

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held in Room 3 at the Town Hall on Wednesday 12th December 2018 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Councillors Andy Stokes (Chair), Janet Jones, Ben Cattrall, Pamela Forbes, Ron Fox, Gwena Harman, Kate Paxman, and Judith Hart (Town Clerk).

In attendance: Cllrs Stuart Barker (County & District), John Nutley (District) and 17 members of the public.

Press: No Press in attendance

18/126. Apologies: Cllrs Pam Barrett, Huw Cox, Dan Simpson and Simon Rines

18/127. Councillors invited to declare any interests: Cllr Janet Jones declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 6) Minute No. 18/133.

18/128. Welcome to newly co-opted Councillors:

The Chair welcomed new Councillors Ben Cattrall, Gwena Harman and Kate Paxman.

18/129. To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 14th November 2018 and the Extraordinary Town Council Meeting held on 28th November 2018:

Signed and approved by Councillor Andy Stokes

18/130. Questions and comments from the public: None

18/131. Reports from Police, County and District Councillors:

No Police report.

Cllr Stuart Barker: The settlement figures to determine the Council Tax are not yet available from the government due to the delays caused by Brexit. £18 million has been allocated for winter road repairs from government with the proviso that this must be spent by the end of March, however an extension has now been granted. £7 million of this will be spent on minor roads. More funds have been made available for gully cleaning which will be increased to 4 times per year for flood risk areas.

Cllr John Nutley: A multi-million-pound regeneration plan for Newton Abbot has been backed by Teignbridge District Council (TDC), however there is no planned investment for Ashburton or Buckfastleigh.

The implementation of a Public Spaces Protection Order for responsible dog ownership came before the Executive. Members voted to place a restriction on the number of dogs an individual can walk at any one time to four and the seasonal dog exclusion areas for beaches has been extended to the earlier date of 1st April to 30th September. There is some opposition to these decisions and further discussion will now take place at the January full Council meeting.

Town and Parish Councils are encouraged to view the Asset Management Strategy document which refers to service devolution and asset transfer on the TDC website.

Cllr Jones asked about the parking review. Cllr Nutley confirmed that no meeting had been scheduled and that they are currently surveying parking in Ashburton.

Cllr Jones asked about the suggestion to have 20 minutes free parking at the Globe car park. Cllr Nutley and Tonya Short (TDC Car Parks Manager) have met with representatives of the Ashburton Chamber of Trade and they are looking at proposals for both towns.

The Chair moved the agenda to item No 6. Barn Park planning application.

18/132. Planning Application 0615/18 – proposed: erection of 28 dwellings (10 affordable, 18 open market), estate road, 50 parking spaces and gardens at Land west of Barn Park.

Cllr Stokes summarised the draft response of the Town Council which objects to this application on the following grounds:

- Privacy
- Flood risk due to the number of springs and high surface run-off
- Maintenance by Exeter University – no explanation as to why Exeter University is involved with water management for the site
- Affordability – the proposal does not include 50% affordable homes, and 80% of market value within the National Park is not affordable. The development will not fulfil local housing need
- Impact on local services
- Lack of public transport
- Restricted access via both Jordan Street and Wallaford Road. The application refers to data from 2008 which is no longer applicable with increased car ownership
- No evidence of sustainable development
- Biodiversity – the development does not protect, maintain or enhance the site
- Constitutes a major development within a National Park in terms of the National Planning Policy Framework

The Chair opened the meeting to the public to comment.

Member of public: *The plan shows tree planting, but these will be removed to increase the size of the site at a later date. Additional cars will add to the existing congestion and parking problems within this area.*

Member of public: *The impact of increased traffic along Wallaford Road must also be considered.*

Cllr Ron Fox: The Duckspod/Wallaford Road junction should also be looked at.

Member of public: *The lack of pavements will lead to problems with users of mobility scooters.*

Cllr Ron Fox: Risks to children walking to school

Member of public: *Camphill traffic, increase in staff vehicles and day service users*

Member of public: *If DNPA are minded to approve this application, Section 106 money should be used to control the number of cars and parking.*

Cllr Pamela Forbes: Access for emergency vehicles is already difficult.

Member of public: *The application includes a photograph of Jordan Street which is misleading when it is Chapel Street.*

Member of public: *It is a steep site which will be slippery for vehicles in icy conditions.*

Cllr Andy Stokes: The site will have to be terraced which will be difficult to access.

A member of public directed a question to Cllr Stuart Barker as a Member of DNPA concerning pre-determination of this application.

Cllr Stuart Barker advised that he could not respond to this as it would not be appropriate, but the Local Plan will be applied when the application is determined.

