

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held in Room 3 at the Town Hall on Wednesday 14th March 2018 at 7:30pm

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

In attendance: John Nutley (District), 1 new Councillor and 6 members of the public

Part I (Open to the Public)

18/194. Apologies: Cllr Greg Porter, Cllr Dan Simpson and Cllr Stuart Barker

18/195. Councillors invited to declare any interests: None

18/196. To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday 14th February 2018:

Signed and approved by Cllr. Pam Barrett

18/197. New Town Councillor enrolment:

Huw Cox was welcomed and enrolled as a newly co-opted Town Councillor

18/198. Questions raised by the Public:

A member of the public reported 3 abandoned vehicles near the A38/South Devon Railway. Cllr Mark Maish confirmed that this is now being addressed.

Member of the public: *A meeting for the proposed Britain in Bloom 2018 entries has taken place and this year the Town Hall has been entered.*

Fanny Jackson, the newly appointed Chair of the Buckfastleigh Community Development Project (Trust) (BCDPT) challenged the content of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 24th January 2018 and read out a lengthy report with reference to an application to the Community Development Fund on behalf of the Bungalow Youth Project which is summarised as follows:-

- *There has been no response to the application or reason for rejection.*
- *They wish to challenge the statements made with reference to their current state of governance, liability, sustainability and lease of the Bungalow as the service provider.*
- *They do not believe that the discussions which have taken place between the Victoria Park trustees and the BCDPT should be brought to the Town Council.*

The Town Council acknowledges the contents of this report.

Member of the public: *Many people enjoy Victoria Park, but it could be improved with the installation of a water fountain, more litter bins, refurbishment or the renewal of benches, the Bungalow needs redecorating and the anti-social behaviour and allegations of bullying should be addressed. It is understood that the Council employs a Park Warden and that he should be dealing with these requests and issues.*

Cllr Pam Barrett: Victoria Park (VP) is a charity which is not responsibility of the Town Council. All the items raised should be brought to one of the VP meetings however, the charity has very limited funding and resources and they would welcome fundraising efforts by those who support and use the park and its facilities. Incidents of anti-social behaviour should be reported to the police, although there is little cover at the present time. The park is covered by CCTV and the Town Ranger is not a Park Warden and is employed by the Council.

It was noted that the youth worker with the support of both youth clubs should be involved with the alleged problems in the park. The Town Council is developing a youth outreach project and it was suggested to extend the role of the Town Ranger, but this is dependent upon funding.

Fanny Jackson confirmed that funding for the youth worker has been secured for the next 12 months.

The next VP meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 24th April and the PCSO holds a surgery once a month in St Luke's Church where the problems highlighted at this meeting could be raised.

18/199. Reports from the Police, County and District Councillors:

No Police Report for February 2018 was available.

Cllr John Nutley presented a report on behalf of Teignbridge District Council (TDC). The Strategy Performance Report is available online which includes data on service performance for e.g. recycling rates are on track and ahead of schedule at 55.7%, and there is a 33% take up on the green bin initiative which has been disappointing.

Dog fouling remains a big issue.

The Torbay energy opportunities report will be circulated for information.

The TDC car parking charges consultation is now available for comment and it is proposed to increase charges, but this is unlikely to benefit Buckfastleigh.

Members expressed concern that the Town Council was not given adequate time to respond to this consultation.

18/200. Minutes of Finance Committee held on 5th March 2018 deferred from 28th February 2018: Noted

To resolve the following recommendations from Minute Nos:
Minute No. 18/74 Grant Applications

Decision: Unable to resolve item v) as the meeting was not quorate at this point. Application to be deferred to the March Finance Committee.

18/201. Moved to Agenda No. 6 Proposals for funding from the Community Development Fund – to include the engagement of a community fund-raiser, the health and well-being strategy, Councillor and staff training.

Proposal to transfer £1,000 from the Community Development Fund (CDF) to the smaller grants budget.

Decision: Proposed by Cllr Barrett and seconded by Cllr Rines. All Members in agreement with 2 abstentions by Cllrs Neil Smith and Huw Cox.

Meeting returned **Agenda No. 5 to 18/200.**

Minute No. 18/75 Holy Trinity Church application for grant funding for grass cutting

Decision: Agreed in principle subject to submission of a grant application. The grants process will be reviewed in April to ensure greater clarity and transparency. Application by letter with little or no supporting documentation is not adequate.

Minutes No. 18/76-79 Review of Financial Regulations and associated documents.

Decision: Reviews of Risk, Internal Control and Assets were all unanimously approved. The Town Council's Financial Regulations are still under review pending a revised grants process and banking procedures.

Minute No. 18/81 Proposal to fund outreach bike bus trips

Proposal to ring-fence a maximum of £700 from the 2017/18 CDF to fund bike bus trips to various trails in Devon commencing in April which will be part of the new health and well-being strategy.

Decision: Proposed by Cllr Stokes and seconded by Cllr Barrett. All Members in favour with 2 abstentions by Cllrs Pamela Forbes and Neil Smith.

