

BUCKFASTLEIGH MATTERS MEETING

Minutes of the Buckfastleigh Matters Meeting held in Room 3 at the Town Hall on Tuesday 3rd December 2019 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Councillors Sue Clarke (Chair), Andy Stokes, Pam Barrett, Huw Cox, Pamela Forbes, Ron Fox, David Patrick, Sylvee Phillips and Judith Hart (Town Clerk).

In attendance: 3 members of the public

Press: No Press in attendance

19/80. Apologies: Cllrs John Bailey, Darren Greep, Gwena Harman and Kate Kayley.

19/81. Councillors invited to declare any interests: None

19/82. Questions and comments from the public: None

19/83. Minutes of the Buckfastleigh Matters meeting held on 6th November 2019 and review of actions:

Signed by Cllr Sue Clarke.

Actions from this meeting:

- Proposal to combine the Heart of Buckfastleigh Awards celebration with a Town Council-hosted SOUP event in the New Year – promotion of event ongoing.
- Riverford and Buckfast Abbey have agreed to donate food towards the Christmas Community lunch. Inga Page to invite previous attendees to this event.
- It was noted that the Town Council will fund a First Aid in the workplace course – Councillors and staff are encouraged to attend.
- The Clerk confirmed that the Town Ranger has submitted a bid to the Devon Community Resilience Fund for the purchase of additional items identified for the emergency equipment store in the Town Hall.

19/84. Planning Applications for commercial sites and areas of significant development or interest:

No applications received.

Cllr Sylvee Phillips arrived at 7.40 pm.

Cllr Forbes expressed concern about light pollution at the Devonia site due to ongoing work.

19/85. Initial discussion to consider the option to adopt the play area at Furlong Close, Buckfast following refurbishment by Teignbridge District Council:

The play park at Furlong Close which is owned by Teignbridge District Council (TDC) is run down and only has two swings left.

It was noted that no consultation has been carried out with the residents. TDC has suggested two options:

1. That TDC fund the refurbishment of the play park using the design attached to their proposal and upon completion transfer ownership to the Town Council or other community organisation.
2. That TDC fund the refurbishment but using a different design and or contractor proposed by the Town Council and again transfer this asset as proposed above.

Elaine Day, Chair of the Buckfast Residents' Society confirmed that this is not viable option for their small group to take over the management of the play park.

The costs of maintenance, management and insurance are not known, but this proposal would have significant cost implications for the Town Council.

Members asked if there a third option where TDC refurbish and retain it and would be interested in exploring options for e.g. if the Town Council or Victoria Park take it over this asset would TDC agree to an annual funding contribution for ongoing maintenance? Victoria Park has the governance and structure in place and the experience, but the Trustees would have to agree to this proposal and examine the cost implications.

Cllr Stokes said TDC should confirm the actual costs of running this facility?

It is unlikely that the Town Council would be in a position to take ownership of this asset as budgets have already been allocated to other projects and we lack capacity, however if the Town Council does not take the play park over will TDC retain it? This would also need to be a decision made by full Council.

Action: Clerk to respond to TDC with the following points:

- The Town Council is pleased that TDC are proposing to use the same contractor used by Victoria Park, but would ask that a community consultation takes place concerning the design. The Resident's Society have offered to assist with this.
- To advise that due to the financial commitment and lack of capacity the Town Council is not in apposition to take ownership of the park.
- To ask will TDC retain this asset if the Town Council or other community organisation does not agree to the proposed transfer?
- Will TDC continue to contribute towards maintenance costs?
- The Town Council would like to explore options with TDC.

19/86. Proposal to facilitate and fund a three-year cycle of community training:

Members agreed to develop a 3-year cycle to cover a variety of training opportunities and workshops for the community including health and safety, safeguarding, fire safety and defibrillator training.

It was confirmed that the emergency first aid at work training will take place in January and will have some places available to the Town Council, Town Hall and other organisations in the town.

Decision: To develop and design a training programme – Cllr Kayley agreed to assist with this. Funding would come from the Community Development Fund budget. It is estimated that £2,000 would cover the costs but a charge could be included to encourage a attendance which would be postcode restricted.

19/87. Devon Floor Resilience Community Pathfinder Project – river monitoring gauge CCTV (FROG) update:

There are two parts to the river monitoring gauge - a CCTV camera and a depth gauge. The camera stopped working at end of October. Cllr Patrick raised this with Devon County Council (DCC) who contacted the contractor. The contractor has provided a quote for £778.00 (exc VAT) to access and assess the site and replace the camera battery. Under the original agreement maintenance of the FROG lies with DCC until 2018 and should have been taken over by the Town Council, however the subscription fee of £200 per year has been paid by DCC until February 2020.

Actions:

- The Town Council acknowledges responsibility of the maintenance of the river monitoring gauge but needs to confirm the estimated cost of maintenance and the subscription.
- Clerk to instruct the contractor to carry out the necessary work and raise a purchase order as per the quote provided.

Proposed by Cllr Andy Stokes, seconded by Cllr Pamela Forbes with all Members in agreement.

19/88. Proposal to plant a replacement native tree at the Church Steps turning circle:

Cllr Barrett – Suggestion to plant a native oak tree at the Church Hill turning circle to replace the diseased tree removed by DCC. Dartmoor National Park ecologist supports this initiative, but as it is DCC land permission will be required. Members agreed in principal to explore this idea and the costs involved.

Action: Town Ranger to discuss with DCC.

19/89. Chair's Announcements: None**19/90. Councillors' updates regarding matters relevant to this meeting:**

Cllr Patrick attended a Devon Resilience Forum meeting and met with colleagues from Ivybridge and Dartmouth who currently do not have flood plans and are interested in working with Buckfastleigh.

The Environment Agency and Devon Rivers Trust provided predicted data concerning future river levels with higher levels expected in winter and less in summer.

Cllr Stokes met with Learn Devon over 12 months ago, but this has not yet resulted in provision of GCSE Maths and English classes in the Town Hall. It was suggested to raise the matter with Cllr Stuart Barker or Cllr Rufus Gilbert the DCC Cabinet portfolio holder for adult education or a higher level at Learn Devon.

Members understand that Learn Devon is under pressure, but no progress has been made and it is difficult for the community to access adult education with limited public transport.

Action: Cllr Stokes agreed to initially contact Cllr Gilbert.

19/91. Items requiring Urgent Attention: None

The public left at 8.45pm and the Chair moved the meeting into a Part II session to receive an update to a confidential matter raised under a Part II session at the Buckfastleigh Matters Meeting held on 6th November 2019.

The meeting closed at 9.03pm.