

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held in the Room 3 at the Town Hall on Wednesday 13th June 2018 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Councillors: Andy Stokes, Janet Jones, Pam Barrett, Huw Cox, Pamela Forbes, Ron Fox, Simon Rines, and Judith Hart (Town Clerk).

In attendance: Cllrs John Nutley (District) and Stuart Barker (District and County), Tom Winters (Teignbridge District Council) and 1 member of the public

Press: No Press in attendance

Part I (Open to the Public)

18/49. Apologies: Cllrs Dan Simpson, Neil Smith, Linus McCloskey and Greg Porter

Cllr Mark Maish did not attend

18/50. Councillors invited to declare any interests: None

18/51. To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 9th May 2018:

Signed and approved by Councillor Andy Stokes

18/52. Questions and comments from the public: None

18/53. Presentation by Tom Winters, Teignbridge District Council Economy Projects Officer on the draft Teignbridge Economic Development Plan:

The new draft Economic Development Plan (EDP) is intended to be a clearer, shorter and more user-friendly document. The goals are to make Teignbridge a better place to have a business and work, with better wages, and increased productivity. Teignbridge District Council's (TDC) vision includes 5 ventures of economic development:

- 1) catalysing growth for commercial property
- 2) driving productivity e.g. the provision of free public WiFi in Newton Abbot, Dawlish and Teignmouth, which if successful, will be extended to other towns
- 3) building partnerships e.g. working with colleges
- 4) networking support e.g. advice and support for new tenants, leaflets for business leases etc
- 5) cooperative services, e.g. advice regarding statutory duties.

Cllr Pam Barrett: How will projects be monitored and is there an action plan?

It was confirmed that TDC will be running a consultation for anyone who wants to have their say.

Cllr Simon Rines: Why wages are significantly lower in the Teignbridge area than the national and Devon average?

Tom Winters: The labour market has changed and become more precarious, for e.g. the increased use of zero hours contracts, there is more self-employment and the global market is driving wages down. Torrridge and North Devon have the lowest wages in Devon.

Tom was asked if there are targets for each of the ventures and he responded that there are none, but TDC will undertake micro-appraisals.

It was agreed that any investment in skills and training is welcome as Buckfastleigh has a significant skills gap for e.g. lack of GCSEs and low educational attainment which limits access to higher paid jobs. The town is often excluded from schemes and consultation events. Tom confirmed that they will be working with schools, colleges and apprenticeship schemes.

Cllr Janet Jones: Buckfastleigh has numerous small companies often with only a handful of employees. There are poor transport links and a lack of affordable work space. How does this fit in with the plan?

Tom Winters: TDC are looking to see if enterprise pods (as used in Northumbria) would be viable at Forde House. If successful, this initiative would be used in other towns.

Cllr Pam Barrett: Work hubs in rural communities will have a different demand.

Mr Winters: The 'Wheels 2 Work' project has been successful.

It was acknowledged that some young people need more support to acquire training and skills.

Cllr Simon Rines: What do businesses say are the biggest challenges?

Tom advised that he has not spoken to Buckfastleigh businesses specifically and has been unable to contact the Chamber of Trade.

It was agreed that an event could be held in Buckfastleigh for local businesses.

Cllr Andy Stokes: Is it appropriate to invest in Wi-Fi when it can be seen as outdated technology when people use 4G etc?

Tom Winters: Wi-Fi will be free to users but there will be an information app and the opportunity for advertising. 4G has a limit on the amount of data you can receive so it is not much use to businesses and there is no additional cost to TDC.

Collective or individual responses to the EDP are welcome.

18/54. Reports from the Police, County and District Councillors:

No police report was available for May.

Cllr John Nutley referred to the TDC ten-year strategy entitled Zero Heroes which focuses on the environmental impact of the Council which includes the use of plastics and the reduction of waste within the organisation. He highlighted the problem of discarded cigarette butts and that these are not always regarded as rubbish.

Car Parking Review – a draft questionnaire has been drawn up to use for the all the TDC owned car parks. Free parking for the day is being promoted as an incentive to complete the survey. The group is currently looking at signage, clarity of instructions and charges.

Cllr Stuart Barker reported that Devon County Council (DCC) is looking at creating a portal for crowdfunding with the intention to support community projects that are seeking funds and who may not be aware of how to get the best out of a crowd funding bid. It may also be

possible for some existing DCC budgets to be available to place funds for projects that meet a criteria.

DCC will be doubling tree inspections following the increase in reported Ash die back.

