the following recommendations of the Finance Sub- Committee be adopted as resolution of the Council.**

C22.1 Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Ceri Mitchell and Alan Guthrie.

C22.2 Code of Conduct - Declarations of Interest

Councillor Daniel Peers declared an interest in minute reference (C22.3), Councillor Peers did not speak to or vote on the item.

C22.3 Application(s) for Grant

Friends of St Philips School had submitted an application form in relation to gaining funds for an outdoor jungle gym module for the school and it was

**Recommended by the Finance Sub-Committee that a grant of £750 be awarded**

C22.4 Accounts Approved for Payment (Chairman using delegated powers between meetings

 Nil

C22.5 Accounts Requiring Payment (June 2025)

Ionos – Website £ 12.00

J Ashcroft – Internal Audit 24/25 £ 600.00

Winwick PC Litter Picker June 2025 £2071.50

HMRC PAYE Q1 £3099.00

Swinton Tractor Insurance 2024 £ 302.08

Swinton Tractor Insurance 2025 £ 394.29

D Oldham Salary Back Pay £ 240.30

J Pickles Salary Back Pay £ 38.19

S Clutton Salary Back Pay £ 95.40

WBC Print £ 43.00

Clerks Expenses June £ 361.13

Chairs Allowance 2025 (Donated to St Rocco’s) £ 250.00

Impact Graphics (Signage) £ 360.00

**Recommended by the Finance Sub-Committed that all payments be made**

C22.6 Monthly Accounts & Bank Reconciliation (May 2025)

The Clerk had produced a report detailing the payments, receipts account and reconciliation for the month of May 2025 and it was

**Recommended by the Finance Sub-Committee that the balance be noted and the report be accepted**

C22.7 Standing Orders and Financial Regulations 2025

**Recommended by the Finance Sub-Committee that Parish Councils Standing Orders and Finance Regulations be noted and approved**

C22.8 Internal Audit Year End March 2025

The Clerk reported that the internal audit had been completed on 07/06/25

it was noted that the internal auditors report was as follows.

As per statutory requirements an internal audit review has been undertaken at Burtonwood and Westbrook Parish Council. The main purpose of the audit was to assess the systems of internal control in place and to provide assurance, prior to completion of the AGAR for the year ending 31/03/25, that key risks in relation to the Parish Council are being effectively managed.

Burtonwood and Westbrook was a civil parish in the unitary authority of Warrington, Cheshire with a population of 11,211 (2021 census). There are a total of sixteen council seats within the parish (9 Westbrook, 6 Burtonwood and 1 Old Hall) with council elections taking place every four years. Since the previous audit review there has been a number of changes to Council membership and it was evident that appropriate consideration was given to succession planning.

The precept figure for the 2023/24 financial had been £119,965 and had been set at £122,995 for 2024/25 financial year.

The audit review included discussions with the Parish Council Clerk to outline systems and processes in place in relation to the following key areas;

• Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

• Book keeping

• Payment Controls

• Risk Management Arrangements

• GDPR

• Budgetary Controls

• Income Controls

• Payroll Controls

• Asset Controls

• Bank Reconciliation Process

• Year End Procedures

• Responsibilities as a Trustee

This was followed by a detailed examination of the supporting documentation and, where relevant, sample testing to verify the operation of procedures.

**Conclusion**

The audit provided assurance that effective controls continue to be in place within the majority of areas covered. It was evident that the Parish Council follow the guidance set out within the National Association of Local Councils’ Financial Regulations and Standing Orders that this documentation is subject to formal review and consideration on an annual basis.

Examination of the Parish Council agendas and other relevant documentation in place, confirmed that meetings are held on a regular basis and that the Clerk provides Councillors with timely information which facilitates an informed decision-making process.

Procedures in place ensure that all income received is appropriately recorded and expenditure incurred is subject to appropriate approval. It was evident that documentary evidence is retained to support all transactions processed and that the Parish Council meeting minutes being maintained provide a formal record of all topics discussed and decisions made.

It was acknowledged that, appropriately consideration was given to recommendations made previously and, at the time of the current review, there were no outstanding actions from our previous audits. The table below outlines the findings and recommendations arising from the June 2025 audit review.

Implementation of audit recommendations being made will further strengthen the control environment, improve accountability and provide evidence for audit trail purposes. Progress against the recommendations being made will be assessed during subsequent audit reviews.

