

BURY PARISH COUNCIL

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The Annual Meeting of Bury Parish was held on Wednesday 5th May 2021 at 7pm by video link

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panel Meetings Regulations 2020 came into force on 05 April enabling local councils to hold remote meetings until May 2021. This meeting took place via “Zoom”

Minutes

Present: Councillors M. Tew (Chairman), J Prestage (Vice Chairman), D. Wakefield, R. Scantlebury, J. Hayes, K Prestage, A Johnston, P Hazell
County Councillor Costello, District Councillor Clarke
Also, present; Clerk – C Copley and 1 member of public

APM0521.23 Apologies.
None received

APM0521.24 Councillors Interests.
None received

APM0521.25 Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 3rd June 2020.
The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 3rd June 202 were confirmed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chairman when legislation allows meetings to be held in public again.

APM0521.26 Matters Arising.
None received.

APM0521.27 Responsible Financial Officer Report 2021.
The Responsible Financial Officer report 2021 was received and noted, and will be appended to these minutes

APM0521.28 Report from the Parish Council Chairman.
The report from the Parish Council Chairman for 2021 was received, noted and appended to these minutes.

APM0521.29 Report from District and County Council Officers.
County Councillor Costello gave her verbal report to members, a copy of which are appended to these minutes.
District Councillor Clarke gave his verbal report to members, a copy of which are appended to these minutes.

APM0521.30 Reports from Local Organisations.
One report from Bury Residents Charity was provided ahead of the meeting and read by the Clerk.
The report is appended to these minutes.

APM0521.31 To Invite Members of the Public to Raise any Matters of Interest.
None raised.

APM0521.32 Questions to County and District Councillors.
No questions asked.

APM0521.33 Chairman's Closing Remarks.
The Chairman thanked everyone for attending this evening and extended thanks to the organisations who had forwarded their reports to the Clerk.
The Chairman wished to extend the Councils gratitude to Mrs A Barber who tendered her resignation as Councillor earlier this week. Alyce has been a very important member of the Council and will be missed. The Council wished Alyce every success in the future.

With no further business to conduct the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 19:22.

Bury Parish Council, Annual report from the Responsible Financial Officer, May 2021

We started the financial year with £109,775 and received £92,522 of income which was made up mostly of Community Infrastructure Levy and precept. With these reserves and with careful management of an annual spend of £37,952 we were able to carry forward £164,346 in reserves at 31st March 2021. Bury Parish Council continues to remain financially stable going forwards.

With the outbreak of Covid-19 this last year had been a difficult one for all and we have seen many people working from home and online lessons for children at home. Cllr Barber was successful in an application for grant funding for the Council, of £500, this donation enabled the purchase of art supplies to create a memory box for children of Bury, this consisted of colouring pens, paper, a box etc for children to enjoy creating during the lockdown periods.

An increase in grass cutting costs has meant the Parish Council have increased the precept for this year to £32,500.

The Parish Council continued to work on the cemetery extension, which will soon see the Garden of Remembrance works finished off with the installation of a sundial and bench.

The village has seen a new housing development site coming along on the former RAF Clinic, with phase 1 works for 160 houses due to commence soon, following demolition of most of the dilapidated RAF buildings. A public consultation period has started with regards to the Phase 2 build on the site. These developments will see a considerable amount of Community Infrastructure Levy being received by the Parish Council who will utilise the funds for infrastructure such as much needed pedestrian crossing on the Upwood Road, and more formal green space provision for our villagers to enjoy. CIL can be spent on infrastructure matters such as;

Access and footpaths

Health and community facilities

Libraries

Lifelong learning and education

The Parish Council have maintained the play equipment well carrying out repairs and new purchases where necessary. A new surface to the shelter on the sports field has been installed today and agreement to purchase signage for the adult gym equipment agreed.

