

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Tourism, Recreation and Economic Development Committee Meeting** held on **Tuesday 29th January 2019 at 7.30pm.**

Present: Councillors Andy Stokes (Acting Chair), Pam Barrett, Ben Cattrall, Ron Fox and Judith Hart (Town Clerk)

In attendance: Ann Werry (Orchard Millennium Green Trust - OMG), Peter Edwards (Chair of the Valiant Soldier and Tourist Information Centre - VS), Maureen Tuffnell (Orchard Millennium Green Trust – OMG), Wendy Hall (Buckfast Abbey), Val Browning (Valiant Soldier – VS), John Brodribb (South Devon Railway Museum - SDR), John Bailey (Buckfastleigh Football Club – FC) and Paul Roberts (Buckfastleigh Christmas Fair - BCF)

19/37. Questions from the public: None

19/38. Apologies for absence: Cllrs Dan Simpson and Huw Cox, Sheila Phillips (William Pengelly Caves Studies Trust – WPCST)

19/39. Declarations of interest: None

19/40. To approve and sign as correct the Minutes of the Tourism, Recreational and Economic Development Committee held on Tuesday 2nd October 2018:

Signed by Cllr Pam Barrett

19/41. Update by the Buckfastleigh Christmas Fair Committee:

The following contributions had been received towards the 2018 Christmas Fair: £600 from Buckfast Abbey; £250 from Glendinnings; £100 from the Ashburton and Buckfastleigh Rotary Club and £250 from Buckfastleigh Town Council.

A cheque for £1,566 was presented to the Council as a contribution towards the total cost of hiring the skating rink. Feedback on the skating rink was generally good although committee members felt that the condition of the rink was poor, there was no music or lights as agreed in the terms of hire and the snow machine shut down early. The rink was adequate for young children but not big enough for adults. This was a new initiative for 2018 but it has been agreed that they may look at other companies if the committee decides to have this again.

Action: The Town Council will suggest a discount to the supplier to reflect the above issues when the final invoice is received.

It was noted that the fair had attracted numerous outside visitors, but it was suggested that there should be a more user-friendly booking system for the stalls.

Paul Roberts would like the town to look at the future of the Christmas Fair. Each year core costs are needed for health and safety, licences, insurance and entertainment which amount to £1,400. Can the town adopt this now that the Committee have a workable model? The group needs assistance with marketing and publicity and to look at sustainable funding which is not just dependent on grants and fundraising every year.

It was acknowledged that usually this type of event is organised by the Chamber of Trade. The Town Council does not have the capacity to take this over. Paul Roberts confirmed that they are looking for support for the volunteers and it was suggested to set up a working party to examine this further. It was agreed the fair format should not be changed and should continue to attract participation by local groups and traders, but more organisational support is needed.

Action: Paul Roberts to meet with Cllrs Pam Barrett and Ben Cattrall to discuss further and invite representatives from the Lamb Pie Day Committee and Chamber of Trade.

Cllr Pam Barrett also suggested creating a community inventory of equipment and a proper events programme

19/42. Chair to invite comments from local attractions, organisations and members of the Buckfastleigh Chamber of Trade represented at this meeting:

Wendy Hall (Buckfast Abbey) – *Abbot David Charlesworth is stepping down in March, his successor is not yet known. Many concerts are planned this year, some to include pre-concert meals. There will also be gardening talks and workshops throughout the year, including a joint venture with the Buckfastleigh Women's Institute in the Town Hall on Tuesday 12th March. Beekeeping courses will also continue and the Millennium Fund money will be presented to 5 local hospices in early February. Other upcoming events include: Saturday 1st June – Buckfast Abbey Garden Fair; Saturday 6th July – Food and Craft Fair and Thursday 11th to Sunday 14th July – Children's Book Festival. There will also be a Food Fair in December. The Grange restaurant will close during the last week of February for maintenance, as will the Conference Centre later in the year. The first Antiques Roadshow filmed at the Abbey will air on television on Sunday 10th February at 7.00pm.*

Ann Werry (OMG) raised the issue of marketing of events.

A promotional leaflet was produced for 2018 by the Town Council. All organisations should send dates and information to the Council in advance if they would like their events promoted. Ann said more coordination is needed so that dates between organisations do not clash.

Maureen Tuffnell (OMG): *The Tea Hut at the OMG will open from Easter Sunday to the end of October/Apple Day. Fun Day will be held on Sunday 30th June. Britain in Bloom entries are again being sought and the replacement decorative flags will be ready for Easter.*

Maureen asked the Town Council to look at the refurbishment of the bollards and litter bins in Fore Street and requested replacement public benches.

It was explained that the street furniture was installed under the Millennium improvements for Fore Street by Teignbridge District Council, but do not undertake the maintenance responsibility. The Town Council does not have the resources or necessary permissions to carry out work on a public highway and Cllr Cattrall explained that any alteration requires amendment to the existing Traffic Order Regulation. There have also been complaints from residents about anti-social behaviour relating to the benches.

Val Browning and Peter Edwards (Valiant Soldier) – *The Valiant Soldier will open on 26th March for the summer season. The WW1 exhibition was very successful, and a new exhibition is planned for 2019. They now have a disabled toilet and are seeking funding for further work to be carried out. A Residents Day is being planned but they are looking at contributions by donation rather than charging £1.00 for admission.*

Cllr Pam Barrett suggested having free admission or by donation for residents which may bring fee-paying visitors/guests throughout the season. Donations often bring in more funds than a set admission price.

Maureen Tuffnell suggested leaving the lights on when closed at certain times to attract visitors to return and visit.

John Bailey (Football Club) – *South West Intervention now occupy/lease the nursery site on weekdays and use the outdoor space for their activities. Finances are improving. There is a Members evening on Saturday 23rd February and Fun Day is scheduled for Saturday 13th July.*

Cllr Pam Barrett (Victoria Park and Pool) – Cold water swimming continues to take place throughout the winter and the Ice Gala will be held on Saturday 2nd February. Unfortunately, the Boxing Day event was cancelled due to the boiler failing and issues with the receipt of grant funding caused unforeseen delays with the new boiler installation. The pool will open on Saturday 25th May for the summer.

Detailed work is being carried out on the Buckfastleigh bats and a Community Day is planned for Saturday 27th April hosted by the Devon Wildlife Trust – more details to follow.

A new initiative for Buckfastleigh is being organised for Saturday 2nd March called ‘Window Wanderland’. Residents and businesses are encouraged to participate, and a map will be created for residents and visitors to follow around the parish.

John Brodribb (South Devon Railway) – *Entry to the SDR museum is free which encourages young families to visit, but they receive a good return from donations. 2018 was not a good year for the railway due to the snow and hot weather. Anniversary events went well. 2019 is the 50th anniversary of the first heritage trains. Events will commence from the February half-term holiday and will include a family weekend on 6th and 7th April.*

It was noted that the visitors sign at the entrance to the railway previously installed by the Town Council is not very inspiring and could do with refurbishment.

Cllr Ben Cattrall – Lamb Pie Day will be held on Saturday 20th July. The fair will be more family orientated and will end earlier to deter incidents of anti-social behaviour. Priority for stalls will be given to local traders.

Wendy suggested advertising family-friendly events to encourage more footfall.

Cllr Cattrall highlighted the free events calendar which is available via Visit Devon and Cllr Ron Fox suggested the need for a Town Entertainments Committee.

Cllr Andy Stokes – All Sing Sunday in the Town Hall is held once a month. 60 people attended the January session which was followed by a community meal. The ‘Big Lunch’ is planned for June. The Town Council Christmas Lunch was again very successful, but it is agreed that the Town Hall is not suitable or equipped for large-scale catering. Ideally The Grange Restaurant at the Abbey cooks the food and it is served at the Town Hall.

19/43. Proposal to hold a monthly street market:

Cllr Andy Stokes: At the Local Traders meeting held in November, one idea was to have a monthly specialist street market e.g. bric-a-brac or books.

The Council does not need permission to hold a market as the town has a charter which dates to the 14th century but would need to pay for the road closure. More details are needed in order to obtain a quote for additional insurance costs.

Action: Second meeting to be arranged and seek further information.

The Town Council and traders will also look at branding such as a re-usable bag with the Buckfastleigh logo and the suggestion to commit a £1 per week spend from every household in local shops.

19/44. Provision of youth services and activity programme update:

Cllr Pam Barrett: Planning is underway for the 'Hello Summer' children's activity programme for 2019. The Council is also working with Young Devon to look at providing a youth outreach service and have a consultation event on Tuesday 5th February to seek feedback from local organisations and families concerning gaps in youth provision.

19/45. To discuss the planning, management and communications issues for projects which are within the remit of this committee.

Already covered under the above items.

19/46. Items requiring Urgent Attention: None

Meeting closed at 9.13 pm.