

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held in Room 3 at the Town Hall on Wednesday 8th November 2017 at 7:30pm

Present: Pam Barrett (Chair), Janet Jones, Simon Rines, Andy Stokes, Linus McCloskey, Neil Smith, and Judith Hart (Town Clerk).

Press: No press in attendance.

In attendance: 8 members of the public

Part I (Open to the Public)

17/124. Apologies: Councillors Pamela Forbes, Dan Simpson, Greg Porter, Ron Fox, Mark Maish, Stuart Barker (County & District) and John Nutley (District).
Cllr Fanny Jackson did not attend or give apologies.

17/125. Councillors invited to declare any interests: None

17/126. To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday 11th October 2017:

Signed and approved by Cllr. Pam Barrett

17/127. Questions raised by the Public: None

17/128. Grants Presentation:

Grant cheques were presented to members of the following organisations:

Buckfast Village Hall - £470
Scoriton & Buckfastleigh Twinning Association - £250
Time at the Bar (at the Valiant Soldier) - £250
The Friendship Group - £250
Buckfastleigh Pantomime Group - £250
Buckfastleigh Christmas Fair - £250
The Seed Community Christmas Meal and Dance - £250

17/129. Reports from the Police, County Councillor and District Councillors:

Police report: No report available.

The Clerk advised that a letter dated 19th October 2017 had been received from the Police Sector Inspector for Coastal and Rural Teignbridge, Andrew Tomlinson, in response to the Town Council letter sent on 19th September. It is apparent from this letter that the reduced level of policing in the parish is not temporary, but likely to be a permanent gap as a result of cuts to their budget.

Action: Cllrs Neil Smith and Andy Stokes to draft a response to the Inspector's letter with copies to the local MP, the Police Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall and the Press, stating that this reduced level of cover for Buckfastleigh is not acceptable.

17/130. To receive the minutes of the non-quorate Tourism, Recreation and Economic Development Committee held on 10th October 2017: Noted.

The Chair conveyed her thanks on behalf of the town to the organisers of the Britain in Bloom competition. An event to celebrate their success has been arranged for 15th November in the Kings Arms.

Cllr Pam Barrett was also pleased to report the success of the swimming pool and Hello Summer 2017 programme of children's activities.

The recent vandalism at South Devon Railway was noted.

17/131. To receive the minutes of the Finance Committee held on 25th October 2017: Noted

This meeting highlighted the need for further information to be provided by applicants to support applications to the Community Development Fund (CDF). Individual meetings are being arranged to ensure clarity.

The Committee have made a provisional recommendation to provide funding from the CDF to support the Bungalow Youth Project to sponsor or staff one night per week, but there are still outstanding issues to resolve. The current restrictive lease on the building prevents community use and the generation of much needed income. An amicable agreement must therefore be reached as there appears to be some misinformation in the community.

There is a suggestion to renegotiate the lease or join with Victoria Park as a single entity. Both sets of trustees have indicated that they are minded to do this, but no further progress has been made.

Cllr Pam Barrett: The Council would like to deliver more youth activities in 2018 and the Bungalow would be the ideal venue to facilitate this.

The Buckfastleigh Community Development Project Trust are scheduled to hold an Annual General Meeting in November. Representatives of the Town Council would like to attend this meeting, the results of which will be reported to the December Town Council meeting.

17/131. To receive the minutes of Planning, Environment and Transport Committee held on 1st November 2017: Noted

It was reiterated that there is a need to look at car parking within the parish and that volunteers are needed to join a parking working party. Parking problems within the town were highlighted as a significant concern to the Dartmoor National Park officers, Dan Janota and Alex Gundy who were in attendance at this meeting to discuss the Dartmoor Local Plan Review.

It was noted that Devon County Council (DCC) are responsible for street parking and Teignbridge District Council for car parks. This is a substantial issue which the Town Council does not have the resources to undertake or analyse.

Action: It was agreed that parking restrictions in Buckfastleigh need to be examined and the Clerk was asked to set up a parking working party and solicit volunteers from the public to join it.

Whitecleave Quarry update – DCC have issued 32 ROMP applications without incident or error and yet the notice for Whitecleave had only 1 accurate point out of 5. The mediation process had initially stalled and then failed to proceed. There is concern about the competency of the planning officer who is responsible for this site who has admitted to his mistakes, and it appears that the Chair of the DCC Audit and Scrutiny Committee does not wish to be involved.

Action: Members agreed to discuss this matter further when a response to the Stage 2 complaint has been received.

