

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting using the remote meeting service Zoom held on Wednesday 12th August 2020 at 7.00 pm.

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

In attendance: Cllr Sarah Parker Khan (Teignbridge District Council) and the Rev Tom Benson

Press: None

20/72. Apologies: Cllrs John Bailey, Sue Clarke, Huw Cox and Darren Greep

20/73. Councillors invited to declare any interests: None

The Chair brought forward Agenda Item Nos. 10 and 11

20/74. Buckfastleigh Response Update and Buckfastleigh Food Bank request for funding from the Covid-19 ring-fenced fund:

The Town Council have received a request from the Food Bank for funding from the Covid-19 fund to cope with the additional expenditure which has increased seven-fold from the same four-month period in 2019.

Tom Benson explained that the larger supermarkets have helped, and the Food Bank has received donations from local businesses and private individuals, but this has not been enough to satisfy demand. It was agreed to buy additional supplies from local suppliers to support the local economy, but this has been met from reserves and donations for eg. Dartmoor National Park Authority and the Rotary Club of Ashburton and Buckfastleigh, which is not sustainable.

The Food Bank is currently managing their stock but are expecting a huge uptake with the end of furlough and the predicted increase in redundancies. They are also looking towards Christmas when families will be struggling and are collecting either new or good quality second hand toys for this purpose.

Decision: Cllr Patrick proposed that £10,000 is used from the Covid-19 ring-fenced fund which was seconded by Cllr Fox with all Members present in agreement.

Tom thanked the Town Council on behalf of the Food Bank and the town and Cllr Stokes thanked Tom, Curate Laura McAdam and all the volunteers for all their efforts and support.

Tom also gave an update from the Buckfastleigh Response team. At the height of the pandemic volunteers received up to 20 helpline calls a day and this will continue to be manned from 9.30am to 1.30pm every weekday indefinitely to deliver Food Bank parcels and prescriptions where needed. The new telephone system is now up and running and they are working in partnership with the Medical Centre to look at what is needed.

Members were advised that on three occasions domestic violence support was requested and the Food Bank can now provide basic support packages which includes bedding, women's underwear, toys, and kitchen equipment such as a kettle, toaster, and hotplate. There is the option to return the equipment which has happened in all cases.

The Medical Centre has identified that fuel poverty is a major issue and Dr Hodgins is currently running an appeal to raise funds for this. The Food Bank have funded electrical top-

ups and have been working with Searles and Refurnish to source replacement white goods which have broken down.

Tom left the meeting at 7.27pm.

20/75. To approve and sign the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 15th July 2020 and review actions from this meeting:

Minutes signed by Cllr Andy Stokes.

It was noted that Cllr Pamela Forbes has recently resigned from the Town Council which has created a casual vacancy although no elections may be held until May 2021.

Actions from this meeting:

- 20/66 – Cllr Stokes and Cox have not met as yet to discuss moving forward with the Buckfastleigh Neighbourhood Plan.

20/76. Questions and comments from the public: No public in attendance.

20/77. Questions to District and County Councillors:

Cllr Stokes asked Cllr Parker Khan if Teignbridge District Council (TDC) had any plans to offer a Tetra Pak recycling collection following the example set by South Hams District Council?

Cllr Parker Khan is aware that recycling collection lorries would need to be adapted to facilitate this and to be aware that individual Parish Council facilities are expensive and do not meet demand.

The Town Council had previously requested for a Tetra Pak skip to be added to the existing recycling facilities in Woodholme car park, but this was rejected.

Action: Cllr Parker Khan to take this forward with TDC.

20/78. Budget Analysis Report 01.07.20 – 31.07.20: Noted

The Clerk highlighted that funding from the youth activity budget for Hello Spring and Summer activity packs has now reverted to the Children in Need grant now in its second year managed by Victoria Park and that unspent funds will be used for other initiatives such as the virtual Youth Well-Being Café.

20/79. Bank Payments Report and Bank Statement 01.07.20 – 31.07.20: Noted

20/80. Multi-Pay Card Statements April – July 2020: Noted

20/81. End of Year Internal Audit Report and amended 2019-20 End of Year Accounts:

The Clerk was thanked for her work on the end of year accounts and submission of the Annual Return and excellent Internal Audit Report. It was noted that most of the surplus for 2019/20 is being used to support the current crisis and other specific projects.

