

# BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Tourism, Recreation and Economic Development Committee Meeting** held on **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2018 at 7.30pm.**

**Present:** Councillors Pam Barrett (Chair), Huw Cox, Ron Fox, Dan Simpson and Judith Hart (Town Clerk)

**In attendance:** Ann Werry (Orchard Millennium Green Trust - OMG), John Bailey (Chair of Buckfastleigh Rangers Football Club - BRFC), Peter Edwards (Chair of the Valiant Soldier and Tourist Information Centre - VS), John Brodribb (South Devon Railway Museum - SDR)

**18/28. Questions from the public:** None

**18/29. Apologies for absence:** Maureen Tuffnell (OMG) and Sheila Phillips (William Pengelly Caves Studies Trust – WPCST)

**18/30. Declarations of interest:** None

**18/31. To approve and sign as correct the Minutes of the Tourism, Recreational and Economic Development Committee held on Tuesday 3rd April 2018 and Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2018:**

Signed by Cllr Pam Barrett with one correction to the meeting held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> July, Minute No. 18/18.

**18/32. Appointment of the Chair of Tourism, Recreation and Economic Development 2018/19:**

Cllr Barrett advised the meeting that Cllr Simon Rines is unable to continue as the Chair of this Committee due to current family commitments.

Cllr Pam Barrett was proposed as the new Chair by Cllr Dan Simpson which was seconded by Cllr Ron Fox with all in agreement. Cllr Barrett accepted the position.

It was highlighted that non-Councillors can become members of this committee and other Council meetings and working parties which do not have financial powers.

**18/33. Chair to invite comments from local attractions, organisations and members of the Buckfastleigh Chamber of Trade represented at this meeting:**

The Chair read out a short report kindly provided by Sheila Phillips of the WPCST:

- *The Centre is awaiting the results of the July archaeological dig and the follow-up 3D scanning that has taken place.*
- *Information held in rocks on the Pengelly site (one of only 22 locations) has contributed to the latest geological research which links South Devon and parts of Cornwall to France millions of years ago. The full report is available in the public domain in 'Nature Communications'.*

John Bailey: *The Football Club has had a very good season although they are still seeking volunteers. A set of healthy accounts were presented to the recent AGM and both teams have new sponsorship which has enabled the purchase of new kit and nets. Some refurbishment to the club house has taken place and this is all thanks to a good management team. The club is being used more often for other activities such as a drama club and monthly music evening and events are scheduled for Christmas and the New Year.*

*Buckfast Abbey have also funded a new lawnmower which was greatly needed.*

The Chair thanked the Football Club for hosting the Town Council funded Colourscape experience as part of their summer fair.

Cllr Pam Barrett gave an update on the swimming pool: Unfortunately, the boiler has broken down and requires replacement in time for the 2019 season. A new boiler will be more efficient and reduce running costs. Trustees have also agreed that this may be an opportunity to redesign and update the pump room too, but it is estimated that the total cost for both will be in the region of £20-25,000. Although it may be possible to obtain grant funding this will be subject to the fund-raising efforts of the community without which the pool would be forced to close.

*John Bailey: The Football Club may be able to facilitate a fund-raising dance night in aid of the pool and will raise this matter with club members at their next meeting.*

It is important that regular users such as both primary schools are made aware of this situation.

Cllr Pam Barrett: The pool has had a very good summer season. Ticket prices for locals have been held, there has been a wide variety of events and activities and there has been a successful staff training programme.

*John Brodribb: The hot summer weather has led to a poor season for the railway. The footfall for the museum has fallen by 8 to 10%. The volunteers are however looking forward to the commemorative events planned for 1<sup>st</sup> November and in 2019. The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the re-opening of the railway as a heritage line will include a gala and a Children's Day will take place on 6<sup>th</sup> April.*

*Ann Werry: The OMG has also benefitted from a good summer and the green has been popular with residents some of whom do not have their own garden or outdoor space to enjoy. The Fun Day held at the end of June was successful, and the Tea on the Green initiative continues to generate a steady income. Apple Day will be held on 7<sup>th</sup> October and residents are encouraged to bring along the apples from their gardens and orchards for pressing. Carols on the Green will again feature as part of the annual Christmas Fair.*

The promotional flags for the OMG, Valiant Soldier and swimming pool have generally been well received although one has met an unfortunate accident. It was noted that two flags are kept as replacements at the Town Hall.

*Peter Edwards: Footfall at the VS has increased slightly, and the centre is proving to be popular with groups. The dementia friendly sessions have been very successful, but more trustees and volunteers are needed. A new virtual reality facility will be available for visitors with mobility problems who cannot negotiate the stairs and the WWI exhibition is now drawing to a close.*

*Some major repairs to the building are needed and there is concern about the state of the garden.*

Cllr Dan Simpson: It is hoped that the annual Lamb Pie Day will go ahead in 2019 following the unforeseen cancellation this year.

It was agreed that the town appeared to be busier this summer and some of this may have been due to the Buckfast Abbey Millennium celebrations, the Town Council's promotional leaflet and Hello Summer activities.

The Clerk confirmed that the Hello Summer programme for 2018 has had an even wider range of trips, workshops and activities with greater attendance and positive feedback. Children from neighbouring communities have also attended.

The Chair advised that Hello Summer will form part of a Town Council youth strategy initiative, but more funding will be needed following the end of the Council Tax Support Grant from 2019 and the Awards for All grant received for 2017/18.

Both the Football Club and Railway offered to participate in the programme for 2019.

Other initiatives this year have included the Bike Bus where cyclists joined minibus trips to various cycle trails around the county and the Naturally Active walking group for over 55s which links walking with a nature activity such as Tai Chi. Active Devon has also selected Buckfastleigh for a new pilot project called Connecting Actively with Nature (CAN) which is a 5-year programme funded by the National Lottery to support older people connect actively to nature. The Town Council has also agreed to fund the ice rink in the Globe car park which is being organised by the Christmas Fair Committee as part of the annual Christmas Fair.

#### **18/34. Provision of youth services and activity programme update:**

Covered under Minute No. 18/33.

The Council is currently working with Young Devon, the school and church to formulate a youth strategy for under 25s. Part of the Awards for All funding is to finance the research for this initiative.

#### **18/35. To discuss the planning, management and communications issues for projects which are within the remit of this committee.**

The Chair highlighted the importance of the budget setting community consultation event to be held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October in the Town Hall and explained that the Town Council will also be subject to funding cuts.

#### **18/36. Items requiring Urgent Attention:**

No urgent items, but a general discussion took place regarding the purpose and membership of this committee. It was agreed that bringing together the representatives of the tourist attractions and recreational organisations is useful, but not necessarily in the current format. Whilst the Heart of Buckfastleigh event in June was well supported, some participants felt it was too long.

It was suggested that this meeting could be held at a different venue with a different structure such as a working party rather than a Council committee. This may encourage participation by other organisations who do not normally attend such as the Chamber of Trade, youth and sports clubs. This committee does not have any powers although it was agreed that a Chair and note taker are still required. It was agreed that the frequency of meetings, which is currently on a quarterly basis, is adequate and that the January meeting could be hosted at the Football Club.

The Chair explained that the Christmas Day meal for those who find themselves alone at Christmas cannot be hosted by Buckfast Abbey this year due to another commitment. The Council is therefore looking for an alternative venue with access to a commercial kitchen and would welcome any suggestions.

Meeting closed at 9.05pm