

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held at Victoria Park, Plymouth Road, Buckfastleigh on Wednesday 23rd June 2021 at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillors: Erin Kohler-Ockmore (Deputy Chair), Huw Cox, Ron Fox, Sylvee Phillips, Andy Stokes and Judith Hart (Town Clerk).

In attendance: Cllr Sarah Parker Khan and 5 members of the public, including one councillor candidate

Press: None

21/72. Apologies: Cllrs David Patrick, Kate Kayley, John Bailey, Susan Clarke, Bryony Tilsley and John Nutley (District)

No apologies received from Cllr Darren Greep

21/73. Councillors invited to declare any interests:

Cllr Phillips declared an interest in Agenda item Nos. 3. Town Councillor co-option, 9. Smaller Grant Applications – Twinning Association and 12. Teignbridge District Council Local Plan (Part 2).

Cllr Cox declared an interest in Agenda item No. 9. Smaller Grant application as Chair of The Orchard Millennium Green Trust

21/74. To approve and sign the minutes from the Annual Town Council Meeting and Town Council Meeting held on 19th May 2021 and review actions from this meeting:

Minutes signed by Cllr Kohler-Ockmore.

Actions from the Town Council Meeting:

- 21/62. Cllr Parker Khan has submitted a request on behalf of Buckfastleigh to join the Speedwatch scheme. Any road which has been identified as a problem area for speeding firstly has to be reviewed and flagged up for possible mitigation. There will be a meeting later in the summer.
- 21/66. Cllr Stokes reported that the Town Council's support of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill had not received a substantial response from the local MP.

21/75. To discuss/vote on the co-option of one Town Councillor vacancy:

Two applicants have applied for the vacant position and were invited to this meeting. Cllr Stokes proposed to initiate the usual procedure to arrange a review panel now that there is more than one application. It was agreed that the panel will consist of Cllrs Kohler-Ockmore and Cox plus one other member to be confirmed.

Action: Clerk to arrange an informal interview using the virtual meeting platform Zoom at the earliest opportunity.

21/76. Questions and comments from the public:

A member of the public asked about the re-surfacing of the tennis court. Cllr Stokes said it had been re-surfaced in 2000 but has had no work since. Sport England will not fund the re-surfacing of tennis courts and the Lawn Tennis Association will only assist with funds if there is an acceptable business plan with evidence of sustainable funding. The cost to resurface the tennis court which is owned by Teignbridge District Council (TDC) is in the region of £15-20,000. Cllr Stokes would be happy to pursue this if there is enough support from the community.

21/77. Questions to District and County Councillors and comments on reports relevant to this meeting:

Cllr Parker Khan: the Devon County Council Neighbourhood Highways Officer (NHO) has confirmed that Strode Road up to the Station Road junction has been submitted for re-surfacing in 2022 following complaints by the Town Council. Interim repairs may be carried out in the meantime. The NHO will also look at the Old Totnes Road junction which may be included in the planned works next year, but this area is probably too large for patch repairs.

The indiscriminate parking of camper vans at Church Hill is causing an obstruction but this is a police matter.

The draft TDC Local Plan consultation runs from 19th June to 9th August 2021. The Town Council and residents are encouraged to respond even if much of the plan does not directly affect Buckfastleigh.

Cllr Cox: 347 empty homes have been recorded within the district. 20 of these have been empty for 10 years or more. TDC are proactive in identifying ownership with a view to bringing empty properties back into use and Council Tax charges are levied proportionately.

Cllr Stokes: TDC is responsible for all planning to the south of Strode Road where there is a proposal to build 12 new homes in that section of the parish. The plan also provides an opportunity to comment on other large developments within Teignbridge.

21/78. To received Police reports for April and May 2021:

It was noted that the figures for Buckfastleigh are generally low but slightly higher than for the same period last year.

21/79. Budget Analysis Report 01.05.21 – 31.05.21: Approved

21/80. Bank Payments Report and Bank Statement 01.05.21 – 31.05.21: Approved

21/81. Smaller Grant Applications:

The following organisations were awarded grants:

- i) Orchard Millennium Green - £500 to refurbish the tea hut on the green: Proposed by Cllr Stokes, seconded by Cllr Phillips with all members in agreement.
- ii) Participate Arts - £500 for the continuation of the Wellbeing workshops: Proposed by Cllr Stokes with the condition that the Town Council receives feedback and clarification that funds benefit more Buckfastleigh residents than visitors, although it was acknowledged that this is difficult to police. It was suggested that participants provide their postcodes to help with this. Members also asked if this is a

Covid only project and will it cease in the autumn? It was agreed to fund if the applicant can satisfy the above requirements and evidence that this project is providing value for Buckfastleigh residents. Seconded by Cllr Fox with all Members in agreement.

