

# BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

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**Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at 7.00pm.**

**Present:** Councillors: Paul Georghiades (Chair), John Bailey, Sue Clarke and Judith Hart (Town Clerk).

**In attendance:** Cllr Sylvee Phillips, Anji Hartnell-Todd, Chair of Buckfastleigh Christmas Fair Committee

**Press:** None

**25/15. Apologies for absence:** Cllr Steven Burch and Ron Fox

**25/16. Councillors invited to declare any interests:** None

**25/17. To approve and sign the minutes from the Finance Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025:**

Minutes signed by Cllr Georghiades

**25/18. To receive the current Grants Report for 2025/26:**

Noted

**25/19. Initial discussion following receipt of one larger grant applications with recommendations to full Council:**

**Buckfastleigh Christmas Fair** – Request for £1,300 towards total running costs of £4,200 including security, first aid, road closure, licence etc using a professional events company and second request for £2,000 towards the cost of hiring a children's toy ride and traditional fairground activity stall. It was noted that this application has changed since submission of the original application for the hire of the Victorian carousel as this company has ceased trading.

Anji Hartnell-Todd is new to the role but has consulted with residents who support this annual event and would like to see it continue. The committee is having difficulties in recruiting volunteers but has received donations and sponsorship for various activities. Committee members would like to maintain the traditional and unique feel of the fair but introduce some fresh ideas too. They believe it is important to have a Father Christmas, but on this occasion will employ an actor.

The committee would like to fundraise for Christmas 2026 but have secured some new performers for this year and have the support and cooperation of the businesses in Fore Street.

**Recommendation:** The Finance Committee wholeheartedly supports both applications and recommends for resolution at the September Town Council meeting to fund from both the Larger Grants fund and the Culture and Events budget.

**25/20. Initial 2026/27 budget discussion pending public consultation:**

The Clerk suggested that holding an informal face to face consultation is more effective than a paper/online questionnaire and to use the October meeting for this purpose.

Members agreed but with the provision of refreshments and cakes.

Cllr Clarke offered to consult with residents using the Social Supermarket too.

It was acknowledged that the decision to close the Woodholme car park toilets in 2027 by Teignbridge District Council (TDC) had been made and that the Town Council needs to move forward from this debate and consider other options.

Whilst it is difficult to estimate the cost of acquiring (for eg. engaging a solicitor and insurance valuation), running and maintaining the toilets having received very little information from TDC, Members agreed it would be prudent to budget some contingency into the 2026/27 and 2027/28 precepts and if not used this could be directed to another project that benefits the community. If the precept is not increased over the next two years Buckfastleigh is likely to be left with no toilets and a decaying building.

**Recommendations:**

- To host a budget consultation evening on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> October in place of the monthly meeting. Details to be confirmed at the September Town Council Meeting.
- Subject to consultation with residents, include an estimated increase in the precept in preparation of the proposed transfer of TDC owned toilets.

**Action:** Clerk to research the costs and liabilities to other parishes who already own and run toilets within south Devon.

**25/21. To review the Clerk's spending limit:**

Due to increasing costs on day-to-day revenue expenditure the Clerk requested an increase to her spending limit of £2,500 which does not require authorisation by two of the four account signatories in accordance with Standing Orders.

**Recommendation:** Proposal to increase to £4,000. To be resolved by full Council.

**25/22. Questions and comments from the public:** No public in attendance.

**25/23. Items requiring urgent attention:** None

Meeting closed at 8.10 pm.