A number of highway policies are being reviewed. The review of speed limit policies will start in September if the Department of Transport have not published new guidance as a result of their own review. This will impact speed limits including the 20mph policy. DCC are also looking at implementing a 30mph speed limit for Strode Road.

DCC are looking at introducing highway permits which will be time related for roadworks to reduce the time that roads are closed or blocked.

Pavement parking will also come under review and DCC have been lobbying government to change enforcement rules so that civil enforcement officers can deal with problem areas. Currently they can deal with vehicles if there are yellow lines on the highway, but if there are no yellow lines then this is a police issue. DCC are seeking to change the latter and are also looking to obtain powers to remove vehicles that persistently ignore parking restrictions and fail to pay parking tickets.

Chapel Street has been added to the list of pavements to be repaired.

The Council are reviewing their own in-house waste management and the use of plastics with various measures put in place such as the use of sustainable food and beverage packaging and tableware choices.

DCC will continue to work in partnership to allow more residents across Devon to recycle plastic, discourage littering and give support to communities to tackle litter problems.

18/55. Minutes of the Environment and Transport Committee held on 6th June 2018:
Noted.

18/56. Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 23rd May 2018.

To resolve the following recommendations from Minute Nos:

18/22 Citizens Advice Outreach Service – see Minute No. 18/58 below.

18/27 Grant process review – conditions reviewed with unanimous agreement. Resolved

18/57. To discuss the Independent Auditor's Report and sign the Accounting Statement of the Annual Return:

The Independent Auditor's Report had not been received to date. The Chair and Clerk signed the Annual Return Accounting Statement.

18/58. Funding for Citizens Advice Outreach Service (see Finance Committee minutes from 23rd May 2018)

The recommendation from the May Finance Committee is that the Town Council guarantees to fund the Citizens Advice Outreach Service for Buckfastleigh (CA) for the next 12 months by using the existing budget for the first 6 months and to seek alternative funding for the

second half of the year. It was agreed that this arrangement is only transitional as the service will need a new volunteer and to raise funding through grants.

The Town Council wishes to continue to support the CA, but the Citizens Advice service are responsible for their own recruitment. There is a need to look at alternatives and perhaps share the service with other communities.

Action: Cllr Pam Barrett to discuss the future of service with Cllr Linus McCloskey and establish what Citizen Advice Teignbridge are doing to resolve the situation. Members voted in favour of supporting the CA for this financial year only due to the increased travel costs for the volunteer CA advisor.

18/59. Review of Standing Orders:

The Chair explained that the new version is more inclusive and reflective whilst remaining within the legal boundaries and mandatory requirements. The proposed amendments were highlighted individually.

Action: All proposed amendments resolved unanimously.

18/60. Review of draft Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy 2018:

Deferred from May full Council to review proposed amendments.

Action: All proposed amendments resolved unanimously.

18/61. Chair's Announcements:

The Heart of Buckfastleigh event takes place on Saturday 16th June. It is hoped that everyone will attend and support this event.

The Chair thanked the staff and Councillors involved with the creation of the new tourism leaflet which is currently being distributed around the town and wider community.

18/62. Clerk's Announcements: None

18/63. Correspondence: One item of correspondence regarding St. Luke's Church was noted.

18/64. Reports from other meetings and working parties attended by members:

Cllr Janet Jones had attended a recent Buckfast Village Hall management committee meeting and was pleased to report that the hall continues to thrive.

Cllrs Janet Jones and Huw Cox have met with Cllr John Nutley regarding parking proposals and that this will be an agenda item for the July Environment and Transport meeting.

Cllr Jones chaired the panel of judges for the Heart of Buckfastleigh awards and advised that there has been a good response to the public vote and decisions for the recipients of the awards were unanimous.

Cllrs Pam Barrett and Andy Stokes met with James Coburn from Learning Devon. It has been agreed that he will run some free training in maths and English GCSEs in the Town Hall

which will start in September. James may also be able to develop some community training and will speak to local employers about skills shortages and possible skills matching. Cllr Andy Stokes also attended a meeting of Cycle South Devon.

18/65. Items requiring Urgent Attention.

Planning Application No. 0270/18 Proposed: Use of school playing field for educational farm and erection of associated buildings at Continuum and Education Group, Cambian School, Oaklands Park, Buckfastleigh.

Action: Cllr Janet Jones to request an extension from the planning authority as the time permitted for consultation is inadequate and the online publication was delayed. Whilst Members initially have no objection to the proposal it was noted that no environmental impact assessment has been carried out and the views of neighbouring residents should be considered.

Meeting closed at 9.55 pm.