**Action Plan**

Audit Area: Bookkeeping - R1 Finding Recommendation Risk Rating ⚫ Medium

As noted during previous audit reviews all cheques require three signatures.

It was noted from examination of the minutes that the cheque signatories had been discussed along with the required amendments to the bank mandate in light of changes in Parish Council membership that had taken place.

Although no discrepancies had been found it is advised including additional controls into the process

Recommendation

Following any changes to the bank signatories a new bank mandate be requested from the bank.

The new bank mandate will be checked to confirm that all changes requested be actioned appropriately and that the bank are holding accurate / up to date information.

The details of this will be presented to the Parish Council at their next meeting along with all other corresponding financial information.

Officer Responsible: Julie Pickles

Implementation Date:18 June 2025

Audit Area: Payment Controls R2 - Finding Recommendation Risk Rating ⚫ Medium

Procedures in place ensure that payments made are appropriately authorised and recorded within the accounts.

Fron the review of the documentation in place / sample testing it was noted that there had been a small number of occasions where replacement cheques had been issued to suppliers as a result of the original cheques getting lost in the post.

I was informed that, as recommended during the previous audit, replacement cheques being issued, the original cheques were being cancelled at the bank.

It was also noted that, to reduce the risk of cheques getting lost in the post, these were now handed in at post office counters for delivery.

Although no discrepancies were identified it was advised including additional controls into the process.

Recommendation

To ensure an appropriate audit trail is maintained written confirmation will be requested from the bank to evidence requests for cheques to be cancelled made by the Parish Council and to confirm that these have been actioned.

The details of this should be presented to the Parish Council at their next meeting along with all other corresponding financial information.

Officer Responsible: Julie Pickles

Implementation Date: 18 June 2025

R3 Finding Recommendation Risk Rating ⚫ Medium

It was noted that the annual Parish Council tractor insurance premium due date fell between meetings.

To ensure that continuity of cover is maintained the Clerk arranges for the payment to be made from her own funds and then receives a reimbursement from the Parish Council at the following meeting.

From examination of the records, it was confirmed that although the tractor insurance had been renewed on a timely basis there was no reference to this in the Parish Council minutes and no reimbursement had been made to the Clerk.

Recommendation

Renewal of the annual tractor insurance cover should be added as a standing agenda item to the May meeting.

This will serve as a formal reminder that the renewal is pending and that payment will be due between meetings.

Timely action should then be taken to ensure that the corresponding reimbursement is made to the Clerk at the following meeting.

Officer Responsible: Julie Pickles

Implementation Date: 18 June 2025

**Recommended by the Finance Sub-Committee that the report be noted and accepted**

C22.9 Risk Management Review

 The Clerk had produced an up-to-date Risk Management document that incorporated the actions put forward by the internal auditor and it was

 **Recommended by the Finance Sub-Committee that the clerks report be accepted**

C22.10External Audit

 The Clerk reported that the external audit documents were to be returned as directed by 1 July 2025.

C22.11Kingswood Community Centre

The Clerk reported that a new user had started to use the building on a Sunday from 9.00am to 1.00pm.

C22.12Pavilion Centre

 Main Agenda.

C22.13Play Area – Pavilion

Nil

C22.14Play Area – Collins Green

Nil

C22.15Play Area Inspections

Nil

C22.16Fir Tree Community Ground

 Nil

 C22.17Pitches

The Clerk reported that there was now a waiting list for junior football teams to use the football pitch, a meeting with the current users would be arranged to discuss further availability.

C22.18Quotations Received

 Nil

C22.19Christmas Arrangements

 The Clerk reported that St Michaels Hall, the Brass Band had been booked and the Christmas Tree had been ordered.

C23 Planning Agenda (18 June 2025)

Councillor Kevin Cox reported verbally on the Planning Sub-Committee meeting also in attendance was Councillor Daniel Peers.

**Resolved that the following recommendations of the Planning Sub- Committee be adopted as resolution of the Council.**

C23.1Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Marc Rufus and Kate Eglinton.

C23.2 Code of Conduct - Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest had been received or recorded.

C23.3 Documents Received

1.

Councils and Clerks Direct

2.

WBC

–

Comm Review Update

–

emailed to all

3.

Intermodal Logistics Park North

–

sent to

all

4.

Tritax Big Box

–

Intermodal Logistics Park North (ILP North)

5.

Horse Welfare Concern

6.

Cllr T Murray

–

Information request

7.

