

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held at Buckfastleigh Town Hall on Wednesday 17th November 2021 at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillors: Sue Clarke (Chair), Erin Kohler-Ockmore, John Bailey, Huw Cox, Ron Fox, David Patrick, Sylvee Phillips, Andy Stokes, Kathy Taylor, and Judith Hart (Town Clerk).

In attendance: Jeremy Irwin to present Agenda No. 4 – To discuss a locally grown food distribution initiative.

Press: None

21/162. Apologies: Councillors Bryony Tilsley, John Nutley (District) and Sarah Parker-Khan (County & District)

No apologies received from Cllr Darren Greep

21/163. Councillors invited to declare any interests: Cllr Phillips declared an interest in Agenda Item No. 7. Smaller Grant Applications – The Valiant Soldier and The Bungalow Youth Project. Cllr Cox in Agenda Item No. 7 Smaller Grant Applications – The Bungalow Youth Project and the Town Clerk declared an interest in The Valiant Soldier application.

Agenda No. 4 was brought forward by the Chair.

21/164. To discuss a locally grown food distribution initiative:

Jeremy asked if the Town Council would be interested in a joint initiative to support the distribution of surplus garden produce grown within the community to the Food Bank and low income households and offered to coordinate this by email.

Cllr Stokes welcomed this idea but confirmed that this does already happen on an informal basis and Riverfood also donates fresh produce to the Food Bank. Storage and shelf life of perishable goods can however be an issue.

Action: Cllr Stokes to contact Laura at St. Luke's Church to establish if there is a need for the Food Bank and discuss with Be Buckfastleigh the suggestion of having a community larder.

21/165. To approve and sign the minutes from the Town Council Meeting held on 27th October 2021 and review actions from this meeting:

Minutes signed by Cllr Clarke

Actions from the Town Council Meeting:

- Minute No. 21/151 - Restoration and use of the West End telephone box – Members agreed that any proposed use for the redundant telephone box must consider security and risk of arson. There are already 4 community defibrillators within the parish, one of which is located at the Football Club. It was agreed that the glass structure would make it too hot to use as a community larder or plant exchange facility. The preferred option would be for an information point if the door can be locked and the gap at the base of the kiosk blocked in.

Action: Town Ranger to investigate further.

- Minute No. 21/152 – Replacement Town Clock update – Cllr Bailey confirmed that the new clock had been ordered and that he is waiting for a delivery date to liaise with Searles regarding installation.
- Minute No. 21/133 deferred - Cllr Stokes still to meet with Rev Laura McAdam regarding the volunteers for the Emergency Plan.
- Cllr Clarke reported that she had an initial discussion with Pam Barrett at Be Buckfastleigh concerning the mobile sound production workshop for young people, but further discussion is needed.

21/166. Questions and comments from the public: None

21/167. Questions to District and County Councillors and comments on reports:

Cllr Cox advised that the consultation period for the third part of the Teignbridge Local Plan 2020-2040 has been extended and is relevant to Buckfastleigh regarding the proposed development site at Strode Road.

Representatives of South West Water and the Environment Agency gave a presentation to the Overview and Scrutiny committee regarding the discharge of sewage in the Teignbridge area. Discharge rates are published online. It was noted that Teignbridge District Council (TDC) meetings do have public sessions but questions from the public should be submitted in writing first.

Action: Cllr Cox to circulate the notes from this presentation to councillors.

21/168 Review of Emergency Plan and Volunteer Recruitment:

Cllr Patrick confirmed that the Emergency Plan requires a few checks to confirm existing agreements and contact details are up to date and to ask other organisations such as Be Buckfastleigh and The Seed whether they would be available to support the Town Council in the event of emergency.

It was agreed to advertise for volunteers with specific skills to come forward such as first aid training.

Action: Clerk to action amendments. Cllr Clarke to contact Buckfastleigh Fire Service regarding a possible activity for the volunteers to test a scenario.

It was noted that the Devon Resilience Forum runs two annual events for emergency plan volunteers which would be useful to attend when available.