- iii) Scoriton and Buckfastleigh Twinning Association - £500 towards the refurbishment of the telephone box donated by the Town Council. It was confirmed that Henry-Fontaine will pay and arrange transport for their 40th twinning anniversary in 2022. The group would like to do a media event to promote this celebration. Proposed by Cllr Stokes and seconded by Cllr Cox. Agreed.
- iv) Woolly Nana's and Friends - £350.00 for a new pilot woollen themed project providing free workshops to all ages. Funds are needed for equipment and the activity provider. Proposed by Cllr Stokes and seconded by Cllr Fox. Agreed.
- v) Nurture - £480 to continue with the pregnancy, Mums and new-born babies support group that is now meeting in St. Luke's Church. Cllr Stokes proposed, Cllr Fox seconded. Agreed.

21/82. To discuss the annual Town Council participatory budget event:

The Town Council hosts one workshop annually for the community to contribute ideas to the budget and see how the Council spends it.

Be Buckfastleigh is looking for evidence for funding bids and feedback from the Town Council consultation would support this.

Cllr Stokes proposed feeding into the Be Buckfastleigh consultation rather than conducting our own on this occasion, but it is included in Town Council Standing Orders.

Cllr Cox: The Buckfastleigh Development Trust are also planning a consultation, and it would be helpful if all three organisations could work together.

Decision: Cllrs Kohler Ockmore, Cox and Phillips proposed organising a Town Council consultation before the end of October although the format will depend on Covid restrictions. All agreed.

21/83. Buckfastleigh Town Council response to the Dartmoor National Park Authority Local Plan Review Proposed Modifications Consultation:

The consultation runs until 19th July 2021.

Cllr Stokes: The government is forcing DNP's hand regarding development targets with the economy taking priority over the original objectives. It is important that the Town Council responds to this consultation with the removal of the Holne Road site and proposed addition of the Timbers Road site which not only lies within a neighbouring parish but also South Hams.

It was noted that communication and access to online drop-in sessions from DNP has been poor and it would have been helpful to have a further session which is properly publicised with adequate time for the community to respond.

Action: Councillors to circulate comments and Cllr Stokes to compose a draft response.

21/84. Draft Teignbridge Local Plan 2020-2040 Site Options Consultation – Initial discussion:

New sites have been put forward and will be looked at for this consultation which ends on 9th August 2021. TDC would like a response from all Town and Parish Councils as feedback may help to stop the development of unpopular sites.

Action: Cllr Stokes will circulate comments for input.

21/85. Buckfastleigh Town Council response to the Government White Paper on Health and Social Care:

Cllr Stokes read out the motion as detailed in the document circulated to Members.

Decision: Cllr Stokes proposed that the Town Council writes to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, the local MP, NHS England, and Devon Clinical Commissioning Group, highlighting our concerns which include:

- The changes proposed in the White Paper will promote further commercial activity for e.g. dental care is not free and is therefore not accessible to all.
- Constrained local funding.
- A lack of democratic accountability and reduced powers of public scrutiny.

Cllr Fox seconded the motion with all Members in agreement. Cllr Stokes and the Clerk to action.

21/86. To discuss a Creative Community Consultation Process for Buckfastleigh:

Be Buckfastleigh is asking for a contribution from the Town Council to support this consultation which will take place in the autumn. The outcome of the consultation which will be commissioned by Be Buckfastleigh should provide a snapshot of the realities, wishes and dreams of people living and working in the parish and evidence the extent of the need in our community through a series of events and workshops. The results of this consultation will be used to support a major funding bid on behalf of the town.

Decision: Cllr Stokes proposed supporting in principle and making a financial contribution to be determined which was seconded by Cllr Kohler Ockmore. Cllr Phillips abstained, and Cllr Cox voted against.

Due to the number of councillors absent from this meeting it was agreed to have a second proposal to agree in principle to supporting the development of the consultation in partnership with Be Buckfastleigh but defer the decision on funding until the next meeting. All Members present in agreement.

21/87. Cycle South Dartmoor Big Bike Revival Events:

The Big Bike Revival will be launched on Saturday 3rd July in Buckfastleigh with various events, rides and workshops planned for the summer which will include the return of the Bike Bus.

Due to unforeseen issues a grant application for £500 was received too late to be considered at this meeting but Cllr Clarke has agreed to use her Mayor's Good Causes Fund for this initiative.

21/88. Chair's Announcements:

Clerk to circulate a date and venue for the next meeting.

21/89. Councillor updates regarding matters relevant to this meeting:

Cllr Phillips attended a meeting of Action Climate Teignbridge (ACT). Targets and local initiatives such as wildlife and electric car charging points were discussed and there is an app for looking at your own carbon footprint.

Cllr Cox attended a flood workshop but this was more product led.

21/90. Items requiring Urgent Attention: None

21/91. Summary of Key Messages:

Cllr Kohler-Ockmore to liaise with the Clerk.

The meeting closed at 8.42 pm.