

# BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

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## **Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023 at 7.00pm.**

**Present:** Councillors: Huw Cox (Chair), Sue Clarke, Emma Fitzpatrick, Ron Fox, Paul Georghiades, and Judith Hart (Town Clerk).

**In attendance:** Cllrs Stuart Rogers (Teignbridge District Council) arrived at 7.10 pm.  
10 members of the public.

**Press:** None

**23/53. Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Leigh Walker-Haworth, John Bailey, Sylvee Phillips, and John Nutley (Teignbridge District Council)

**23/54. Councillors invited to declare any interests:** None

**23/55. To approve and sign the minutes of the Annual Town Council Meeting and Town Council Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and review actions from these meetings:**

Signed by Cllr Cox.

### **Actions:**

- The Clerk advised that a new draft Cyber Security policy will be circulated for comment and approval at the next meeting.
- The Clerk confirmed that there is a designated alcohol-free zone in the centre of Buckfastleigh which has been in place since 2006.

**23/56. To receive and note the minutes of the Finance Committee held on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023:**  
Noted

**23/57. Proposal for a new youth band for Ashburton, Buckfastleigh and the surrounding area:**

John Fisher presented a proposal for a community youth band for Ashburton and Buckfastleigh. He explained that a band is a great medium for young people which encourages self-discipline, teamwork and instils a sense of well-being. He believes some young people have no self-worth and being part of a band provides a purpose. The band would be very simple consisting of drum and fife instruments.

At this stage, he is looking for approval and support from the Town Council and has just started to publicise this initiative.

Cllr Clarke: The Town Council is currently updating its Youth Strategy as discussed at the Youth Forum meeting on held on 20<sup>th</sup> June.

John Fisher: Would like young people to take ownership of the band so that it is youth-led.

**Decision:** The Town Council agreed to support this in principle.

**23/58. Presentation by Ashburton and South Dartmoor Business Network:** No representative present.

**23/59. Questions and comments from the public:**

A member of the public commented that newly decorated Room 3 looks very nice.

Cllr Cox advised that is part of a refurbishment programme for the Town Hall.

A member of the public raised a question about funds for the renovation of the tennis courts. Cllr Cox confirmed that this matter is in progress following funding from the Lawn Tennis Association.

### **23/60. To consider Smaller Grant Applications:**

Scoriton and Buckfastleigh Twinning Association – Tim Coulton representing on behalf of the group. A party of 40 members from Fontaine-Henry will be visiting Buckfastleigh in August - £400 to support this event.

The Friendship Group - £500 to contribute towards day trips.

All things kidz – Deborah Gardner present - £490 to support this messy play initiative for children of pre-school age.

Conversation Works – Kathrine Bailey present - £500 award. It was agreed this grant will be refunded to the Town Council if an application to the National Lottery is successful.

Royal British Legion – Emma Distin and Abby Harmes present. The group have now successfully raised funds for the bench for the RBL garden at the corner of Bossell Road and Crest Hill other landscaping and planting works are still required to complete this project - £500 agreed.

Buckfastleigh Youth Club – Logan Berry and Emma Distin present. £500 awarded for summer crafts activities. It was noted that the youth club has a full repair lease which depletes funds due to the age and condition of the property.

### **23/61. To consider Larger Grant Applications and recommendations from the Finance Committee:**

Buckfastleigh Bowls Club – Members agreed to defer this application until a representative attends this meeting.

Friends of Buckfastleigh Library – Janet Jones and Erin Kohler-Ockmore present. They have achieved some fundraising but would like to create a dedicated reading space for children with a paid storyteller. Cllr Georghiadis had questions re: enough space for the proposed new equipment and seeking lower prices from other companies. They were asked that if they are a charity, they can claim the VAT on purchases back. Janet agreed to ask the librarian to look at alternative prices to obtain best value.

**Decision:** Defer to the July meeting pending further information and costs.

### **23/62. Questions to District and County Councillors and comments on reports relevant to this meeting:**

Devon County Council report from Councillor Sarah Parker-Khan - noted.

Cllr Cox: Next phase of the household support fund is now available. The new Ashburton housing development is now finished and occupied. The proposed development of Sherborne House, Newton Abbot to provide 24 apartments is now out for consultation. A major renovation programme for Stover Country Park is due to start shortly.

Cllr Rogers: Parishes have the same issues, and he would like areas to work together. He has asked

TDC re street cleaning costs and has sourced a street cleaning machine for £8,000. He would like to pool funds to purchase one for Ashburton, Buckfastleigh and the surrounding villages.

Members agreed that further information is needed regarding storage, maintenance, travel between parishes and use, for e.g. how long would it be available for Buckfastleigh?

Cllr Rogers is also involved with a review of parking within Teignbridge.

**23/63. Planning Applications for commercial sites and areas of significant development or interest:**

Buckfast Abbey Care Village – a new flood risk assessment report to support the existing planning application was noted.

Although planning permission is not required the Town Council has not been informed that a new Farm shop will be part of the EV charging station at Salmon's Leap which is within the parish of Ashburton but adjacent to the boundary of Buckfastleigh. Members expressed disappointment that the Town Council had again not been consulted.

**23/64. Budget Analysis Report 01.05.23 – 31.05.23:** Noted

**23/65. Bank Payments Report and Bank Statements 01.05.23 – 31.05.23:** Noted

**23/66. Following completion of the audit, to receive and note the following:**

- **Annual Internal End of Year Audit Report 2022/23 and to agree the appointment of the Internal Auditor for 2023/24**
- **Sign the Accounting Statement of the Annual Return 2022/3**
- **The Exercise of Public Rights which will commence on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and end on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2023:**

Appointment of Internal Auditor agreed. Audit report noted. The Clerk was thanked for her work on the end of year audit and accounts.

Annual Return accounting statement recorded and signed by the Chair and Clerk.

Notice of Public rights – dates of publication noted.

**23/67. To review membership of the Rural Market Town Group:**

**Decision:** Defer decision until a later date to assess the benefit of membership.

**23/68. To discuss and resolve the Devon Pathfinder Buckfastleigh Maintenance and Timeview Telemetry Contract:**

The current annual contract expires on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023. Members agreed that the increasing costs of site visits, maintenance and equipment replacement outweighs the benefit now that alternative provision by the Environment Agency is in operation.

**Decision:** Clerk to confirm the cancellation procedure and terminate the contract prior to the expiry date.

Cllr Cox and the Town Ranger to remove the Town Council owned equipment.

**23/69. Chair's Announcements:**

Councillors Cox, Clarke, Fitzpatrick, Georghiades, Phillips and Walker-Haworth have attended Devon Association of Local Councils training.

The Clerk was asked to update the agenda to include the way apologies are recorded. Some procedural matters had been revised under a previous administration.

Cllr Fitzpatrick highlighted the need for Councillors to have their own dedicated emails for Town Council matters. It was agreed that councillors could set up their own Gmail accounts to this effect.

The Council will look at recruitment of new councillors and how new members can be encouraged to join.

**23/70. Councillor updates relevant to this meeting:**

Cllr Clarke: The new Buckfastleigh Youth Forum has met which included two members of the local police. Membership of this group will be extended to other youth organisations. Concerns were raised regarding increasing incidents of anti-social behaviour, street drinking and a small number of adults influencing younger members of the community.

Cllr Cox will meet with the Anti-Social Behaviour officer at TDC to discuss further.

**23/71. Items requiring Urgent Attention: None.**

**23/72. Summary of Key Messages:**

Clerk to action.

Meeting closed at 8.45 pm.