

**MAGHULL TOWN COUNCIL**  
**FULL COUNCIL**  
**HELD 22<sup>nd</sup> JUNE 2020**  
**VIRTUAL MEETING**

**PRESENT** - Councillor Josh Burns (In the Chair) and Councillors (Cllrs): June Burns, Carr, Carlsen, Desmond, Doherty, Ferguson, K & T Hughes, Lloyd, Mullen, J & Y Sayers and Sharp.

**ALSO PRESENT** – A. McIntyre (Town Clerk), A. Spencer (Amenities Manager), P. Dillon (Community Services Manager), D. Healey (Finance Officer), S. Larking (Community Services Officer), S. Lawrence (minutes), Public viewing via YouTube.

One minute's silence was held for the key workers, emergency services, and victims of COVID 19. Also in memory of Jim Sharp who worked as a local journalist for the Champion newspaper.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**: Apologies were received from Cllr McKinley.
2. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**: None.
3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**: due to the Covid 19 pandemic public participation is submission of comments or questions to the Council prior to the meeting commencing. Three received;

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Maghull Cricket and Football clubs plus the local neighbours who are suffering the consequences of the following, the upkeep of the bins on the Old Hall Field across both the Football pitch and the Cricket club, as the current weather conditions means that the bins are permanently overflowing come the weekend, as clearing them on a Tuesday is not suffice, as come Friday they are already overflowing and creates a mess like this weekend.

With this comes another problem of the anti-social behaviour of groups of young people camping out and smoking, drug taking and alcohol drinking until early hours of the morning, one neighbour mentioned in passing that this last weekend they were drinking until 03:00am.

As well as the above, one neighbour had a bottle of urine thrown at her house, and whilst on the pitch area one gang decided to have a bottle fight and ended up throwing bottles across the stream into neighbouring gardens, and then to cap this all off I was called out to the football pitch on Sat night at midnight to stop a gang of people having a bonfire in the middle of the football pitch.

Since then I have found out that there are scorch marks also on the cricket pitch from barbeques and even though we told people to stay off the pitch there are now further fire marks on the surrounding areas of the pitch where further small fires have been made.

What we need is some action from the Council to try and stop this happening again, whether it be more frequent emptying of the bins, or put up some clear notices to state that barbeques and fire making is not allowed. Can the Police be actively involved in improving these problems as I know they were called out 3 times over the weekend, but no-one turned up.

So even if the Council security turned up and checked for anything, they would need Police support as well.

These improvements will stop the Cricket and Football club committee members and local dog walkers from clearing up the mess and damage daily, plus I think you would get the support from the local neighbours as well.

There is also another big issue which we would like to bring to your attention and ask for help with. We have a constant problem with motorbike and mopeds being ridden through the ground damaging the pitches and causing a nuisance.

JB

Could we work together to come up with a possible solution. Maybe fitting anti-motorbike gates similar to the ones that are used along the canal towpaths or on the Cheshire Lines public footpath. We also think that more anti-motorbike gates should be fitted on the canal towpaths at the canal swing bridge on Hall lane and Northway bridge at the entrance to the Old Hall playing field.

Would I be able to attend the Full Council meeting on the 3rd June and address the council in person? I have heard that you will be setting up a video conference because you are unable to hold the meeting at the Town Hall.

Both clubs look forward to working with you.

#### Comments made by the Town Clerk:

- MTC have changed the date of bin collection, therefore if the bins become full they can be emptied again. Unfortunately we cannot empty bins on the weekend.
- Town Clerk has passed a copy of this letter to the police regarding the anti-social behaviour but has received no response.
- As this public participation no decisions can be made on the issues raised.

#### Comments & Questions made by Cllrs:

- In regards to the motorbikes, can we install gates along the field and canal? Town Clerk informed MTC have emailed to get prices for motorbike gates, this will be brought back to Full Council for a decision. Another complication is MTC do not own the land by the canal. Liaison with the Canal and Rivers Trust would be required; however this is all reliant on funding and decision from Full Council.
- Once lockdown eases and members of clubs return to play etc. We assume this will decrease the anti-social behaviour.
- A letter was written to the Canal and River Trust for a different incident, unfortunately we received no reply.
- The anti-social behaviour is at a worst at 3-4am.
- Write a letter to the Canal and Rivers Trust asking them to reinstate the gates, as gates posts still remain but the gates were removed due to vandalism. Therefore MTC would not incur the cost.
- Have a review on the bin collections. May need to implement 'super bins' like Sefton Council.

#### Actions for MTC:

- **Provide costings for Anti Motorbike gates.**
- **Liaise with Canal and River Trust with various comments and questions asked by the Cllrs.**
- **To be reviewed at the next appropriate Full Council meeting.**

#### 2 emails regard Black Lives Matter:

##### Email 1:

JB

I am writing to you about the current Black Lives Matter movement and how we are going to tackle the racism in our community.

I have lived in Maghull my entire life and growing up I was never really exposed to a very diverse community. I understand this is out of a lot of people's control as they have no control over who lives in their community. However, I also realised throughout my education (in Maghull schools) and growing up in the community, my understanding of BAME people's experiences and culture was very limited.

