

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Finance Committee** meeting held in the Town Clerk's Office on **Wednesday 25th October 2017 at 7.30pm.**

Present: Councillors:- Andy Stokes (Chair), Pam Barrett, Mark Maish, Linus McCloskey, Greg Porter and Judith Hart (Town Clerk/RFO)

In attendance: Cllr Simon Rines, Tim Coulton (Scoriton and Buckfastleigh Twinning Association) and Jim Euridge (Bungalow Youth Project)

Part I (Open to the Public)

17/35. Questions raised by the Public: None

17/36. Apologies: Cllrs Fanny Jackson and Neil Smith
Anne Goulborn (Scoriton and Buckfastleigh Twinning Association)

17/37. Declaration of Interests: None

17/38. To approve as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the Meeting held on 28.06.2017:

Signed and approved by Cllr Andy Stokes

17/39. Grant Applications:

Tim Coulton who had circulated a report to Members prior to this meeting, was invited to speak on behalf of the Twinning Association.

Tim confirmed that the Association is very active raising funds, hosting various events in the Town Hall and Football Club and has now established links with the primary schools including a French penfriends initiative.

The group has a new website which provides useful information for anyone who is thinking of joining and as part of its publicity campaign it is hoped that a promotional advert can be created for the monthly cinema club in the Town Hall. The Association is also looking at the inclusion of the twinning reference to the town place name signs.

Buckfastleigh and Scoriton has approximately 30 members in the Association and there are 40 in the French group.

The Association submits a grant application to the Town Council on a bi-annual basis to coincide with the French visit to the town who stay for a long weekend with host families. The reciprocal visits cost on average £90.00 to £100.00 per person.

Outings are usually arranged within the immediate area which include visits to the railway and Abbey to support the local economy.

The Chair thanked Tim for his presentation to the meeting and it was suggested that the French visitors with their host families are encouraged to integrate into the community during their next stay.

The following grant applications were submitted to the Finance Committee by 30 September 2017 as follows: -

Time at the Bar – awarded £250.00 Members agreed that it is important to support groups who work with the elderly and those who suffer from memory loss.

Buckfastleigh Pantomime Group – awarded £250.00

Buckfastleigh and Scoriton Twinning Association – awarded £250.00

Buckfastleigh Christmas Fair – awarded £250.00

The Friendship Group – awarded £250.00

The Seed Christmas Community Meal and Dance – awarded £250.00 The Chair agreed to bring this application forward as an urgent item and Cllr Mark Maish abstained from voting.

Cllr Mark Maish: The Seed, in partnership with the Town Hall, are organising a free Christmas family orientated event which will include a meal, music and entertainment.

It was noted that the application is for £550.00 which is beyond the spending powers of this Committee and that the room hire will receive a 20% discount as a community event.

Cllr Simon Rines suggested that the shortfall could be met from donations.

Decision: All grant applications agreed by the Finance Committee as detailed above to be presented at the November Town Council meeting.

17/40. Community Development Fund Applications:

Jim Euridge was invited to speak on behalf of the **Bungalow Youth Project** who have applied to the Community Development Fund.

The Bungalow has had the full support of the Devon Youth Service since 2014 and then withdrew. The project was closed for four days before re-opening again. It is difficult to secure funding as youth work is not viewed as important and there are misconceptions about what youth workers do. The most important function of a youth worker is to encourage relationship building and trust with an adult who can potentially prevent problems reaching a crisis if nipped in the bud early on in the process.

The facility is completely free with no charge for refreshments. In return young people who attend are expected to demonstrate social responsibility for eg. helping with the Rotary Club sleigh.

The average attendance is 25 to 30 people per evening and the Bungalow is open from 6.00 to 9.00pm on Tuesdays and Fridays and on Thursdays from 6.00 to 8.30pm for juniors aged 10 to 13 years.

An application for £5,000 has been submitted to the Town Council to fund staff or alternatively to sponsor the cost of one night per week. It is hoped that this facility can open four nights per week, but it would need to be financially stable before this can happen.

An informal educational curriculum is offered which ranges from cookery and craft classes to more challenging topics such as drug abuse and smoking.

Cllr Simon Rines: The Council is very concerned that the mediation process between the BCDPT trustees and Victoria Park trustees, who are the landlord, has stalled. The building is an asset and is not used enough for the benefit of the community.

Cllr Andy Stokes: Victoria Park inherited the lease of the Bungalow from Teignbridge District Council (TDC) which is restricted to providing just youth work. The lease should be changed so that other users can hire the building which would provide a source of revenue.

Jim Euridge: The Bungalow had hosted some bookings, but this was cancelled by the Victoria Park trustees.

The Chair advised that the trustees had no choice in this matter as this was in breach of the terms of the lease created by TDC.