20/82. Larger Grant Application deferred from the July Meeting:

Buckfastleigh Bowling Club submitted a Larger Grant application to the July meeting, but it was agreed that further clarification was needed concerning funding of the proposed refurbishment. Cllrs Bailey and Cox were not in attendance to comment following their recent site visit to the Bowling Club although Cllr Bailey had provided an update.

Decision: Members agreed in principal to support this application subject to a delegated decision to agree by Cllrs Bailey and Cox.

20/83. To discuss the future of virtual Town Council meetings, frequency of meetings and dates:

It is acknowledged that virtual meetings can be difficult for some participants and that there is now the option to return to face to face meetings at the Town Hall with effect from September. The legislation to use virtual Parish Council meetings has not been withdrawn by government yet. A blended approach with some people choosing to attend in person or some virtually can be difficult to manage and technical issues would need to be addressed. Virtual meetings are helpful for those who need childcare which is not necessarily available at the current time and those who do not feel comfortable with being in a public setting. It was also noted that virtual meetings may not encourage public participation.

Decision: Members agreed to again use Zoom for the September meeting and agree on a month by month basis as to whether to meet in the Town Hall. Meetings will continue monthly for the time being.

20/84. Requirement to publish a website accessibility statement and ensure compliance in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018:

The Town Council must publish a statement by 23rd September 2020 to be compliant with the new legislation and to identify where an element of the website is not accessible to all users when this will be in place.

Action: Cllrs Stokes and Patrick to discuss further.

20/85. Forward planning to 2021 – community consultation update:

The first Councillors surgery was held on Saturday 8th August at The Living Room with Cllrs Barrett and Patrick. Feedback from the public was positive with discussion about speeding, cycling, self-build, concerns about the economy, Fore Street one-way system and provision for early years. A wishing line is available to post ideas outside and a second surgery has been arranged for Saturday 5th September.

Cllr Barrett also encourages Cllrs to stop and chat with residents when they are out and about and to use the Victoria Park shelter to engage with parents and young people.

An online questionnaire will be available shortly to post on the website and social media to gather further information.

20/86. Chairs announcements:

Cllr Stokes advised the meeting that the government has just published a new consultation proposing to restructure planning which will be a significant shake up of the current system and will transfer planning decisions from elected bodies to non-elected bodies. It is important that the Town Council submits a robust response to this in addition to individual replies.

It was suggested that the Town Council also works with other parishes to produce a collaborative response.

Cllr Stokes expressed concern regarding a new pollution map which identifies Dean Prior as an area of significantly high pollution from the A38. Although Dean Prior is within the South Hams area this affects Teignbridge residents too and Cllr Parker Khan was asked to raise this matter with Environmental Health and request air pollution monitors to be placed at sites to be identified.

20/87. Councillor updates regarding matters relevant to this meeting:

Cllr Barrett was pleased to announce that a ten week trial of free hula hoop classes have started as part of a programme of classes currently being planned such as cycling confidence, outdoor exercise and activities for early years.

The Clerk was asked to contact Learn Devon regarding the proposed maths, English and IT classes that were due to commence in the Town Hall in September. It was agreed that social distancing will not be an issue as there is likely to be a slow take-up to begin with, but it is important that in the current economic climate people have access to training and qualifications.

Actions: Community training such as safeguarding and health and safety to be discussed at the next meeting as an agenda item. Cllr Kayley and Barrett to discuss further and look at local trainers for delivery where possible.

20/88. Items requiring Urgent Attention:

Members were advised that the Leader of Teignbridge District Council, Cllr Gordon Hook had resigned and that Mid Devon District Council had joined East Devon District Council in withdrawing from the proposed Greater Exeter Strategic Plan while TDC are still supporting it.

20/89. Summary of Key Messages:

- Buckfastleigh Response – increased demand for the Food Bank during the coronavirus and Town Council funding.
- Town Council monthly Zoom meetings to continue.
- Looking forward to 2021 – public consultation via Councillor surgeries and an online questionnaire.

The Chair moved the meeting into a Part II session under Agenda Item No. 19 which included attendance by Cllr Parker-Khan to discuss an item of confidential business.

20/90. Part II (Private session)

The meeting returned to Part I and closed at 8.53pm.