I think with this being a pivotal moment in history, it is important to make sure that Maghull and its majority white community are well-educated and making changes to provide children (and people of all ages) with more knowledge of the experiences and cultures of the BAME communities.

I have seen some displays of racism in the Maghull Community Page on Facebook recently, and it would be a large help if the council or the Mayor himself distribute some resources for people to look into in order to educate our community. I just want to know the council's take on this issue and what we are going to do to better our community.

#### Email 2:

I am writing to you about the current Black Lives Matter movement and how we are going to tackle the racism in our community. I have lived in Maghull my entire life and growing up I was never really exposed to a very diverse community, which I understand this is out of a lot of people's control who lives in their community. However, I also realised throughout my education (in Maghull schools) and growing up in the community, my understanding of BAME people's experiences and culture is very limited.

I think with this being a pivotal moment in history, it is important to make sure that Maghull and its majority white community are well-educated and making changes to provide children (and people of all ages) with a more knowledge of the experiences and cultures of the BAME communities. I just want to know the council's take on this issue and what we are going to do to better our community.

#### Comments made by Town Clerk and Cllrs:

- **Member of Maghull Community can raise any concerns to the MTC regarding racism.**
- **MTC appreciates ethnic diversity and we encourage educating the community on all different cultures.**

#### Actions for MTC:

- **Town Clerk to draft a statement for Cllrs to check, then when approved to be put on website and Social Media.**

#### 4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

Cllr Lloyd stated that the minutes of the meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> January did not reflect his comments in response to Cllr McKinley's comments regarding the questions Cllr Lloyd had asked.

JB

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting be approved once Cllr Lloyd's comments had been added.**

**5. COVID 19 REPORT:**

Town Clerk provided a brief update on the Covid 19 pandemic and noted that the report had been produced in May 2020. The focus was on how the staff had returned to work and the safety measures put in place. It was also noted that the parks and open spaces in Maghull had seen significant improvement since the Grounds Maintenance Team had returned.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

**6. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 – SECTION 85 – ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS – COVID-19 ARRANGEMENTS:**

Members were informed that due to the reduction of meetings due to the Covid-19 pandemic the report requested our authority to approve and authorise the absence of any Councillors from attendance at Council and Committee Meetings pursuant to Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1. Agreed that the absence of any Elected Member from all Council and Committee Meetings be authorised and approved for the period until 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2020, pursuant to Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.**
- 2. The report be noted.**

**7. COMMITTEE PLACES 2020-21:**

Members were informed that the legislation had been amended due to Covid 19, which meant that the incumbents of the Mayor and Chairs of Committees would not change. Cllr Josh Burns was happy to remain Mayor for the municipal year 2020-2, with Cllr John Sayers remaining as Deputy Mayor. It was anticipated that Cllr Sayers would take the position of Mayor the following municipal year.

Members were also informed that the Personnel Sub Committee needed to sit as there was an ongoing issue with the filling of a vacancy. As the Personnel Sub Committee was a sub committee of the Finance and General Purposes Committee only members of the F&GP Committee could sit on the Personnel Sub Committee. Full training on Personnel matters would be given. The following Members agreed to sit on the Personnel Committee

- Cllr Thomas Hughes - Conservative party.
- Cllr Josh Burns - Labour Party
- Cllr Denise Mullen - Labour Party
- Cllr Chris Carlsen - Labour Party

- Suggestion to put the vacancy on hold as many are self-isolating etc. and therefore cannot attend to interview therefore would be unfair, until the pandemic is over.

Cllr June Burns asked whether Cllr Adam Lloyd should have declared an interest due to the Cricket Club being tenants of the Council and Cllr Lloyd being a member. Cllr Adam Lloyd informed he is no longer on the Cricket Club Management Committee. Town Clerk informed Members that Cllr Adam Lloyd had updated his DOI form with the MTC and therefore did not need to declare a Disclosable Non-Pecuniary Interest in this item. The Town Clerk also reminded Members that it was their responsibility to update their interests as soon as they had changed.

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1. The revised budgets for 2020-21 be agreed;**
- 2. The rewire for the Town Hall and associated buildings be funded from Reserves;**
- 3. The financial adjustment to increase the hours from part-time to full time for the Assistant Maintenance Officer Post be agreed;**
- 4. Due to Covid 19 community groups and commercial organisations who were tenants of the Council would be rebated 9 months' rent. Rent would be come due in January 2021 and be for the remaining 3 months;**
- 5. The report be noted.**

**9. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS:**

Town Clerk provided brief update regarding the Financial Regulations, these were reviewed within the Finance and General Purposes meeting in February 2020 and amendments were made.

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1. The new Financial Regulations be adopted;**
- 2. The report be noted.**

**10. MTC SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICY:**

Cllr Carlsen informed this policy was to monitor and manage the Council's use and resources for our carbon emissions. The principle was to set a baseline figure for the carbon emissions and then to put actions against that figure to reduce carbon emissions over time. This was in line with the net zero target set by the Government.

Cllr Carlsen would be assisting the Council with this task and would appreciate volunteers going forward. MTC would need to retrieve old utilities bills over the past few years to gather the data needed.

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1. Agreed the Sustainable Development Management policy;**
- 2. The report be noted.**

*JB*

- Vacancy was gifted from the Labour Group to Cllr Sean Doherty – Liberal Democrats

Training session will be provided to go through the terms and conditions, aiming for July 2020.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. **Agreed that Cllr Josh Burns and Cllr John Sayers remained as Mayor and Deputy Mayor respectively;**
2. **Agreed to keep the same membership of Committees for the forthcoming municipal year;**
3. **Agreed the members of the Personnel Sub Committee as detailed above for the forthcoming municipal year;**
4. **Agreed to keep the same Chairs of Committees for the forthcoming municipal year;**
5. **Agreed to keep the same representatives on outside bodies for the forthcoming municipal year;**
6. **That the report be noted.**

8. BUDGET REPORT:

Members were reminded that the Council had agreed their budget for the financial year back in January 2020. Unfortunately due to Covid 19 the budgets would have to be amended. The Council was not expecting tenants to be able to pay their rents for the forthcoming year as the Town Hall and associated facilities remained closed. This meant an anticipated loss of £32,503 from the income of the Council, which was an overall reduction of 4.4%.

MTC have also had additional expenses due to Covid 19 including additional PPE, minor works to accommodate social distancing working and signage.

Questions asked by Cllrs:

- Is MTC eligible to apply for grants? Town Clerk responded - MTC is percept receiving authority therefore MTC are not eligible to apply.
- Why has the mobile phone budget decreased? Finance officer responded- the decrease is due to a change in contract resulting in a cheaper service.
- Provide an explanation why the advertisement for the part time assistant maintenance was so much? Town Clerk responded - MTC have advertised three times (Indeed.co.uk, Champion and Echo print and social media) and still are unsuccessful to finding a candidate.
- Will the budgets increase next year? Finance officer responded - MTC assume the budgets will increase for next year, the decrease is due to Covid 19 at this particular time.
- Community Grants were already agreed previous to the Covid 19 pandemic will these grants still be honoured? Finance officer responded - Any grants agreed before Covid 19 pandemic will be honoured.
- Fleet repairs budget has doubled can you explain? Amenities Manager responded - MTC have aging vehicles and therefore we expect them to be repaired.

JB

### 11. LANDSCAPING OF BOBBY'S WOOD (PART A):

Members were informed that the detailed report was a closed report due to the confidential nature of the matters to be discussed. The report in the open part of the meeting was to give Members of the Public information regarding the broad outlines of the project.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

### 12. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

**RESOLVED that due to the confidential nature of the matters to be discussed the press and public be excluded from the meeting. The live stream of the meeting to the public was stopped via YouTube.**

### 13. LANDSCAPING OF BOBBY'S WOOD (PART B):

Cllr Frank Sharp provided an explanation on the landscaping of Bobby's Wood report. The feedback received has been positive towards the plans. A crowd funding campaign was started with a target of £24,000 and had so far collected £16,000. This project had been on many media platforms receiving positive feedback and many donations.

A detailed explanation was given of the map regarding paths, trees and planting etc. Collaboration with Sefton Council had been discussed for research to determine the amount of pollution. An estimated 60% of the pollution could be consumed from the hedges alone. If any extra monies are received a banqueting table would be considered. Also on the wish list was a Saxon warrior statue which can be loaned to the Council. This would give Maghull a spectacular feature.

Out of 2000 comments received only 2 were negative. These were both expressing their concern for the potential Anti-Social Behaviour the improvements to Bobby's Wood could bring. Cllr Sharp responded to say he had spoken to Mersey Police who stated that parks did attract anti-social behaviour when parks were mainly enclosed. However Bobby's Wood had good visibility which will act as a deterrent due to passive surveillance.

Town Clerk stated that the Grounds Maintenance Team were already maintaining Bobby's Wood and would continue to do so if the improvements to Bobby's Wood took place. The Council could also devote resources to the project e.g. Officers' time in assisting in grant applications etc. However, the Council was not in a position to provide financial assistance to the project.

Cllrs thanked Cllr Sharp for the hard work and time he has put into this project so far.

#### Comments from Cllrs:

- Great project going forward as around that area of Maghull did need improvement.
- Crowd Fund Link to be circulated to Cllrs after the meeting.

JTB

- Apply for funding from the Merseyside funding network. MTC is already registered Veolia Waste Management.
- Currently have a ten year lease; this project would allow the lease to be extended in the future.
- Concern with the banquet table, would become a hotspot for anti-social behaviour.
- An offer of boulders from Cllr Ken Hughes from the Quarry.
- Will there be a public consultation?

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1. Agreed the Council to support the project with additional resources;**
- 2. Agreed the Council to authorise officer time to support the project;**
- 3. A survey to be created on Survey Monkey and published by the Council;**
- 4. The report be noted.**



**CHAIRMAN**