

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held in Room 3 at the Town Hall on Wednesday 10th October 2018 at 7.30 pm.

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

In attendance: Cllrs John Nutley (District) and Stuart Barker (District & County), Reverend Tom Benson and 4 members of the public

Press: No Press in attendance

18/90. Apologies: Cllrs Simon Rines and Linus McCloskey sent their apologies.

18/91. Councillors invited to declare any interests: Cllrs Pam Barrett, Ron Fox and Dan Simpson declared a non-pecuniary interest re Agenda Item No. 4 Perennial Grant Applications Minute No. 18/46 Victoria Park and Cllr Janet Jones re Agenda Item No. 4 Larger Grant Application No. 18/45 St. Luke's PCC on behalf of Holy Trinity churchyard grass cutting for 2018/19. Written requests for dispensation to speak and vote as trustees were received and approved by the Clerk five working days prior to this meeting.

All Councillors declared a non-pecuniary interest re Agenda Item No. 4 Perennial Grant Application Minute No. 18/46 Buckfastleigh Town Hall & Institute.

18/92. To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 12th September 2018:

Signed and approved by Councillor Andy Stokes

18/93. Questions and comments from the public:

John Goulding reported on the Britain in Bloom Southwest Awards: *The huge success of those entering the competition was a great reflection of all the hard work by individuals in the community and the ability to come together to make the town into something special. Among the many awards to Buckfastleigh included Silver Gilts to Salmon's Leap and The King's Arms and a Gold Award together with the City of Bath cup for landscaping to Buckfast Abbey.*

A full list of awards will be published on the Town Council website.

18/94. Reports from Police, County and District Councillors:

No police report was available.

Cllr Stuart Barker reported on behalf of Devon County Council:

The Police and Crime Panel have decided against an amalgamation with Dorset. An extra 146 police officers will now not be employed as the merger would have provided the savings to fund this, for example by only having to pay for one Police Commissioner instead of two. It was noted that there is now no rural police support for the cities in the event of major incidents.

Proposals to change allowances for foster carers in Devon have been approved. Funding will now be attached to the child.

Road patching and repairs continue.

Cllr John Nutley said there was not much to report from Teignbridge District Council (TDC). The inclusion of parish councillors in site visits for planning applications will however, not change.

Cllr Pam Barrett proposed sending a formal note of thanks and best wishes to PCSO James Yates whose presence and help in the town will be missed. There is now no community policing for Buckfastleigh and the community needs to be made aware of this.

Actions: To request a formal written statement from the Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall Police. Publicise thanks to the PCSO and the fact that community policing has now ceased in this parish because of Government austerity measures. Clerk to draft and circulate to Members for comment.

It was also noted that the monthly police surgeries held in St. Luke's Church have ceased.

18/95. Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 26th September 2018: Noted

To resolve the following recommendations from Minute Nos:

18/45 Larger Grant Application for grass cutting at Holy Trinity churchyard: Reverend Tom Benson advised the meeting that the application to the Town Council has been withdrawn and the annual grass cutting costs will be funded from other sources. The Council may however, be asked to support this in the future but the PCC is aware that the Town Council is facing significant funding cuts for the 2019/20 budget.

Member of the Public: *Would it be possible to look at the churchyard as a wildflower area?*

Reverend Tom Benson: *Grass cutting is dependent on public use and not every area of the churchyard has the same number of cuts.*

18/46 Perennial Grant Application for Buckfastleigh Town Hall and Institute. Resolved – all Members voted in support for a grant of £16,000 plus the annual rate of inflation for up to four years subject to an annual review.

18/46 Perennial Grant Application for Victoria Park.

Cllr Huw Cox expressed concerns regarding funding Victoria Park and asked if this would be an annual expenditure commitment for the Town Council?

Cllr Pam Barrett confirmed that other sources of income are continuously sought including grant applications and fundraising activities.

Cllr Cox commented that the Council provides more funding to the swimming pool than other Town Councils.

Cllr Barrett advised that although ticket sales are up, some users are subsidised for eg. free swimming is offered in partnership with the church and doctors and the trustees are reluctant to have large price increases.

It was acknowledged that the pool can only remain open if it continues to be subsidised. The community needs to decide if they want the pool to remain open and this can only be achieved with the support of funding from the Town Council. The Victoria Park trustees follow all the highest standards of health and safety including paid and trained lifeguards, regular water testing, child protection policies etc. Meeting these high standards come at a cost. The boiler now needs to be replaced and it has been agreed that this could provide the opportunity for the outdated pump room to be reconfigured and modernised.

Cllr Andy Stokes: The views of the community will be sought on this.

Teignbridge District Council does not contribute any funding to the swimming pool. It is a popular resource for the town and attracts many users. Smaller communities such as Buckfastleigh are often dependent upon the same volunteers to manage community facilities and it is hoped that new Town Councillors and trustees can be sought to assist with this.

Cllr Barrett explained the requirements of the Perennial Grant. The Finance Committee will consider applications for perennial funding for up to four years and successful applicants will be expected to report back to the Council annually on the effectiveness of the awarded grant.

The Clerk as the Responsible Financial Officer stressed that the whole grant process has been reviewed to be more transparent and accountable, in line with the requirements of audit.

Resolved – 5 Members voted in favour of awarding an annual grant of £20,000 plus inflation for a period of up to four years subject to annual review. Cllrs Pam Barrett and Huw Cox abstained from voting. Vote carried.