The Town Council needs partners to support a full programme of youth work and it is important that we all work together. A youth consultation has already been carried out, so the Council is aware of what young people would like. There is the potential to raise £15,000 in the budget to help achieve this. There is a need to develop the relationship between the Victoria Park and BCDPT trustees to be able to move forward. The TDC lease is not fit for purpose for the building to survive.

Three proposals have been suggested to the BCDPT trustees:-

1. The Park and BCDPT trustees join as one organisation;
2. Review and re-negotiate the terms of the lease or;
3. Continue as now with no resolution

Cllr Andy Stokes would be pleased to recommend this application to full Council, but only if the above issues reach an amicable solution.

It was acknowledged that the swimming pool as part of Victoria Park is substantially subsidised by the Town Council. If the Bungalow could raise some of its own funding as part of the Park this would contribute to releasing part of the grant that the Council provides.

Action: In principal the Finance Committee is in favour of supporting the recommendation of this application subject to Cllr Stokes and Rines invitation to the meeting scheduled between the Park and BCDPT trustees in November and an amicable agreement being reached. A unanimous vote was taken to this effect with abstention by Cllr Pam Barrett.

Cllr Pam Barrett reiterated that it is important that all the youth providers within the parish work together.

Nature Play & Clay – application for £2,151.00 towards a community project called Ceramic Stove Creations (total cost £9,789.00) which will run for two years and include a series of workshops to hand-make a ceramic bowl with a willow-weave fringe using a stovepipe kiln. The project will engage with local people, secondary schools and university students and encourage their confidence with pottery and creative skills.

Members agreed that further information is needed before any recommendation can be made. No match funding has been secured for this project.

Decision: Applicant to be invited to a meeting with members of this committee to discuss further.

Action: It was agreed that where an application to the Community Development Fund is by an organisation not known to the Town Council, further information and discussion is required with the applicant as part of a secondary stage.

Buckfast Residents' Society in partnership with Buckfast Village Hall (previously known as Southpark Community Centre) – application for pedestrian access safety improvements to the hall. 50% match funding has been secured. A further £470.00 is needed to fund this project.

Decision: Members agreed to award £470.00 which is within the spending powers of this committee.

West Devon Art Workshops – Application for £1,050.00 (total cost £1,800.00) to develop 'Art for All Buckfastleigh' which is a project to promote wellbeing and combat isolation among the over 50's through art classes held in the Town Hall.

Decision: Applicants to be invited to a meeting with members of this committee to discuss further.

17/41. Budget Analysis Reports 01.06.17 - 30.09.17: Noted and signed by the Chair

Special thanks were given to Judith Hart as the RFO for the successful completion of the 2016/17 external audit and Annual Return.

17/42. Bank Payments Reports and Bank Statements 01.06.17 - 30.09.17: Noted and signed by the Chair

17/43. To discuss the initial results and feedback from the Community Participatory Budget Consultation held on 10th July 2017:

The following feedback from this event was noted:-

- Residents are supportive of projects for young people and the elderly;
- There is enthusiasm for the arts including music, dance and craft activities.
- Food and growing food initiatives including an annual food fair which could promote local growers and manufacturers;

- Training for voluntary community groups and organisations that operate for the benefit of the community – the Town Council has already actioned this request by facilitating monthly free training sessions in the Town Hall.

17/44. Initial draft Budget 2018/19 discussion:

The RFO has completed the first draft of the new budget that would meet the costs of all the existing and proposed new projects with an initial suggested increase to the precept which is below the rate of inflation.

Action: Further discussion to take place at the November Town Council meeting with a view to ratification at the December meeting.

17/45. The Elector Fund and Community Infrastructure Levy payment:

An application from **Buckfastleigh Community Care** has been submitted to the Town Council for the Elector Fund for £1,000.00. It was agreed that all applications for this fund should be asked to complete a Community Development Fund application so that Members have a full understanding of each project before recommendation.

Action: Clerk to forward a CDF application to Buckfastleigh Community Care.

Buckfastleigh Naturally Healthy have made an initial request to the Town Council to support this project financially following the withdrawal of funding by DNPA and Public Health. It was agreed that this would be a substantial financial and long-term commitment and that this group needs to look at other funding sources too.

Action: Clerk to arrange a meeting between representatives of this group and the Finance Committee to discuss further.

The Community Infrastructure Levy payment to be deferred to the November Finance Committee.

17/46. Planning the ‘Awards for All’ grant expenditure programme:

Cllr Pam Barrett and the Clerk have met with the organiser for the ‘Hello Summer’ programme to discuss the next phase of this project.

17/47. Items requiring Urgent Attention: None

Meeting closed at 10.05pm.