The Council has been able to make a financial donation to the Royal British Legion for a Remembrance Day poppy wreath along with a donation of £100 to SERV Cambs and Suffolk, also known as the Bloodrunners, who provide a free essential service to our local NHS hospitals, Air Ambulance Services, Hospices, Pharmacies and Human Donor Milk Banks.

Bury Parish Council Chairman's Report 2021

This has been a year like none other.

All meetings of the Parish Council have been held remotely by video conferencing. We all have had to get used to working differently but, overall and despite a few technical glitches initially, we have coped very well and attendance by residents at our monthly meetings has increased. There have been no interruptions to the services that we provide for our community, we have continued to progress our strategic programme steered by the Neighbourhood plan and we have taken steps to re-shape the working structure of the Council so that it is more suited to current and future requirements.

Covid-19 has had a profound effect in our own community. Most of us have experienced sadness or health concerns within our own families or among our friends. Many things have changed and some of the changes will last for the foreseeable future. But, I think we will all agree that our sense of community is stronger and, with the roll out of the vaccine, there will soon be opportunities for people to meet again and to take up interests and activities old and new.

The strength of our community cannot be better exemplified than by the work of all our community mutual aid Groups which have provided valuable comfort and assistance to our older and more vulnerable people in our Parish during the pandemic and special thanks go to the residents who cooked meals for people with dietary needs keeping them fed and safe, it just goes to show what a great village we live in.

Upwood airfield is progressing and phase 1 will be under way very shortly, phase 2 is at the application stage, and two other developments have commenced being the Upwood Road and Buryfield, which is causing concerns with residents, the parish council is engaging with the developers to get the best it can get for the Bury area. Developers still use speculative opportunities to develop around the Bury area on greenfield sites especially with the Government white paper which by-passes local democracy expected in the Autumn, which the Parish Council takes very seriously and will continue to object to developments on Greenfield sites, but ultimately these decisions are taken by the District council.

The state of our roads in the parish and the increased usage continue to cause concerns, the Parish Council are aware that with all the new developments in Bury and Ramsey that the road system will rapidly deteriorate, the Parish Council will keep monitoring the situation and collect data and evidence to see if remedial action needs to be taken, and I urge residents to keep reporting the potholes as they appear to the county council on their website. The cemetery extension is close to completion adding the last pieces of the jigsaw to the Garden of remembrance. And I thank the working group for all their hard work to bring this to fruition..

And finally my thanks to all members of the council but especially to our newly qualified clerk Charlotte Copley who passed her CiLCA qualification on the first attempt, this will give the Parish Council the General Power of Competence, which will allow the Council to work differently this year and into the future, her hard work ensuring our parish continues to comply with the latest legislation.

I would also like to thank our District Councillors and our County Councillor, for the support that they have given to the Council during the year.

I hope residents of our village will feel that we have kept them informed and that the Parish Council have kept the parish in a tidy state that we are all proud to live in, especially through these difficult times.

Bury Parish Council, report from County Councillor A Costello

The last year has been very strange for everyone.

In May of last year, we were in a lockdown and many county services were not provided as staff were either working from home or had been delegated to support front line services so ensuring that vulnerable people received the care that they required. Many of our Highways Officers were sent to work for the District Councils to ensure that refuse collections would continue.

The education of our children was a priority as well and all staff in schools with the support of the Director of Education and his officers ensured that all students were in a safe learning environment.

The summer months saw an easing of restrictions, so libraries, youth services amongst others were able to resume.

In the meantime, the County Council as indeed all local government continued to make decisions using virtual facilities such as Zoom.

In September schools, colleges and universities opened their doors for the Autumn Term but the number of Covid cases increased resulting in a further lockdown in November which closed most of the services again and staff were once more re-located to front line services.

Following a day of torrential rain on 23rd December, many areas of Bury experienced flooding as the drainage systems became overwhelmed. The County Council who is responsible for Flood Management immediately actioned an enquiry and all information from residents and the council was forwarded to the responsible body. They will be producing a report with recommendations to prevent such a situation occurring again. The Local Highways Officer was requested to clear drains and gullies.

