

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Tourism, Recreation and Economic Development Committee Meeting** held on **Tuesday 17th January 2017 at 7.30pm.**

Present: Councillors: - Simon Rines (Chair), Pam Barrett, Fanny Jackson, Neil Smith, Ron Fox, Greg Porter, Dan Simpson and Judith Hart (Town Clerk).

In attendance: Val Browning (The Valiant Soldier) Maureen Tuffnell (Orchard Millennium Green Trust and W.I.) and Anne Werry (OMG),

17/28. Questions from the public: None.

17/29. Apologies: Sheila Phillips (William Pengelly Cave Studies Trust – WPCST)

17/30. Declarations of Interest: None

17/31. Chair to invite comments from the local attractions and members of the Buckfastleigh Chamber of Trade represented at this meeting: No comments

17/32. To approve and sign as correct the Minutes of the Tourism and Recreational Committee meeting held on Tuesday 5th July 2016.

Signed and approved by Cllr Pam Barrett.

17/33. To discuss the improvement of signage around the Parish to encourage visitors deferred from the July meeting:

Information had been circulated to Members concerning the requirements and process stipulated by Devon County Council for the installation and type of signage permitted.

Members agreed that the car parks in the town need better signage and that the sign at the junction of Dart Bridge Road and Buckfast Road encourages visitors to go around the town rather than into it, although it was acknowledged that larger vehicles should take this route.

The Chair advised the Committee to look at tourism (brown signs) and non-tourism signs and the Clerk highlighted the problems of the cost of erecting the sign at the entrance to South Devon Railway by the Council to encourage visitors into the town. New signs are very expensive, require planning permission and must conform to a certain standard.

Cllr Neil Smith: Could individual businesses be asked as to what they feel is needed?

Val Browning: *The brown signs for The Valiant are not of significant benefit.*

Decision: It was agreed that due to the cost and validity the Council would not pursue additional signage at the present time. The entry points to the town could however, be made more attractive with bulb planting and it was proposed that the Council could adopt these areas.

17/34. Pubwatch and anti-social behaviour in the town.

Cllr Simon Rines gave an update of the recent meeting facilitated by the Town Council and that the zero tolerance and poster campaign had been positive with reports that incidents of anti-social behaviour had decreased.

Cllr Dan Simpson: A Pubwatch meeting called by the Pubwatch Chair was also held before Christmas where individuals who are known to participate in anti-social behaviour were identified and added to the “banned” list.

Cllr Pam Barrett: A meeting has been held with a representative from the Co-op supermarket head office following a letter from the Council asking for clarification as to how anti-social behaviour and drink related problems are dealt with by the store and their policy for the selling of alcohol to customers who are intoxicated. The Co-op does not ban customers, but are now looking at potentially violent individuals with respect to security and safety measures for their staff. It was stressed that the supermarket needs to take some responsibility.

Another meeting is to be arranged with the Co-op, the Town Council, Police and members of Pubwatch soon.

17/35. Town Guide update:

The Town Council is contractually obliged to deliver the guide door to door. The next edition Will be for 2018/19. There is the option to pay for delivery or use volunteers. The aim of the guide was to be tourism based and not to compete with the ‘Around Buckfastleigh’ publication. A further two editions are required using the current publisher to honour the contract. The Council would need a production editor to produce the guide in-house in the future.

Decision: Cllr Simon Rines to send a notice to the community news sheet to notify residents of delivery and to encourage readers to return their copy to the Clerk’s office once read. Cllr Rines will also draft a letter to the publishers to discuss the possible termination of the contract and the Clerk to arrange delivery via the local newsagent.

Members discussed the purpose of the guide and Cllr Greg Porter offered to do the work for the next edition.

17/36. Proposal to organise a Press trip in 2017 to promote tourism:

Cllr Simon Rines: This proposal is to invite a group of journalists from various publications, for eg, wildlife, walking, railways together with representatives of the national press to take a tour around the town and will be provided with complimentary accommodation, food and transport. Volunteers would be needed to facilitate this event and define what is specifically to be promoted.

It was suggested that this event could link in with the Buckfast Abbey Millennium anniversary in 2018 and that ideally it should be organised for the summer and funded by sponsorship from the local businesses who would benefit from the promotion.

Decision: Members agreed that due to the amount of organisation and coordination required that this could be a project for 2018 and that an itinerary would be needed. To discuss again at the next meeting.

17/37. Meeting with representatives of Buckfast Abbey update:

The Council is in regular contact with the Abbey, but there is no news to report at present.