Horse Welfare Concern

8.

LUF Workshop Slides

–

emailed to all

9.

Cllr A Guthrie

–

LUF

–

Financial Matters

–

Separation of Parish

–

Emailed to all

10.

Cllr B Gallagher

–

Support of Cllr A Guthries email (no 9

–

above)

–

Emailed to all

11.

WBC John Davies

-

LUF Update

–

Transportation

–

emailed to all

12.

Email

–

John Bibby

–

Possible Westbrook Library Closure

–

emailed to

all

13.

Email Cllr H Patel

–

Westbrook Library

–

emailed to all

14.

Email Cllr T Higgins

–

Westbrook Library

–

emailed to all

15.

Email Cllr B Gallagher

–

Renaming of the Pavilion

–

emailed to all

16.

Email Cllr A Guthrie

–

Reply to Cllr H Patel

–

Westbrook Library

–

emailed to all

17.

Email Cllr T Murray

–

Modular Units

–

LUF

18.

Email Cllr J White

–

Modular Units

–

LUF

19.

Email

–

Wasps

–

Room Hire

20.

Email

–

WBC Corporate Strategy

–

emailed to all

21.

Email

–

WBC

–

Westbrook Library

–

emailed to all

22.

Email

–

Police Reports

–

emailed to all

23.

Tritax Big Box Intermodal Logistics Park

 0 General Item of Correspondence

1 Domestic Planning Application

3 Non-Domestic Planning Application

0 Prior Notifications under Schedule 2, Part 24 of the Town, and Country Planning – (General Permitted Development Order) 1995 (1)

0 Notice of Withdrawal of Planning Application

0 Notice of Decision – Permission Granted

0 Notice of Decision – Permission Refused

0 Notice of Certificate of Lawful Use

0 Notice of Permitted Development

0 Notice of Decision – Approved

0 The Planning Inspectorate

0 Notice of Appeal By Way of Informal Hearing

0 Notice of Appeal By Way of Written Representation

0 Notice of Appeal By Way of Public Inquiry

6 Enforcement Notices Received and Closed

0Town and Country Act 1991 – Appeal Under S78 Against Refusal of House Holder Application

0 WBC Development Control Agenda

0 WBC Cat D Listing

0 Ward List

Recommended by the Planning Sub-Committee that the above documents received be noted

C24 Correspondence

1. Development Control
2. Community Governance Update
3. Police Reports

 **Resolved by the Council that all correspondence be noted**

C25 Burtonwood Reports / Updates

 Councillor Jason Webb reported on the latest updates in relation to the new build on the Gorsey Lane site.

It was noted that since the last meeting of the Parish Council, the Borough Council had requested further detail for the quote(s) specification. The outcome being that the Parish Council now requests the Borough Council to gain quotations for a modular build to include showers/changing rooms and a quotation without showers/changing rooms to keep within the current financial budget.

**Resolved by the Council that the Borough Council procure quotations as per the above**

Councillor Jan White reported on the following matters;-

* Fourth newsletter due out

**Resolved by the Council that Councillor J White’s report be noted**

Councillor Kevin Burgess reported on the following matters;-

* The trees at the back of the ice cream parlor need pruning
* The hedges alongside the Pavilion need cutting back again
* The footpath on Lumber lane had lots of weeds coming through – WBC have been informed

**Resolved by the Council that Councillor K Burgess’s report be noted**

Councillor Theresa Murray reported on the following matters;-

* Hedges on Alder lane need to be cut back as they are encroaching onto the pavement, it was noted that Councillor K Burgress had already reported this matter to WBC.
* UU to do survey – rat infestation
* Meeting attended on 2 June in the village – local issues

**Resolved by the Council that Councillor T Murray’s report be noted**

C26 Old Hall Reports / Updates

Nil

C27 Westbrook Reports / Updates

 Councillor Daniel Peers reported on the following matter;-

* Reported on the latest information in relation to the Westbrook Library – still waiting for outcome of consultation

**Resolved by the Council that Councillor D Peers’s report be noted**

 Councillor Nigel Catlow reported on the following matter; -

* Recently had become a Member of the RBL – it was noted that he had completed a new Declaration of Interests form and this had been lodged with the Clerk, additionally he requested further venues to place the poppy collection points

**Resolved by the Council that Councillor N Catlow’s report be noted**

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

Signed as a true record……..…………….

Cllr Jason Webb

Chairperson

 16 July 2025