

# BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Finance Committee** meeting held in the Council Chamber on **Wednesday 23rd May 2018 at 7.30pm.**

**Present:** Councillors:- Andy Stokes (Chair), Pam Barrett, Huw Cox, Ron Fox and Judith Hart (Town Clerk/RFO)

**In attendance:** Katie Chaplin, Teignbridge CVS 'SOUP' project

## **Part I (Open to the Public)**

### **18/14. Questions raised by the Public:**

Katie Chaplin: *The 'SOUP' project is an evening event where local people can listen to other groups who can pitch their projects for 5 minutes, followed by 5 minutes of questions. Groups do not have to be constituted and are therefore not bound by the restrictions which may prevent them for applying for other funds. Attendees pay £5.00 for a bowl of soup, snacks and refreshments and have the right to vote for one or two of the projects which are funded from the entry fee and other philanthropic sources. People are given the opportunity to say how the money is spent which can give a sense of community empowerment. A SOUP event will be held in Town Hall on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> July from 6.00 to 8.30 pm.*

Cllr Andy Stokes expressed concerns that this mini crowdfunding ethos may exclude some people in Buckfastleigh but would be supportive if the charge is lowered or changed to voluntary donations which would vary according to affordability.

It was agreed that young people should be encouraged to step forward into the decision-making process and a donation from the Mayor's Fund was suggested to cover the cost of room hire in the Town Hall together with a suggested donation of £250.

Cllr Stokes offered to publicise the event.

It was noted that Teignbridge CVS will have a stall at the Heart of Buckfastleigh event in June.

**18/15. Apologies:** Cllrs Mark Maish, Linus McCloskey, Dan Simpson and Greg Porter.

**18/16. Declaration of Interests:** None.

**18/17. To approve as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the Meeting held on 28.03.2018:**

Signed and approved by Cllr Andy Stokes

**18/18. To note as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the Non-Quorate Meeting held on 25.04.2018.**

Signed and approved by Cllr Andy Stokes

**18/19. Budget Analysis Report 01.03.18 – 30.04.18:** Noted

**18/20. Bank Payments Report and Bank Statement 01.03.18 – 30.04.18:** Noted

**18/21: 2018/19 Budget Calculation deferred from non-quorate meeting on 25.04.18:**

Cllr Andy Stokes explained the 2018/19 budget calculation error was based on the estimated Teignbridge District Council tax base figure and not the actual figure which is received after the budget is set. This has now been corrected.

It was noted that the Council Tax Support Grant has been withdrawn with effect from 2019/20.

Chair moved the meeting to Agenda Item No. 10.

**18/22. Citizens Advice Outreach Service:**

Citizens Advice (CA) costs have increased. Members agreed that it is important to have a money advice volunteer in the town which benefits both the community and the economy. The CA helps people manage their lives and the cost is significantly less than a paid worker. The Town Council needs to find funds for this service to continue and it was suggested that a fundraiser could pursue this.

**Action:** Recommendation to full Council to fund in principle for the full financial year with the first half of the year met from the Council budget and, if possible, we will also look for alternative funding for the second half of the year

It was agreed that a separate discussion is needed at full Council to look at supporting a money advice service if the CA is lost and gauge what support there is for the CA service at the community engagement event in July.

**18/23. Application to the Community Development Fund – End of Grant Report:**

Members were pleased to receive an end of grant report from the West Devon Arts Workshop and that permission could be sought to use the artwork in publicity.

**18/24. Certificate in Local Council Administration costs and implications:**

The Town Council has agreed that by achieving the General Power of Competence it could take on new services for the benefit of the community.

**Action:** Members agreed to fund the cost of the Town Clerk undertaking the CILCA course.

**18/25. Correspondence:** None

**18/26. Items requiring Urgent Attention:** None

Meeting returned to Agenda Item No. 9

**18/27. Grant process review – proposal to amend the small grants policy and introduce a new large grants policy:**

The Chair highlighted the review document circulated to Members and items which required further clarification.

**Recommendations:**

- To increase the smaller grant rounds from 3 to 4 per year and increase the maximum award from £250 to £500.

- To abolish the Community Development Fund (CDF), but utilise the existing CDF application process to create a new Larger Grants application and policy for over £500 with the discretion to be less rigorous for smaller amounts.
- The Finance Committee has the discretion to ask for additional information, meet applicants for an informal discussion and potentially work with them to help achieve their objectives.

**Action:** Recommendation to full Council to adopt the revised Smaller Grants policy and application, abolish the Community Development Fund and adopt a new draft Larger Grants policy and application.

Meeting closed at 9.00 pm.