17/132. Town Council Projects update:

- Helipad – The community landing site at the football ground for Devon Air Ambulance is now complete. Cllr Barrett thanked John Bailey, Chair of Buckfastleigh Rangers Football Club for his support and cooperation and it is hoped that the new LED lights will extend the use of the football pitch.
- Community solar panels – Cllr Andy Stokes reported that these will be installed at the swimming pool in February and funding is now being sought for the Town Hall.
- Hello Summer – There is now a cross over with funds for the youth activities following receipt of the Awards for All grant. Activities continue with fortnightly bouncy castle sessions in the Town Hall, parkour and cinema matinees.

Action: Clerk to update the grant awards report on the Council website.

- Cllr Simon Rines is looking at producing a short film about a year in the life of Buckfastleigh for the Town Hall cinema and was pleased to report that this initiative has been nominated for the New Community Film Society of the Year award.

17/133. Draft Budget 2018/19 discussion:

Members of the Finance Committee agreed that some of the existing projects need to continue and be developed further such as the youth activities programme. Feedback from the community engagement event held in the summer indicated that there is support for activities for the young and elderly and projects that promote the arts such as music festivals, food growing for eg. community gardens and allotments and a food fair. Projects however, need to be sustainable and the Town Council can look at further grant funding to support future initiatives.

Decision: Members broadly agreed to an initial proposal to increase the budget in line with inflation. The draft budget to be discussed further at the November Finance meeting with a view to ratification at the December Town Council meeting.

It was noted that the cost of the free community training programme is being met from the CDF, but some key organisations in the town are not participating or communicating with each other. Groups that have attended the sessions have found these to be useful and have begun to network.

It was also suggested to organise a ‘Fresher’ type fair in the spring so that all the community groups can showcase what they do, to facilitate a youth council and promote a volunteer rewards scheme.

17/134. Review of the Town Council grant allocation process:

Cllr Andy Stokes reported that the £250 grants are established and work well, but a tighter process is needed for more significant sums such as the CDF. Councillors should meet with applicants to obtain more in-depth information and that this would be the second stage of the application process. A review is now required with a view to a revised policy in place for the new financial year in April 2018. A new clause should also be included that if money is not spent, it should be refunded to the Town Council.

Action: Cllr Stokes to draft a revised policy which was proposed by Cllr Pam Barrett and seconded by Cllr Simon Rines with all Members in agreement. Final draft to approved by full Council.

17/135. 2018 Buckfast Abbey Millennium Celebration and ‘Colourscape’

Thousands of visitors are expected to visit Buckfast Abbey for its Millennium Celebration in 2018 and it has been agreed that Buckfastleigh can be promoted at these events. It has been suggested to design and produce a promotional flyer or tri-fold leaflet together with an advertising board aimed at car drivers and users of the vintage bus. Costs could possibly be shared with Buckfastleigh Chamber of Trade.

Action: Clerk to invite representatives of the Chamber of Trade and the tourist attractions to an initial meeting to be chaired by Cllr Simon Rines.

Colourscape – Cllr Rines explained the Colourscape experience at the Sports Festival held in July to the meeting. It was very popular, and the Council is committed to fund a second visit in 2018. Colourscape is also a stimulating and therapeutic experience for children with disabilities.

It was agreed that two days at a cost of £6,500 is a substantial financial commitment, but it could be the main feature of a festival or carnival. Members agreed in principle, but the Council would need to secure some match funding through grants and a slightly higher admission price could be charged.

Decision: Members agreed to fund £3,000 from the 2018/19 Budget if the Council can obtain match funding and to explore support from traders, sports groups and organisations who represent the disabled. A vote was taken with 5 Members in support, Cllr Andy Stokes abstained.

17/136. To discuss the planning, management and communication issues for projects which are within the remit of this committee:

No matters to report to this meeting.

17/137. Chair’s Announcements: None

17/138. Clerk’s Announcements: None

17/139. Correspondence: None

17/140. Reports from other meetings and working parties attended by Members:

Cllr Janet Jones attended the Civic Services for Totnes and Newton Abbot and a health stakeholders meeting about the well-being centre in Ashburton. A new core group has been formed but, there is no news regarding the proposal to move the doctor’s surgery into the old hospital.

Cllr Pam Barrett reminded Members that there will be a Remembrance Sunday Service on 12th November and that the Council will be supporting the Christmas Day dinner at Buckfast Abbey.

17/141. Urgent Items: None.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm

Signed Date.....