From 26th December, a further lockdown was introduced but this time with more flexibility, enabling staff to deal with situations such as potholes, the bane of everyone's lives, however, the winter weather did not help the situation as many of those repaired, soon ended up being potholes again! The Local Highways Officer continues to monitor the situation and keeps me informed of future works.

I am always happy to undertake any work asked of me by Bury Parish Councillors and the Clerk and have recently become involved into looking at Section 106 money from RAF Upwood Phase 2 for infrastructure, mainly Abbey College and early years provision. This is ongoing.

I am also available to Bury residents and have over the year helped them with personal situations. Just for your information, I thought that you would like to know that the Full County Council are now going to meet face to face under strict covid guidelines. The first meeting will take place on Tuesday 18th May at Duxford in one of their big conference centres. This will be the Annual County Council meeting where the Chairman will be elected amongst other positions. Other meetings may still be virtual if there are no decisions to be made.

As always, I am happy to offer my services to assist the residents of Bury.

Yearly Report from Cllr Clarke, Ramsey & Bury HDC Ward Councillor.

Without doubt this last year has been the most challenging that most have ever known and everyone at HDC has played their part by helping wherever they could. Such as One Leisure and with Business grants and 'Click it Local' supporting businesses opening up after Covid.

The 'Task and Finish' Group was put together to find causes and highlight other issues that caused the flooding in December. They are also attempting to build the Town Markets up. On both counts there is a long way to go!

There is an argument that the Planning Department has not been kind to Bury Parish Council. Some, I am sure will think that is an 'understatement'. The department has seen new Officers come in, including a new Chief Planner to replace Jacob Jaarsma.

On the plus side it is most pleasing to see, at last, the developments at RAF Upwood commencing and hopefully blending in with Bury and Upwood.

On a personal note, I am quite saddened that it is no longer an operational airbase. Back in the fifties, when on the school bus we saw Lancasters and Camberras taking off and landing. Then later when playing cricket for Ramsey we enjoyed good times on the cricket square and later in the Officers Mess.

I mention that the 3G pitch has started and I am sure will benefit a lot of people. Before lockdown they were a hive of activity throughout the county.

St Neots have had a successful application to improve the High Street and the intention is the same for all market towns.

On a sad note, Huntingdonshire District Council lost its Chairman John Davies, and Jill Taverner the Warboys Councillor.

Annual Report from the Bury Residents Charity
to Bury Parish Council
2020/2021

The Charity manages Bury village hall and the committee comprises 7 trustees. David Yardley our treasurer retired in March 2021 after doing an amazing job sorting out the book-keeping!

We have been open since our deep clean in June 2020 but only for the Bury Playgroup during school terms due to the government restrictions. For a short time between lockdowns, we also were able to welcome back the Bury table tennis group. Otherwise, this has been an incredibly quiet period.

We anticipate that most of our regular bookings will re-start during the coming months to September - Beavers & Cubs, Carpet Bowls, Bridge, Table tennis and the Concert band. Added to these our regular monthly users – the Parish Council, Abbey W.I., Ramsey senior citizens and Hunts Society for the Blind will re-start when government restrictions allow.

This steady income from our regular users allows us to plan with confidence for the future.

We had a wide variety of occasional users, principally at the weekend, who were organizing parties for all ages, quizzes, yoga etc. Happily, we have had our first 3 bookings for 2021 starting at the end of June!

During lockdown we have been the recipient of the government COVID-19 grants managed by HDC, which have basically kept us afloat.

We have plans to redecorate the hall and are in discussion with community groups on re-wilding the flower borders around the hall.

This continues to be a team effort and my thanks go to Pat, Karen, Trudy, Jo, Thusy and Chris.

John Prestage

Chairman

May 2021