

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday 19th October 2022 at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillors: Sue Clarke (Chair), Erin Kohler-Ockmore, John Bailey, Huw Cox, Sylvee Phillips, David Patrick, Mark Jefferys, and Judith Hart (Town Clerk).

Press: None

In attendance: 4 members of the public

22/122. Apologies for absence: Cllrs Kathy Taylor, Leigh Walker-Haworth, Sarah Parker Khan (County and District) and John Nutley (District)

No apologies received from Cllrs Ron Fox and Caroline Bach-Price

22/123. Councillors invited to declare any interests: None

22/124. To approve and sign the minutes from the Town Council Meeting held on 7th September 2022 and review actions from this meeting:

Signed by Cllr Clarke

Actions:

- The Warm Space initiative in the Town Hall will start in November. It is important that those who may benefit from this service are aware that it is available and cascade this message through the Food Bank.

22/125. To approve and sign the minutes from the Parish Meeting held on 28th September 2022:

Signed by Cllr Clarke

22/126. Questions and comments from the public:

Alex Knight and Mark Maish again asked for a meeting with the Town Hall Trustees about revisiting their request to use the Town Hall as a venue for their events. Mark Maish claimed that there had been a lack of discussion and has only received a letter excluding their organisation from the building. He also alleged that the Town Hall runs at a loss and is under-used.

Cllr Clarke reiterated that members of the public cannot call a Town Hall Trustees meeting or set the agenda.

Mark was reminded that serious breaches of health and safety had occurred at their last event and that much of this was captured on CCTV. Cllr Bailey objected to Mr Maish's aggressive attitude during this discussion.

Cllr Cox suggested a new meeting to discuss.

2 members of the public left at 7.20pm.

22/127. Questions to District and County Councillors and comments on reports relevant to this meeting.

Cllr Cox – the Teignbridge District Council budget process is underway; budgets are being streamlined. There is still a shortage of refuse drivers and officers are behind with processing planning applications.

Cllr Clarke has sent a letter to TDC regarding the lack of funding for services in Buckfastleigh and recognising rural need.

Cllr Cox – the amount paid in Council Tax does not cover the cost of the refuse and recycling collection.

Cllr Clarke would like to know more about how much revenue TDC receives, how it is spent and who decides this.

Cllr Cox – budget meetings are open to the public.

Cllr Clarke highlighted car parking and the attitude of some TDC staff.

22/128. Planning Applications for commercial sites and areas of significant development or interest:

South Devon Railway (SDR) has submitted a planning application which is open for comments.

“Site wide landscaping works, erection of a locomotive restoration building (Use Class B2), alterations to internal access arrangements, formation of a car park and associated drainage infrastructure and works.”

Suggestion to have a site meeting.

Action: Cllr Cox to arrange a site visit and invite a representative of SDR to a Town Council meeting.

22/129. To consider 2 Larger Grant Applications:

- (i) Buckfastleigh Christmas Fair Committee. Funds to cover core costs.

Paul Roberts from the Christmas Fair Committee highlighted the verbal agreement with the Town Council prior to Covid for help with insurance, health and safety etc.

- (ii) Cost of hire of the carousel

It was agreed that this was a very popular attraction in 2019.

The Committee have sourced some other funding and donations and local traders are contributing small amounts to pay for entertainers. Stalls are charged at £15 each and retail units pay an additional donation after sales.

£3,500 in total proposed by Cllr Cox and seconded by Cllr Phillips. The Clerk confirmed that £1,500 could be sourced from the culture and events budget and £2,000 from the ring-fenced Wellbeing budget.

Decision: All in favour. Resolved

22/130. Christmas Community Meal:

It was agreed that home delivered meals would be available on Christmas Eve and it was suggested that a community Christmas party could be held in the Town Hall.

Action: Clerk and Cllr Clarke to discuss further.

22/131. Be Buckfastleigh end of year report for delivery of Hello Summer for 2021 and 2022:

Report noted. Cllr Clarke has attended many of these events and would like councillors to visit to see how funds are spent. Hello Summer and other holiday activities are very popular, well attended and well regarded by other parishes. The Town Council contributes £10,000 per year to this initiative.

22/132. Budget Analysis Report 01.09.22-30.09.22:

It was noted that the Mayor's budget has been used for the Menopause meetings, the purchase of games, arts and crafts for the Warm Spaces and a flower arrangement for the Queen Elizabeth II funeral.

22/133. Bank Payments Report and Bank Statement 01.09.22-30.09.22: Noted

22/134. Multi-Pay Card Statements July 2022 to September 2022: Noted

22/135. Quarterly Bank Reconciliation July 2022 to September 2022: Noted

22/136. Chair's Announcements:

The Chair did not attend the Royal British Legion (RBL) meeting due to ill health. The Town Council has never organised Remembrance Sunday events as they have been arranged by St. Luke's Church for many years. Cllr Cox to liaise with the RBL concerning arrangements for this year.

There is an Exhibition of swimming pools through time at The Living Room.

22/137. Councillor updates relevant to this meeting:

Cllr Patrick gave a vote of thanks to the Clerk regarding the success of the recent Buckfastleigh Green Fair. Whilst attending the fair he spoke to the Environment Agency (EA) re the Headwaters project and how Buckfastleigh is at risk of flash flooding. The EA are working to slow the progress of water. Dartmoor National Park are looking at the reintroduction of beavers in the National Park as studies have shown that their behaviour contributes to a healthier ecosystem and helps to reduce flooding downstream.

The Environment Agency is offering to run a flood preparation session and formalise our volunteer team at the Town Hall in the New Year.

Cllr Patrick has received communications from residents regarding the swimming pool. Cllr Bailey has also responded to a couple of emails on this topic. No alternatives are on the table at present to take on the running of the pool and park, but it is not the responsibility of the Town Council to close the pool and dispose of any assets which lies with the charity.

Cllr Clarke is aware that some volunteers have come forward re the future of the park.

Cllr Kohler-Ockmore attended the commemoration of the Queen's funeral.

Cllr Clarke – discussion re the Devon Energy CIC Power Allotments solar energy project. Five acres are needed that are not in the National Park to site a solar array which requires an open and sunny site.

Cllr Jefferys – Moor Trees will be running a workshop in the Town Hall on Saturday 12th November.

22/138. Items requiring urgent attention: None

22/139. Summary of Key Messages:

The Town Hall and Library will be available as a Warm Space starting on Tuesday 1st November, offering a warm space and hot drinks from 9.00 am to 1.00 pm and other times. Further details will be on the Town Council website.

Cllr Huw Cox highlighted the challenges of Teignbridge District Council setting the budget for 2023/24 and was asked how much of the revenue specifically benefits Buckfastleigh. The Town Council would be interested to invite representatives of the District Council to explain how decisions are made regarding allocation of funds.

The Town Council is pleased to support some of the costs for the Christmas Fair this year which will take place on Wednesday 7th December from 4.00 pm to 7.30 pm.

The Town Council will once again be delivering Christmas meals to those residents in town who would like them.

Meeting closed at 8.25 pm.