

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 28th September 2022 at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillors: Sue Clarke (Chair), Erin Kohler-Ockmore, Caroline Bach-Price, John Bailey, Huw Cox, Ron Fox, Mark Jefferys, David Patrick, Sylvee Phillips, Leigh Walker-Haworth, Judith Hart (Town Clerk) and 38 members of the public

Press: No press in attendance

22/122. Apologies for absence: Cllr Kathy Taylor

22/123. To receive a proposal from a representative of the electorate at the meeting for a poll to be called with regards to:

Buckfastleigh Town Council raising the precept (which forms part of the total Council Tax for Buckfastleigh) from 2023/24 to fund a perennial grant application submitted by Victoria Park and Swimming Pool for £65,000 per annum (including an annual inflationary increase) for a period of four years.

1. Proposer: Pam Barrett, 24 Station Road, Buckfastleigh
2. Matt Wicks, *****, Buckfastleigh
3. Emma Blackmore, *****, Buckfast
4. Stephen Dunster, *****, Buckfastleigh
5. Jerome Shapland, *****, Buckfastleigh
6. Victoria Narewski Scullion, *****, Buckfastleigh
7. Alasdair James, *****, Buckfastleigh
8. Solveig Wallis, *****, Buckfastleigh
9. Alex Antcliff, *****, Buckfastleigh
10. Richard Blackmore, *****, Buckfast

This was followed by a questions and answer session regarding the poll process and timescale.

22/124. To vote on the question which is to be put in the poll. Each government elector present may give one vote and no more on any question:

Pam Barrett proposed the following question be put to the vote:

Question 1. Do you support an increase in the Town Council precept (Council Tax) by an estimated 77p per household per week in order to keep Victoria Park and pool open from 2023 onwards?

Cllr Cox: This proposal is a 30% increase to the Town Council precept.

Member of the public: *Objection to using a percentage increase and would prefer actual monetary figures which are clearer.*

Member of the public: *Will there be further increase to the annual budget to account for an inflationary rise?*

P. Barrett: *If funding cannot be secured to pay for the increasing energy costs to run the pool it will have to close. This request is for 2023/24 and will be reviewed in line with decreasing or increasing energy bills.*

Member of the public: *Have the pool trustees looked at other options?*

The Chair confirmed that discussion about the future of the pool, how it is run and funded has already been discussed at length and this is not the meeting to re-visit this.

Member of the public: *Will we need to call another parish poll if more money is needed to keep the pool open?*

P. Barrett: *This meeting was called to allow the community the opportunity to have a say regarding a proposed increase to their council tax – this is an example of democracy.*

Member of the public: *The pool does not have to be heated.*

Two minor variations to the existing question were suggested:

Question 2. Same question as detailed above but without an estimated cost proposed by Cllr Huw Cox.

Question 3. Same question as above but with a monthly estimated amount of £3.33 instead of 77p per week proposed by Gary Quest.

Voting

The votes were recorded by the Town Clerk as follows:

Question 1 – 24

Question 2 – 0

Question 3 – 12

Option 1 carried and resolved. Clerk to action by requesting that Teignbridge District Council calls a Parish Poll.

Meeting closed at 7.44 pm.