Cllr Ben Cattrall left the meeting at 8.00pm.

Planners will have to consider all the matters raised but cannot remove an allocated site once an application has been submitted as the authority would be required to pay compensation to the developer.

Cllr Ron Fox: There is concern by residents based on previous decisions made at a local level.

Cllr Stuart Barker: No dates have been fixed to consider the Holne Road and Barn Park applications as planners are awaiting surveys, reports and the outcome of responses to Barn Park.

Cllr Kate Paxman: Can planning be rejected for this site?

Town Clerk: The previous Town Council supported the allocation of this site because it was for social housing.

Member of public: *Residents were made aware when Barn Park was first built that the site would be extended, but as so much time has past it was not felt that this would ever happen.*

Cllr Ron Fox: The goalposts have changed from building social housing to promoting market/affordable housing.

The Chair highlighted that the revised DNP Local Plan is now out for consultation and the public are encouraged to comment.

Decision: Members unanimously voted to support the Town Council's objections to this application. Clerk to submit the response by 13th December 2018.

6 members of the public remained.

18/133. Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 28th November 2018: Noted.

To resolve the following recommendations from Minute Nos:

18/57. Review of Financial Regulations – adopted with all Members in favour

18/56. Draft Budget and Precept 2019/20

Cllr Andy Stokes explained the draft recommendations to the meeting including the loss of the Council Tax Support Tax at £9,000 and the end of the Awards for All grant which funded much of the Youth Activities Programme for 2017 and 2018.

A member of the public expressed concern regarding the costs of subsidising the swimming pool.

Cllr Ron Fox highlighted that the pool would close without the £20,000 annual subsidy provided by the Town Council and that Victoria Park would be very pleased to have non-councillor trustees come forward.

The District Council used to fund the pool from the Council Tax. Funding is now from the Town Council via the Council Tax and a stringent grant process. Both the pool and the free activities for children are very popular and feedback from residents is supportive for the continuation of both services.

In order to maintain the current services provided by the Town Council the proposal is to increase the precept by 15p per week for a Band D property or 11p per week for a Band B. The Town Council is currently not capped by the government, but public services are in a state of crisis generally.

Cllr Stuart Barker: It is mostly the councils who provide the children's and care services who are struggling. Devon County Council already has a £8 million overspend for these services for 2018/19.

Decision: The Chair proposed to increase the precept by 6.63% from £136,194.00 to £145,224.00 for 2019/20. Members voted unanimously in favour of this.

18/134. Buckfastleigh Traders Meeting Update:

There are a variety of issues as to why shopping locally has declined including online shopping and large out-of-town retail parks. The results of this meeting will be discussed further at the next Tourism, Recreation and Economic Development Committee.

A member of the public suggested that the wide variety of local food producers within the town could have retail outlets.

A campaign to shop locally which could include a loyalty scheme and printed cloth bags will be promoted, but this needs to be supported by the Chamber of Trade with fresh and innovative ideas. The Chamber of Trade does not have enough active members.

There has been the suggestion to hold a monthly market for eg. bric-a-brac and antiques which will be explored.

18/135. Buckfastleigh Community Christmas Lunch:

Cllr Ben Cattrall has kindly agreed to coordinate the Community Christmas Lunch. Buckfast Abbey will be donating and cooking the food and The Globe will heating up the food which will be served in the Town Hall on Christmas Day.

18/136. Town Council Projects update and to discuss planning, management and communications issues for projects for 2018:

No further reports.

18/137. Chair's Announcements:

Cllr Andy Stokes was pleased to report that the 2018 Christmas Fair was very successful and gave his thanks to all contributors and organisers.

There is a proposal for the development of a 'care village' at the old Axminster site adjacent to Buckfast Abbey. In the Local Plan the site is designated for mixed use development and will also need approval from the Health and Safety Executive concerning the calor gas site at Bullycleave Quarry.

Cllr Janet Jones: Representatives of Buckfast Village Hall Management Committee have met with the Abbey who are looking at the option of removing the hall for an access road to the site. There will be a public meeting in January at the village hall to discuss all the options.

18/138. Clerk's Announcements: None

18/139. Correspondence: None

18/140. Reports from other meetings and working parties attended by Members:

Cllr Jones attended a Teignbridge Association of Local Councils meeting where Cllr John Hart, Leader of Devon County Council discussed the budget and how it is spent. Cllr Jones has also attended the Teignmouth and Kingsteignton Civic Carol Services.

18/141. Items requiring urgent attention: None

Meeting closed at 9.15 pm.