21/169. Smaller Grant Applications:

The following organisations were awarded grants:

- i) Be Buckfastleigh - £500 for early years development. Cllr Kohler-Ockmore suggested that the Nurture Group should be linked to this and will discuss further with Pam Barrett.
- ii) The Bungalow Youth Project - £500 to purchase two laptops for apprentice youth workers.
- iii) The Valiant Soldier - £500 towards the renovation of the rear garden.

Decision: All grant applications approved unanimously by those who did not register an interest.

Cllr Fox expressed his disappointment that very few applicants present their applications in person to this meeting.

21/170. Review of Interim Audit Report 2021/22:

The Clerk highlighted the need to have a new Investments Policy in accordance with statutory guidance on local government investments and transparency regulations. It was also noted that the Register of Risk is approved annually in March and not at the time of the interim audit.

Decision: Members acknowledged the Interim Audit Report and thanked the Clerk for her work in achieving such a good report.

21/171. To review and adopt a draft Investments Policy:

Following recommendation by the Internal Auditor a new Treasury and Investments Policy was circulated to Members for approval. The main objective of this policy is for the Town Council to invest prudently, maintain liquidity, mitigate risk, and seek optimum returns if, and when applicable.

Decision: To defer for resolution at the next meeting to include an additional clause regarding ethical banking. Clerk to action.

21/172. Budget Analysis Report 01.10.21 – 31.10.21: Noted

21/173. Bank Payments Report and Bank Statement 01.10.21 – 31.10.21: Noted

Cllr Bailey highlighted that the total amount received from Just Giving donations to fund the new Town Clock included a deduction of £45.13 as an administration fee. The difference in the total amount has been met from Town Council ring-fenced reserves.

21/174. Chair's Announcements:

Cllr Clarke was interviewed by Radio Devon concerning the Dartmoor Byelaws consultation. The consultation has generated many objections with 2,500 responses to the online survey, but questions have been raised concerning the security and validity of responders. Landowners have raised concerns as to how the National Park is now being used by visitors

It was noted that the Dartmoor Forum meeting scheduled for 19th November 2021 has been cancelled. Representatives from the Town Council had been keen to attend this.

Cllr Clarke attended an unveiling ceremony for the new sign at Barn Park play area and led the lantern parade in Fore Street organised by Be Buckfastleigh and Participate Arts which was very well attended.

Cllrs Clarke, Tilsley and the Town Clerk represented the Town Council at the St. Luke's Remembrance Sunday service and parade.

21/175. Councillor updates relevant to this meeting:

Cllr Patrick advised the meeting that Hydro-Logic who maintain the river Mardle flood gauge and camera have provided details for a new contact and Western Power have introduced a new grant funding scheme up to £10,000 per application to assist with fuel poverty initiatives, but the deadline for applications is 22nd November 2021.

Action: Cllr Clarke to apply on behalf of the Town Council.

Cllr Cox attended the recent Buckfastleigh Action for Nature Group AGM who are working with the Vincent Wildlife Trust to maintain identified sites around the parish.

Laura at St. Luke's Church has proposed that a travelling musical and singing group visits the town during the Christmas period, but no further details were available at this time.

Cllr Kohler-Ockmore will be attending the Voices of the Dart project zoom meeting which will be looking at ways to promote reducing water use.

Cllr Taylor raised some feedback from residents concerning the state of the pavements and a community composting facility.

Any issues regarding pavements should be reported to Devon Highways or referred to the Town Ranger to raise. The Town Council has previously held discussions about a community composting facility with interested parties, but the main problem is obtaining a suitable and accessible piece of land.

The Clerk confirmed that the Town Hall cinema will be showing a Disney film in the afternoon and an action film in the evening on Saturday 11th December.

21/176 Items requiring Urgent Attention:

The Chair raised concerns about the two camper vans that continue to be parked in the Football Club car park following alleged safeguarding issues highlighted by some members of the public.

Cllr Cox confirmed that TDC could not issue enforcement notices to vacate the site immediately due to their statutory homelessness obligations, but notices will be issued shortly.

Action: Clerk to send a letter to the TDC Community Safety team to highlight our concerns about the length of time it is taking to resolve this situation which we believe is a community safety issue and not just trespassing on publicly owned land.

21/177. Summary of Key Messages:

Clerk to liaise with the Chair

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm