

BUCKFASTLEIGH MATTERS MEETING

Minutes of the Buckfastleigh Matters Meeting held in Room 3 at the Town Hall on Wednesday 6th November 2019 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Councillors Sue Clarke (Acting Chair), Andy Stokes, Pam Barrett, Huw Cox, Ron Fox, Gwena Harman, Kate Kayley, Sylvee Phillips, David Patrick and Judith Hart (Town Clerk).

In attendance: 1 member of the public

Press: No Press in attendance

19/67. Appointment of an Acting Chair:

Cllr Stokes proposed Cllr Sue Clarke to chair this meeting and this was unanimously agreed.

19/68. Apologies: Cllrs John Bailey and Darren Greep.

No apologies received from Cllr Pamela Forbes.

19/69. Councillors invited to declare any interests:

Cllr Sylvee Phillips declared an interest re Agenda Item No. 5. Smaller Grant Applications – Scorrison and Buckfastleigh Twinning Association grant

19/70. Questions and comments from the public: None

19/71. Minutes of the Buckfastleigh Matters meeting held on 2nd October 2019 and review of actions:

Signed by Cllr Sue Clarke.

19/72. Smaller Grant Applications:

One smaller grant application had been received from the Scorrison and Buckfastleigh Twinning Association.

Decision: Rejected as policy states that no retrospective applications will be considered, and the grant request was to fund an event that has already taken place.

19/73. Planning Applications for commercial sites and areas of significant development or interest:

0451/19 Proposed: Change of shopfront to include new doors to retail unit and moving of doors forward to property boundary at 33 Chapel Street, Buckfastleigh

Decision: Unanimously support

0494/19 Proposed: Replacement of three bungalows at 1-3 Barn Park, Buckfastleigh.

It was noted that the design of the new bungalows is larger to comply with building regulations, that there is an access lane between the existing 3 properties and the new 3. No parking has been included. Residents may have reduced mobility and/or carers and parking is already difficult in this area due to the design of the estate and the fact that residents from Jordan St. also park there.

Dartmoor National Park Authority have made a zero carbon by 2025 commitment and yet no attempt has been made to reduce emissions in this design and the use of materials.

Decision: Unanimously support in principle subject to the provision of allocated parking and observations. Clerk to circulate draft response for approval.

19/74. Proposal to combine the Heart of Buckfastleigh Awards celebration with a Town Council-hosted SOUP event in the New Year:

Cllr Stokes gave an overview as to why it would be more effective to combine both the Heart of Buckfastleigh awards and a SOUP event, with a provisional date given of Friday 24th January. Previously, SOUP applicants have struggled to submit bids by the deadline so early publicity is essential. A £700 donation from an anonymous benefactor has already been pledged and Cllr Stokes will donate either the whole or part of the Mayor's Fund plus donations on the door. It should be highlighted that the Town Council's grants criteria does not apply to this fund.

Action: Inga to publicise the combined event as soon as possible and again nearer the time and send a press release to the weekly Buckfastleigh column in the Mid-Devon Advertiser.

19/75. To discuss the Annual Community Christmas Lunch:

It was agreed that the Town Hall kitchen is not adequately equipped, ventilated or of a suitable size to cook or re-heat the volume of food needed for up to 50 guests. Food donations and the recruitment of volunteers is not a problem but use of a commercial kitchen is required. No local organisation has made a commitment to providing the use of such a kitchen as yet and time is running out. It would be helpful if a kitchen could be identified which is also a venue. Help will be needed with decorations, set up, clear up and the purchase and wrapping of gifts.

Action: Inga to be appointed as the volunteer coordinator and take bookings, check dietary requirements, numbers attending, transport needs etc. Event to be publicised through the usual channels.

19/76. Adoption of community defibrillators update following initial discussion at the Town Council meeting held on 23rd October 2019:

Deferred – waiting for further information from the Fire Service.

19/77. Chair's Announcements: None

19/78. Councillors' updates regarding matters relevant to this meeting:

Cllr Patrick reported that the town and South Devon Railway did well in the Britain in Bloom awards.

Action: Congratulations from the Town Council to all involved and thanks for their hard work.

It was noted that the short green cycle path at Dean Prior slipway has been reinstated as part of the recent highway work in that area.

Residents are encouraged to report highway matters on the Devon County Council (DCC) website.

Cllr Patrick reported that the Buckfastleigh river monitoring gauge CCTV (FROG) had stopped working on Monday 28th October and that he is waiting for repair/replacement.

Volunteers and residents were swift to respond to the potential flooding incident at Market Street caused by a long spell of persistent and heavy rain leading to significant surface water run-off from Merrifield Road and Crest Hill. It was noted that the drains were completely blocked with debris washed down from the moor.

Action: Members conveyed thanks to the volunteers, neighbours and Buckfastleigh Fire Service for their help.

DCC had agreed to do an annual clearance of vulnerable drains in the town but funding cuts have stopped this. Market Street has however been identified as a problem area by DCC and is part of the flood plan. The Town Ranger had reported the blocked surface water drains, but it is understood that no action was taken. The Town Council is concerned that this recent flooding event was only resolved by the action of volunteers. Cllrs Patrick and Cox were thanked for their help.

Actions:

- Town Ranger to ask Teignbridge District Council to collect used sandbags as they are now categorised as hazardous waste.
- Town Ranger to send a letter and evidence to DCC concerning his original report regarding Market Street.

The Devon Community Resilience Fund is available again. The Town Council's Voluntary Emergency Response Team have identified additional items that are needed for the equipment store:

Wading sticks

First Aid kits for the emergency boxes

Generator

High level floodlights

Stand for small lights

Action: Town Ranger to source suppliers and formulate a bid.

Cllr Stokes: The Where Next? community workshop held in the Town Hall on Wednesday 30th October had low numbers due to weather and Buckfastleigh in Bloom event, but it went very well due to a good team running it. Further consultation will be going to the Sports Club and it was suggested to include the Food Bank, Women's Institute, Youth Clubs and Residents' Associations.

Cllr Barrett: Consultation can also be undertaken at the Council's stall at the Christmas Fair.

Solid Wool are hosting a new initiative for the town called Wintertide on Saturday 23rd November from 10.00am to 5.00pm at Devonian with a wide range of high quality arts and crafts available.

The Teignbridge District Council Rural Skip facility will be available at Ashburton on 23rd November.

19/79. Items requiring Urgent Attention – to resolve that the meeting moves into a Part II (Private Session) to discuss a matter of commercial sensitivity that would be prejudicial to public interest.

Member of the public left and the Chair moved the meeting into a Part II session.

The meeting returned to Part I and closed at 9.05 pm.