

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held in the Room 3 at the Town Hall on Wednesday 12th April 2017 at 7.00 pm.

Present: Councillors: Pam Barrett (Chair), Janet Jones, Mark Maish, Linus McCloskey, Greg Porter, Andy Stokes and Judith Hart (Town Clerk).

Press: No representatives of the Press in attendance

In attendance: Halina Pasiecznik of Vivid Regeneration LLP and 2 members of the public.

Apologies: Councillors Ron Fox, Fanny Jackson, Dan Simpson, Simon Rines, Neil Smith and J. Nutley (District).

Cllr Pamela Forbes did not attend

17/01. Introduction and welcome to the Annual Town Meeting:

Councillor Pam Barrett welcomed everyone to the meeting.

17/02. To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 13th April 2016:

Signed and approved by Councillor Pam Barrett.

17/03. Buckfastleigh youth activities progress report by Halina Pasiecznik of Vivid Regeneration LLP:

Halina explained to the meeting that she has been working with Kerry McCabe, a local youth worker, to carry out a survey with the young people of the town, local schools and youth groups, commissioned by the Town Council, to find out what they do, what is available, what they would like to do and what they need.

Buckfastleigh is isolated from shops and entertainment facilities and public transport is limited so the Town Council decided to take on the project now named 'What's in it for the kids?' to help address this shortfall.

A survey was sent out and a drop-in session took place in the Town Hall. 140 responses were recorded with a 60% children to 40% parent ratio response to the questions. The survey looked at four age groups – 6 to 10 years, 11 to 14 years, 15 to 18 years and 19 to 25 years which included children who attend Buckfastleigh Primary School, South Dartmoor College, the Bungalow Youth Project, Buckfastleigh Youth Club, scouts, brownies and guides.

It was established that many activities undertaken are where parents can take them outside of the town for eg. ballet lessons and canoeing, but these tend to take place after school and at weekends. Both children and parents would like activities during the school holidays and 98% of the parents surveyed agreed that they would make a financial contribution if more activities became available.

There was enthusiasm for most of the activities suggested, but the most popular are drawing and painting, learning a musical instrument, a cinema/film-making club and soft play. The most popular physical activities are swimming, life-saving, rock climbing, football, caving

and sailing. Under the learn and explore category, children would like to do cookery, have trips out, nature and environment activities, gardening and cycle repair.

Each category has also been broken down to look at the most popular activities by age group with the following results:-

6 to 10 years – art, cookery, trips out, film-making and swimming; 11 to 14 years – graffiti workshops, skateboarding, swimming and trips out, 15 to 18 years – art, caving, running and triathlon and 19 to 25 years – trips out and soft play.

Parents with mostly primary school aged children would like soft play, swimming, learning a musical instrument, discos, dancing and climbing.

A wide range of activities were discussed and it was agreed that there is scope to have discos, a cinema club, gardening, swimming, cookery, trips out, graffiti, nature and environment, climbing, football, caving, canoeing, running and soft play.

The survey results can now be used as evidence to support funding applications for an activities leader as all of these proposed activities would need a lot of organising. Halina has started to write a bid for an ‘Awards for All’ grant application for outreach work and a Youth Activities Coordinator. Smaller grants are also available for eg. ‘Children in Need’ and she suggested that the Council looks at the purchase of equipment.

17/04. A Review of Town Council activities during the year and a look ahead to future plans by Councillor Pam Barrett, Mayor of Buckfastleigh:

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WEDNESDAY 12 APRIL 2017

A REVIEW OF THE YEAR AND LOOK FORWARD TO THE FUTURE

A review of the year

April 2017 marks the end of the second year since the current town council was elected and, even though being a councillor is a new thing for all except one of us, it really does feel like a team working together to help make things better in our community.

During 2016, we focused on finding out what projects people and local groups wanted to support and working out how those projects could be funded and delivered. We held a number of informal consultations which were really well attended and identified lots of issues that people felt passionate about. There’s a long list of things people would like to happen, ranging from better community transport to a local composting service; tree and woodland planting to installing CCTV; more parking and getting something done about irresponsible dog owners!

We asked people to priorities this long list and also worked out what we thought could actually be delivered during 2017/18 (some projects like community transport and installing CCTV are complex projects which will require a lot of work and significant funding to deliver). From this, we identified things we could do right now, such as creating a new community cinema and running more events at the town hall, and things that we could do during the coming year. Overall, we identified 8 projects to fund during 2017/18:

- Developing a programme of free youth activity.

- Creating a new Town Ranger role to help with outdoor improvements and maintenance work.
- Providing a Citizen's Advice Bureau outreach worker in Buckfastleigh.
- Contributing to the running costs of Victoria Park, pool, skate park and play area.
- Creation of an Air Ambulance landing site for emergency night flights.
- Installation costs for solar panels on community buildings.
- Allocating funds for the Community Development Fund Grant Programme.
- Contributing to the running costs of the Town Hall as a community venue.

This is an ambitious programme for volunteers to plan and deliver and all the town councillors are grateful for the support of our team and community volunteers who help get things done. We've seen a big increase in the number of people coming forward and getting involved in making the town a better place to live and there's no doubt that the success of these projects will depend on more people joining in. But we also need to think about how these improvements can be sustained in the longer term and how we can deliver some of the bigger projects if that is what the community would like to do in the future.

Our voluntary groups are essential to the town and this year we have given away over £5,300 to support their vital work. I'd personally like to thank everyone who gives their time so generously to make things happen and care for others throughout the year. I know how much time and effort people dedicate to helping others and that without them so many of the things the town loves simply wouldn't be there. I'd also specifically like to thank Buckfast Abbey and all the volunteers who helped to manage and run Christmas day dinner for people in the community who needed it. It was a fantastic meal, a lovely day and huge fun and I know that it was much appreciated by everyone who attended. Thank you.

A look ahead

In the coming year, our challenge will be to deliver on the projects already agreed and funded and start the process of looking to what the community wants to do in 2017/18. We expect to run more community discussions in early summer and autumn to work up any new projects and help us plan the budget for the following year. I hope that anyone with suggestions or views on what needs to happen will take part in those discussions.

Our Neighbourhood Plan has completed the formal phase of consultation and we will be holding a referendum on its adoption during 2017.

We have commissioned work to apply for grant funding to help develop our youth activities programme into a three-year funded project and we are also starting the process of developing a community sports strategy, helping to get more people active and seeing if we have enough evidence of support to apply for grants to improve facilities and the range of sports on offer.

I have chaired and attended many meetings in the past year and I would like to thank all the councillors for their contributions and support and also thank all the people in the community who have contributed their views and ideas. I would like to thank our Town Clerk, Judith Hart, for all her

hard work and valued support to me and all the councillors during the year. I'd also like to thank the town hall team, Clair Stevens, Kiki Sykes and Dave Abbott for keeping us all running!

Councillor Pam Barrett, Mayor of Buckfastleigh

17/05. Public Question Time:

Member of Public: *The results from the youth activity survey are very interesting.*

Meeting closed at 7.40pm.

Signed.....

Date.....