17/38. Creating a promotional video programme update:

Cllr Simon Rines: This is a suggestion to create videos that promote the history, ecology, wildlife, adventure tourism and other aspects of the area for the Council website, 'Youtube' etc. Local attractions could be encouraged to make their own promotional videos or contribute funding to engage a local film maker.

This could be extended to hosting a natural history film with a speaker in the Town Hall. Short promotional films could also be shown prior to the monthly film at the cinema club. It was suggested that the Council could also approach University students who are studying film-making etc to assist in this project.

Action: Cllr Greg Porter to liaise with Cllr Rines and research further.

17/39. Recruitment of volunteers for tourism projects:

It was suggested that the Council looks at creating a sports and leisure activity project looking at how the community uses green space in the parish. The Football Club will benefit from new floodlights as part of the Devon Air Ambulance helipad initiative so it is important that the use of this facility is developed.

There is a need to bring all the sports clubs and sport providers together to establish who does what and where with a view to upgrading club houses and facilities and assess what is available for young people. A sports panel could be created which can meet and discuss issues, funding, ambitions for the future and formulate a sports strategy. There is not enough structured sport in Buckfastleigh especially for young girls.

Action: Members agreed that the next TRED meeting should be dedicated to sport in the parish and that the Clerk invites all the sports related clubs and organisations.

It was suggested that an all-weather five aside pitch would be useful. Members acknowledged that there is a problem with recruiting volunteers, but a project often needs to be identified before asking for help.

17/40. Proposal for local tourist attractions to support a tourism promotion fund initiative:

Tourist attractions and local businesses could be promoted by the Town Council in return for a donation. It is helpful to share knowledge and promote other businesses which can bring visitors into the town.

Val Browning: *The Tourist Information Centre does not provide a booking service as the volunteers are not aware when rooms are available or where. This would be a helpful facility to provide.*

Cllr Pam Barrett: An annual programme of events such as the Wool Gathering, Lamb Pie Day, All Hands to the Pump and the Ice Gala should be promoted, not just on the online calendar, but with the use of promotional text and pictures.

Maureen Tuffnell: *There is an increasing interest in engineering archaeology which is relevant to Buckfastleigh's woollen mill history. An exhibition could be created to this effect using materials and machinery that are available in the area.*

Cllr Simon Rines: Blues and Jazz festivals usually attract a lot of visitors as demonstrated in neighbouring parishes.

Decision: Members agreed that a detailed discussion is needed to progress these ideas further.

17/41. Correspondence:

The Clerk advised that due to an unprecedented demand for redundant red telephone boxes, there has been no decision regarding the application for the telephone kiosk situated on Dart Bridge Road or the expression of interest for the other boxes identified within the parish.

Maureen Tuffnell: *Buckfastleigh W.I are supporting the provision of a parish defibrillator for 2017 and if the Dart Bridge telephone kiosk is re-located to a more central site this could be used to house the defibrillator.*

17/42. Items requiring urgent attention:

An update was provided following the recent site visit to the Salmons Leap development. Pre-planning advice from Dartmoor National Park (DNPA) to the owner does not support the proposed expansion of the site to show case local producers and provide facilities for kayakers who use the River Dart and visit the café.

The Town Council does not concur with the objections and reasons given by the planning authority and that the business does not support tourism. It is an important development for the town which fits in with the objectives of the Buckfastleigh Neighbourhood Plan.

Action: Clerk to send a letter to DNPA supporting the proposed development and to disagree with the objections raised.

Cllr Pam Barrett confirmed that there is still no response from the District Council to clarify the leisure spend specifically for Buckfastleigh and that investment is clearly directed towards Newton Abbot and Teignmouth.

An annual programme of youth activities could be supported under the remit of this committee or the freelance fund raiser who has been engaged by Victoria Park could work up a programme and source funding through grants and sponsorship.

Action: Recommendation to full Council to either spend £1,000 of the new £3,000 free kids activities budget to engage the fund raiser to scope up the work or fund this from the Community Development Fund.

Cllr Simon Rines: Working in partnership with the South Devon Railway, the Council is looking at screening the Hound of the Baskervilles film at Holy Trinity Church which would include a meal and train ride prior to the film show. This would take place in mid to late August when the evenings are starting to get darker.

‘Colourscape’ is another initiative which could be invited to the town where giant inflatable chambers of colours and sound are set up for one weekend over two years, a large flat site is needed and this could only take place if there is enough ticket income. Cllr Rines to research further.

Meeting closed at 9.33pm