18/201. Community Development Fund - Proposal to engage a fund-raiser, health and well-being strategy, and training:

There is a huge amount of grants available, but the Town Council does not have the capacity to apply for them. Cllr Pam Barrett proposed that the Council looks at employing a fund-raiser and investigate on what terms this person could be engaged for eg. could the fund raiser work on behalf of community groups too?

Decision: All members agreed to explore this option further.

Cllr Pam Barrett: The Council is now looking at the development of a health and well-being strategy document to prioritise resources and access other resources to promote community cohesion and help issues such as loneliness and mental health. A template could be created that can be used by other communities. It is important to unite and encourage existing groups to work together to address specific needs such as combating loneliness by providing transport to the community cinema. Having this strategy would help with funding applications. Buckfastleigh scores high on the scale for health problems and deprivation. A local group called Network of Well-being could be used to help list community aims and objectives and the steps needed to get there.

A member of the public asked why the Council could not just support local groups?

Cllr Pam Barrett: This initiative would be for the benefit of all our community groups.

Cllr Neil Smith requested the Clerk to minute that he felt that the new Chair of the BCDTP and her husband who was also in attendance were attempting to bully and undermine Cllr Barrett with their comments.

Cllr Pam Barrett: It is important to ensure sustainable support in the community by plugging into the well-being network.

Decision: All Members in agreement and support for the proposed well-being strategy.

Proposal to ring-fence some funding from the 2018/19 budget for training in how to manage and facilitate consultation meetings. These new skills can help to establish not just what people want, but how to put it into practice. It could also be offered to community groups.

Decision: Members agreed that Cllr Barrett could explore this further.

The Council would benefit from the award of the General Power of Competence, but this requires a qualified Clerk and two-thirds of the total number of Councillors must be elected. The Clerk has agreed to undertake the Certificate in Local Council Administration and will submit costs, the estimated timescale and time commitment to the April Finance Committee for agreement.

18/202. To receive the minutes of Environment and Transport Committee held on 7th March 2018: Noted

18/203. To discuss A38 safety concerns:

Devon Highways have acknowledged the problem of high water run-off onto the carriageway during periods of heavy rainfall and yet nothing has been resolved.

Cllr Neil Smith: All the incidents have involved aquaplaning and no action has been taken despite there being several fatal accidents.

The Council has been persistently flagging up this problem. It was suggested to contact the Coroner and the Secretary of State for Transport to highlight the issue and ask for advice as to how the Council can raise the profile of this problem.

18/204. Buckfastleigh Emergency Plan:

Cllr Pam Barrett: There had been an amazing response from the community during the recent snow and freezing conditions and congratulated all involved. There is however, a need to re-visit the Town Council's emergency plan. On 27th March there will be a practical flood exercise with the support of the Environment Agency and the Fire Service which will identify all the problems in the plan.

It was agreed that the current method of recruiting volunteers does not work although there are residents who clearly want to help.

The local supermarket could not re-stock due to lack of deliveries, there were problems with staffing in the care home although volunteers need to have up-to-date DBS checks and 4x4 vehicles are needed for medical emergencies.

Members of the public are invited to attend the March 27th event and look at the emergency plan.

18/205. Town Council Projects update and to discuss the planning, management and communications issues for projects for 2018:

Cllr Andy Stokes: The solar panels contractor is no longer conducting business from the address provided. The Town Council will now look for a new provider, but there is a need to proceed with caution due to the financial position.

18/206. Chair's Announcements: None

18/207. Clerk's Announcements: None

18/208. Correspondence: None

18/209. Reports from other meetings and working parties attended by Members:

Cllr Janet Jones attended a meeting of Buckfast Village Hall. The management committee are looking at future projects such as central heating.

Cllr Janet Jones also attended an Ashburton and Buckfastleigh Hospital League of Friends meeting. There was an update on the services now available in the hospital and she was pleased to report that most of the rooms are in use for clinics and training.

Cllr Andy Stokes: What is the long-term outlook for the survival of the hospital?

Cllr John Nutley confirmed that the outlook for the hospital is positive.

Cllr Pamela Forbes reported that there are issues with HGVs using Market Street which exceed the weight limit. This has been reported to Devon Highways.

Cllr Simon Rines has met with the consultant who is preparing a Green Infrastructure Survey for the Neighbourhood Plan. Once completed the Plan will go to the planning inspector for review.

18/210. Urgent Items:

Devon County Council Development and Management Committee will meet on 21st March to determine the Whitecleave Quarry planning application for the continued temporary use of the site. The Town Council was however, only given 4 days' notice to send a representative to this meeting which must be decided by 16th March. It was agreed that this is not enough notice to send a Town Councillor.

Action: Clerk to send all relevant correspondence and Stage 2 complaint correspondence to Devon County Councillor Jacqi Hodgson and explain that Cllr Rines will contact her to discuss further.

Meeting closed at 9.30 pm

Signed Date.....