18/96. Minutes of the Tourism, Recreation and Economic Development Committee held on 2nd October 2018: Noted

Cllr Simon Rines has stood down as Chair of this committee. Cllr Pam Barrett was appointed as the new Chair at this meeting.

18/97. Minutes of the Environment and Transport Committee held on 3rd October 2018: Noted.

18/98. Town Councillor vacancies update:

The Chair reported that Cllrs Greg Porter, Neil Smith and Mark Maish have left the Council creating three casual vacancies to be filled either by an election, if called by the electorate, or by co-option to serve until the May 2019 election.

18/99. Review of Town Council meeting structure:

Cllr Barrett proposed a review of the Council's meeting structure to create a more effective and clearer decision-making process. She suggested better scheduling and that proposals are prepared and circulated in advance of a meeting where a decision is required. A wider number

of people should be encouraged to participate at an earlier stage in working parties and meetings. This will require the introduction of a new working practice.

Cllr Jones stressed that councillors need to be prepared for meetings and in possession of all the facts before making an informed decision.

Meetings need to be accessible to all and a wider demographic should be involved.

Action: Clerk to invite councillors to a working party to scope this for a formal review.

18/100. To receive a quote for the printing and delivery to all households within the parish for the “What Do Councils Do?” Leaflet:

Cllr Stuart Barker was thanked for his additional content to the proposed leaflet. It was agreed that this needs further review to transform from a list to an interesting eye-catching leaflet. Cllr Barrett suggested highlighting the section on what Buckfastleigh Town Council does, then providing a summary of the responsibilities of the other authorities.

Action: Cllrs Stokes and Barrett and Inga Page to have a meeting to revise further.

Cllr Barker agreed the information needed to be more visual with a focus on how you access services information. Devon County Council (DCC) provides leaflets for individual services.

It was suggested that the leaflet should be ready to go to print in the New Year.

18/101. To receive a quote for the design and print of double sided laminated A4 waterproof boards for the Emergency Plan maps:

The Town Council’s Emergency Group agreed that it would be helpful to divide up the parish into zones and that each zone has a detailed map which is laminated onto waterproof boards for use by the volunteers.

The quote circulated to Members is for 15 maps at a total cost of £525.00 including VAT.

Decision: Quote accepted subject to the Clerk liaising with the designer to create 12 maps at a revised cost.

18/102. Buckfastleigh Community Christmas Lunch:

Buckfast Abbey is unable to host the Christmas community lunch this year and the Council is looking for an alternative venue. There are plenty of volunteers and food can be supplied by donation, but a commercial kitchen is needed.

Decision: Members agreed that the Town Hall is the venue with various locations used to prepare and cook the food.

18/103. To discuss the Teignbridge District Council proposal to support and finance a five towns Peripatetic Business Development Manager:

Councillors are not aware that the chambers of trade for each town have been consulted on this proposal and cannot see any real benefits for Buckfastleigh. TDC are requesting funding

that is more than the suggested use of the Communities Together Fund which may not be available in the future. This would become a significant financial burden to the Town Council which is not in line with any of the projects or services currently supported.

Decision: Rejected unanimously.

18/104. Town Council Projects update and to discuss planning, management and communications issues for projects for 2018:

A review of projects will take place at the community consultation event scheduled for Wednesday 17th October.

Cllr Janet Jones confirmed that she had presented the speeding petition to Devon County Council requesting the introduction of a 20mph speed limit in the town and a 30mph speed limit on Strode Road. Receipt of the petition has been acknowledged by DCC and will be reviewed.

18/105. Chair's Announcements:

Cllr Stokes referred to the annual community consultation event "Where Next for Buckfastleigh?" and encourages residents to attend.

The SOUP fundraising event in conjunction with Teignbridge CVS will take place on Friday 26th October at 6.00pm. People can pitch for money from an unknown donor plus money taken on the door, and then those attending decide who receives the money to start up a new project.

18/106. Clerk's Announcements: None

18/107. Correspondence: None

18/108. Reports from other meetings and working parties attended by Members:

Cllr Jones has attended Civic Services at Chudleigh and Dawlish, a meeting of the Teignbridge Association of Local Councils on 27th September and presented the speed petition at County Hall to DCC.

Cllr Cox attended Apple Day at the Orchard Millennium Green where 65 gallons of apple juice was produced. He was also pleased to report that the Bungalow Youth Project is currently adequately funded.

Cllr Barrett has received a proposal to support a new scouting group. Members agreed that this would be good for the town.

The Council will again have a stall at the Christmas Fair organised by the Clerk.

It was noted that Dartmoor National Park Authority have not scheduled attendance at any specific event in Buckfastleigh for consultation on the Local Plan. The plan will be available to view at the Town Hall and the Valiant Soldier although the latter closes for winter at the end of October.

Action: Clerk to suggest attendance at the Christmas Fair or December Town Council meeting.

Cllr Pamela Forbes attended a cancer support group event in the Valiant Soldier.

Cllr Andy Stokes met with the matron at Ashburton Hospital and Cllr Sarah Parker Khan of Ashburton Town Council to discuss funding a volunteer support worker.

Cllr Stokes was taken on a behind the scenes tour of the BBC Antiques Roadshow at Buckfast Abbey.

18/109. Items requiring urgent attention: None

Meeting closed at 9.12 pm.