

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday 21st February 2024 at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillors Sue Clarke (Chair), Paul Georghiadis, Steven Burch, Ron Fox, Sylvee Phillips, Leigh Walker-Haworth, and Judith Hart (Town Clerk).

In attendance: Joanna De Groot-Marzec representing the Moorland Community Caring grant application and councillor vacancy, PCSO Tamzin Campbell-Moseley, PC Claire Hurrell and 1 member of the public.

Press: None

24/205. Apologies for absence: Cllr John Bailey, Jim Hughes (awaiting enrolment as a new Town Councillor), Cllrs John Nutley and Stuart Rogers (Teignbridge District Council)

24/206. Councillors invited to declare any interests: None

24/207. Newly co-opted Town Councillor welcome: Steven Burch was welcomed as a new councillor and enrolled by the Town Clerk.

24/208. To approve and sign the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 24th January 2024 and review actions from these meetings:

Minutes signed by Cllr Clarke.

- Wool Hub initiative. Cllr Walker-Haworth has been co-opted as the Town Council representative and has attended a few meetings. There are major cost implications to creating a dedicated web app about the wool history of the town which currently is not affordable. The group are asking for volunteers to undertake research. Cllr Walker-Haworth is working with them. A hard copy map will be the first initiative and can be achieved. Malmesbury in Wiltshire is a good example of what can be achieved and have created an interesting historical narrative of the town which subject to funding could be done here.
- No information has been forwarded from Cllr Nutley regarding the future running and maintenance of the tennis courts.
- Warm meal update – the Clerk will advertise a two-course home delivered meal for the Easter weekend for those who are struggling financially in the community.
- Plaques for Room 3 and the new bench outside Searles electrical shop dedicated to Councillor Huw Cox are now ready for installation.

24/209. Introduction to Claire Hurrell, new Neighbourhood Beat Manager for Ashburton and Buckfastleigh with PCSO Tamzin Campbell-Moseley and review of the Police Report for January 2024:

The monthly report was discussed. Some neighbour disputes can result in several crimes from one incident being recorded which can distort data. They are working with young people regarding behaviour and exploitation. The adult of concern has been identified following referrals from local organisations. Many agencies were involved, and action has been taken. Young people are starting to re-engage at The Bungalow following this matter being resolved.

They have established links with local youth groups and businesses such as the caravan parks and

holiday lets regarding awareness of exploitation. Information needs to be reported to the police so they can examine the whole picture of what is happening in Buckfastleigh.

Action: To add the Crimestoppers and Operation Snap links to the Town Council website and social media page.

Cllr Clarke: There is a need to safeguard children and it is a concern for all of us. The Council needs to re-visit the Youth Forum meeting initiative in the summer.

Cllr Georghiades: The Youth Forum needs more structure as we cannot share certain information which limits its purpose.

Cllr Clarke: It is hoped that the Forum will be a starting point for the youth services in Buckfastleigh to pool funds as currently there is a disparity between the groups and how funds are distributed.

PC Claire Hurrell will be the new intervention officer at some point.

Cllr Clarke also highlighted speeding vehicles around the town. Evidence can be reported to Operation Snap but registration numbers of the offending vehicles are needed.

The next surgery is scheduled for Friday, 15th March, but this will only continue if used by the public.

24/210. To consider one smaller grant application:

Moorland Community Caring (MCC) grant application. Cllr Clarke summarised the application and Joanna De Groot-Marzec represented the group as a trustee.

MCC provide one-to-one work supporting people with dementia at home. The soup and pudding club costs £2,500 to run for Buckfastleigh. Social activities are very important for their clients, and they are also dependent upon volunteer drivers to take people to attend these events.

Cllr Georghiades agrees with supporting the group but requested an explanation concerning the level of reserves held in the bank.

Joanna De Groot-Marzec: Current funds of £90,000 without any further grants would allow the organisation to continue for a year. Staff are paid and are professional. Each social event is attended by 15-20 people.

Decision: Cllr Georghiades proposed £500, seconded by Cllr Clarke with all in favour. Clerk to action.

24/211. Questions and comments from the public: None

24/212. Questions to District and County Councillors and comments on reports relevant to this meeting:

Huw's commemorative plaque at Ashburton Post Office noted from Cllr Rogers.

Clerk to ask Cllr Nutley again regarding the tennis court information and terms. The tennis court is currently locked and not free to access. Members do not understand why other new Lawn Tennis Association funded courts have been installed with the proper court surface but only tarmac has been used for Buckfastleigh.

24/213. To consider and adopt a new Biodiversity Policy:

It was highlighted that Point 3 of the policy raises the need to engage a specialist, where applicable, when considering the impact of a planning application on biodiversity. It was agreed that the Buckfastleigh Action for Nature Group could be called upon to assist with this.

Action: Policy adopted and will publish on the website.

24/214. To receive the Teignbridge Citizens Advice Buckfastleigh Outreach Activity Report October to December 2024:

Cllr Georghiades: The Citizens Advice service deals with a wide variety of complex issues and need funds to continue.

It was noted that the Town Council continues to support the weekly outreach service in the St. Luke's Community Hub.

24/215. To review and comment on the proposed new draft Memorandum of Understanding and note the minutes from the TRAYE project Steering Group meeting held on 15th December 2023:

The Clerk explained the purpose of this document, that it is not legally binding and either party may give 3 months' notice to discontinue the service currently provided in Buckfastleigh. It would allow the organisation to budget for the year ahead.

Decision: Cllr Georghiades proposed to accept the Memorandum of Understanding, Cllr Clarke seconded with all in favour. Members conveyed their thanks to TRAYE for all their hard work.

24/216. Budget Analysis Report 01.01.24 – 31.01.24: Noted.

24/217. Bank Payments Report and Bank Statements 01.01.24 – 31.01.24: Noted

24/218. Chair's Announcements:

Proposed development of 75 dwellings at land at Timbers Road, Buckfastleigh appeal to the Planning Inspectorate ref: W/23/3334393 – Members agreed that it unreasonable to determine such a complex application within such a short period of time and stand by the original observations made in 2023.

Action: Clerk to respond.

Planning application 0080/24 – change of use from Church to Community Hub and minor alterations at Buckfastleigh Methodist.

Action: Comments to the Clerk once the application is uploaded to the DNP website, but Members were generally supportive of this application and pleased that the building will be renovated and brought back to use for the community. Concern was expressed regarding the impact of another café on the existing businesses in Fore Street and the increased traffic flow and parking in this area which will be generated. How will this be managed and facilitated?

Cllr Clarke: Irresponsible dog owners continue to allow their dogs to foul the streets, but evidence is needed for the TDC Dog Warden to visit.

24/219. Councillor updates relevant to this meeting:

Cllr Phillips: The Orchard Millennium Green Trust AGM will be held on Tuesday 19th March at 7.00pm in the Valiant Soldier. They are looking for new trustees as only 3 are left. Would

members of the Buckfastleigh Action for Nature Group consider joining as trustees or volunteers?

Cllr Walker-Haworth: The Wool Hub is undertaking research and collating information concerning the proposal to create a heritage wool trail map for the town and will shortly advertise on social media to this effect.

Moor Imagination Collective will be opening the doors of the Methodist Church at 6.00pm on Thursday 22nd February to give residents an insight of their plans for the building.

Cllr Georghiades: The Christmas lights working party will meet at 7.00pm on Wednesday 28th February to discuss how to move forward regarding a new town centre display.

Joanna De Groot-Marzec: The Devon and Torbay Devolution proposal – there has been little publicity and little time to comment.

It was noted that Plymouth City Council has already rejected the opportunity to join the devolution deal.

Action: Social media update to be posted as many people are unaware of this proposal.

24/220. Summary of Key Messages:

Clerk to action.

24/221. Motion to move into a Part II (private) session to discuss one item of confidential business in accordance with Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Meeting returned to Part I and closed at 9.00 pm.