

# BUCKFASTLEIGH MATTERS MEETING

**Minutes of the Buckfastleigh Matters Meeting held in Room 3 at the Town Hall on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019 at 7.30 pm.**

**Present:** Councillors Andy Stokes (Chair), Pam Barrett, Janet Jones, Pamela Forbes, Huw Cox, Dan Simpson and Judith Hart (Town Clerk).

**In attendance:** 1 member of the public and Maureen Tuffnell (Orchard Millennium Green Trust – OMG)

**Press:** No Press in attendance

**19/01. Apologies:** Cllr Simon Rines, John Bailey (Buckfastleigh Football Club), Sheila Phillips (William Pengelly Caves Studies Trust), Ann Werry (Orchard Millennium Green Trust), Val Browning (Valiant Soldier) and Charlie Dennis (Teignbridge District Council).

No apologies received from Cllrs Ben Cattrall, Ron Fox, Gwena Harman and Kate Paxman

**19/02. Councillors invited to declare any interests:** None

**19/03. New meeting structure and presentation:**

A presentation was made to Cllr Janet Jones who will be retiring from the Town Council in May with thanks from all the councillors and staff for her many years of service to both the Council and the community.

**19/04. Questions and comments from the public:** None

**19/05. Barn Park emergency response update:**

Cllr Pam Barrett reported that this was the first call-out for the new Volunteer Emergency Response Team (VERT). There was a quick response from residents, the Town Council and Teign Housing. There were good communications between all who were involved, and the response was well coordinated. David Patrick set up a Go Fund Me page and the proceeds will be managed through the Town Council accounts. The fund will be used for additional support not covered by insurance, Teign Housing etc. Any money not used will be decided by the Buckfastleigh Residents Association. Part of the Mayor's Fund has also been donated to this fund.

**19/06. Minutes of the Environment and Transport Committee held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019:**

Signed by Cllr Stokes.

The Clerk reported that Buckfastleigh Primary School has not to date been contacted by the Devon County Council Traffic Officer to arrange a meeting to discuss the road safety concerns raised with the Town Council.

**Action:** Clerk to raise this matter with Cllr Stuart Barker.

No further progress has been made with either parking or the proposed 20 mph speed limit.

**19/07. Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2019:**

Deferred to the April Town Council Meeting

**19/08. Minutes of the Tourism, Recreation and Economic Development Committee held on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2019:**

Signed by Cllr Stokes.

The Clerk confirmed that all outstanding actions from this meeting have been addressed for e.g. a second Traders meeting has been arranged for Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> April and event planning will be discussed under Minute No.19/10.

The Chair outlined the new meeting structure.

The intention is to provide a more relaxed meeting to discuss town issues. The traditional meeting structure did not facilitate enough discussion and contribution from councillors, residents and organisations. Buckfastleigh Matters will look at specific topics such as youth provision or events and may only have one item on agenda to allow for informed discussion. A working party will look at delegated powers and set spending limits for each committee. New terms of reference for each committee will be ratified by the full Council.

Cllr Janet Jones stressed that recommendations should still be made for all planning applications.

Guidance on how to respond to planning applications could be advertised to the community.

Membership of each committee is open to all councillors and the new structure will be reviewed later in the year.

**Action:** Planning matters to be a standing item on this agenda.

Extraordinary meetings will still be called to address planning applications which require a response outside the timing of this meeting.

**Action:** Clerk to work up initial terms of reference for each committee. All draft terms of reference to go to the June Town Council meeting.

Cllr Stokes brought forward Agenda Item No. 9

#### **19/09. Traders Meeting update and next steps:**

A second Traders Meeting has been arranged for Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> April in the Town Hall to look at a promotional campaign and themed monthly summer markets. A representative of Teignbridge District Council will be attending this meeting to provide support and advice.

It was highlighted that there is no joined up approach between the traders, they are not working together.

Nationally there are already examples of how to increase footfall into a town which is something that is usually led by the Chamber of Trade.

**Action:** Cllr Pamela Forbes to visit local businesses to encourage participation at this meeting.

The meeting returned to Agenda Item No. 8)

#### **19/10. To discuss event planning, promotion, marketing and the Town Council's visitor sign at the entrance to South Devon Railway:**

It was suggested to publish an annual events calendar for the town. Further publications of the Town Guide and/or a visitor's information leaflet was raised.

Following a variety of issues, the Town Council terminated the contract with the publishers for the Town Guide. The 2017/18 edition of the guide was overseen by a Councillor who has now moved out of the area. A huge amount of time over many months and money is needed to produce a guide and the Council does not currently have the capacity or designated budget for this project.

Members agreed that an events team/manager is needed for event planning and a promotional marketing campaign.

8.30pm A member of the public arrived.

A suggestion was made to have a board/map and leaflets to replace or cover the sign at the entrance to South Devon Railway, but this must have the cooperation of the railway.

**Actions:** To commission a designer to create a new board using the original structure following further discussion by a working party comprising members of the new Council.

Maureen Tuffnell to have an initial informal discussion with the designer used by the OMG.

**19/11. Climate Emergency motion update and creation of a Citizens Assembly:**

Volunteers have come forward for a new Citizens Assembly but due to election purdah, the first meeting cannot be organised until later in May.

Those who wish to volunteer should provide their details to the Town Clerk.

**19/12. To discuss concerns raised in relation to the Devonian site:**

Cllr Pamela Forbes: Residents have expressed concerns about a range of alleged activities at the Devonian site in relation to health and safety, noise etc. Has the asbestos that is left on the site been inspected? Have the appropriate authorities inspected the site to ensure compliance following recent changes and new businesses moving in?

**Action:** Cllr Forbes to raise these concerns with Teignbridge District Council Environmental Services and report back to this meeting.

**19/13. To discuss the terms of reference and delegated powers for the new committee structure:**

Discussed under item 19/08.

**19/14. Town Council Projects:**

Nothing to report – standing item to be removed from all agendas.

**19/15. Chair's Announcements:** None

**19/16. Councillors' Reports regarding matters relevant to this meeting:**

Buckfastleigh Bat Day will take place on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April in Victoria Park hosted by the Devon Wildlife Trust.

**19/17. Items requiring urgent attention:**

Cllr Andy Stokes: School cuts have been announced with 74 staff redundancies across all the academy schools that are part of the South Dartmoor Multi-Academy Trust. No information was released about this. Why are these cuts needed? Why has there been no consultation? What is the scope of the cuts? A meeting of the parents with the directors has been arranged for Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April at 6.30pm.

Cllr Pam Barrett proposed that the Town Council write to South Dartmoor Community College and express its concerns. No official announcement has been made and when the accounts were signed off in January, there was nothing identified as significant that raised an alarm. Communication has been very poor.

**Action:** Members unanimously agreed to the proposal that the Chair writes a letter to both the CEO and Chair of Directors requesting clarification. What has happened? Why has it happened? When was the decision made and how was it made?

It was noted that the Council can make a Freedom of Information request if this information is not forthcoming. Where are the minutes to this decision and why has there not been an Annual General Meeting? Are the Directors aware of their responsibilities? Letter to include specific questions, for e.g. confidentiality clauses, when will this happen? Why has the information held by Companies House not been updated? Chair to request a comprehensive written response to these questions.

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm.