

# BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

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## **Minutes of the Tourism, Recreation and Economic Development Meeting held on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 7.00pm.**

**Present:** Councillors Sylvee Phillips (Chair), Steven Burch, Sue Clarke, Joanna De Groot-Marzec and Judith Hart (Town Clerk).

**In attendance:** Cllr Paul Georghiadis, Fanny Jackson (Bungalow Youth Project), Kerry McCabe (TRAYE), Logan Berry (Buckfastleigh Youth Club), Sheila Phillips (William Pengelly Caves Studies Trust), Mark Jeffreys (The Share Shed) and Fabio Israel (The Doe)

**24/01. Apologies for absence:** Cllr John Bailey (Buckfastleigh Football Club), Cllr Leigh Walker-Haworth, Buckfast Abbey and The Wool Hub

### **24/02. Councillors invited to declare any interests:**

Cllrs Phillips and Cllr Burch – Trustees of The Valiant Soldier and Heritage Centre

Cllr Clarke – Trustee of Victoria Park

Cllr De Groot-Marzec – Buckfastleigh Christmas Fair and Moorland Community Care

### **24/03. To approve and sign the minutes from the Tourism and Recreation Meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022:**

Signed by Phillips. No actions.

**24/04. Questions and comments from the public:** No public present

### **24/05. Proposal to extend the remit and terms of reference for this committee:**

Members agreed to revert the title of this meeting back to the Tourism, Recreation and Economic Development Committee to reflect the revised remit of this committee to foster and develop a working relationship with local businesses.

The youth strategy and participation by all 3 youth organisations to continue to be part of this committee due to their recreational provision for young people.

### **24/06. Comments from local visitor attractions, businesses, and organisations:**

Sheila Phillips – The caves centre continues to have residential guests including school groups and the scouts. A wide variety of groups attend the tours. The centre is open every Wednesday and Thursday in August but is limited by the number of volunteer guides and it is important to have volunteers with local knowledge.

A new nature trail is now open, and the bat walks have been extended. The centre has worked with Birmingham University for many years and currently they are working on a new project about the bone cave which will include a public presentation when completed.

Joanna De Groot-Marzec – The annual Christmas Fair will be held on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December. This year will have a Grinch theme with a “roaming Grinch” to join in the fun. The fair will include a singing quartet, traditional games and it is hoped that the Town Council will again fund the popular Victorian Carousel.

Steven Burch - The Valiant Soldier will be holding a 60's night in August. Trustees have a lot to address including the future of the barns, but are pleased to report the refurbishment of the garden which includes a new gate, fruit trees and a herb garden.

Fabio Israel – The Doe has been open approx. 6 weeks and serves as an eatery and bar. There has not been any marketing or social media and yet the number of customers has increased with very positive feedback from customers. The adjoining shop, The Stable opened in September 2023.

They are now looking for staff. There are no plans to use the garden as an extension of the space for customers due to risk and insurance implications but also because it is a family home.

Cllr Georghiades highlighted that the problem of finding somewhere to park in the town centre has clearly not affected this new venture. It was agreed The Doe has a friendly and welcoming environment.

Mark Jeffreys – The Share Shed is very busy, but they are struggling to secure funding. They are looking at hosting a repair café for Buckfastleigh, but this needs further discussion with the community.

The new cycle/walking route from Totnes to Buckfastleigh is now open which forms part of the Dartmoor Way cycle route.

Fanny Jackson – the Bungalow Youth Project. As part of their funding criteria one hour delivered to young people must be matched by one hour of admin support to the service. They currently have 3 youth workers and Fanny is also employed as a member of staff.

The Lottery grant meets core costs but does not include funding for specific projects, so they continue to fundraise and apply for grants. They are currently undertaking a mental health first aid course and continue to mentor and train young people to prepare them for work.

Cllr Georghiades: “How do the youth groups integrate with local businesses?”

Kerry McCabe: By attending TRAYE, young people are given the opportunity to train as youth workers as it is very difficult for them to find work.

Members agreed that it would be useful to expand work experience in the town.

The Bungalow will be holding their own Prom for those who have been excluded from their own school Prom.

It is important that young people can talk about their issues rather than be excluded due to their behaviour. They may have skills that could lead to employment, but these are not identified through the school system if they are excluded.

Pengelly Caves have a young volunteer following a visit from the Hello Summer initiative and can offer placements.

It was suggested that a group of young people who attend The Bungalow and TRAYE come along to a Town Council meeting to listen to what is discussed and discover that the Council is approachable.

Cllr Georghiades left the meeting at 7.50pm

Logan Berry – Buckfastleigh Youth Club offers a different space and experience to younger children where they can chill out and play games. The club like many organisations struggles to

attract volunteers to help with activities and they continue to have problems with the building.

The group are also aware that the kick boxing classes and Mavericks will be moving into the new Moor Imagination Collective premises which will have an impact on their income.

Cllr Clarke highlighted the issues of a whole group of children aged between 11 to 13 years who missed out on the structure, support and stability of attending school during the pandemic. Some were left alone at home or did not enough support and are now causing problems.

The Town Council has missed the opportunity to apply for funding from the Rural Prosperity Fund administered by Teignbridge District Council (TDC) because there had not been any demand or adequate time to consult to submit a viable bid for a market initiative. £3,000 was offered for a feasibility study to provide a new market or enhance an existing market to meet the criteria of increasing footfall to the town. The Clerk had asked for funding towards the new Christmas lights which is one element of the Christmas Fair, but this was not deemed to be an initiative that would increase footfall and was rejected.

Who decides what projects can be funded and how much is available to each parish?

The Valiant Soldier has applied to the TDC Green Business Grant.

Cllr Clarke stressed that both the Leader of TDC and the Chief Executive Officer should find a better way of communicating what funds are available to the towns and parishes.

Kerry McCabe – Wednesday evenings at the wellbeing café are ‘Inspire Intervention’ sessions which offer advice about training, relationships, sexual health, cost of living, cooking on a budget etc. TRAYE also offer trips during the summer to encourage young people to visit places outside of Buckfastleigh and would like to liaise with The Bungalow on this. The number of attendees increases each year.

Both Cllr Clarke and Kerry McCabe left the meeting at 8.15pm

**24/07. Planning, management, and communications issues for projects which are within the remit of this committee:**

Covered under the above items. Members of this meeting are encouraged to bring forward items for discussion by contacting the Clerk before the agenda is set.

**24/08. To discuss the publication and funding of a new or revised Buckfastleigh Town Guide:**

Item raised by Mark Jeffreys who also commented on the need to have a more interactive events page on the Town Council website to avoid groups organising events on the same day.

Judith explained the history of the guide and that due to capacity there has not been a new edition since 2019. Following the departure from a publishing house that produced guides for many Town and Parish Councils across the country, a local provider was engaged, but it is not known if they would be available to do this again or still have the original templates. The guides were delivered to many businesses and organisations as far as Plymouth, Exeter and Dartmoor and feedback was positive.

**Action:** Members agreed that an updated guide is needed. Clerk to contact the 2019 guide designer to discuss further.

The Town Councils website is also out of date and needs to be refreshed and more modern with an

accessible events page. Quotes are be needed to assess how this could be achieved and at what cost.

**24/09. Buckfastleigh Christmas Lights Update:**

The Clerk explained that the process of replacing the lights is slow and complicated, but provided a summary of what may be achieved in the first year subject to funding and cooperation. Letters to local businesses and organisations requesting donations are being distributed to seek financial support.

Meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

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