

# BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

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**Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025 which followed the Annual Town Council Meeting at 7.00pm.**

**Present:** Councillors: Sue Clarke (Chair), John Bailey, Steven Burch, Joanna De Groot-Marzec, Ron Fox, and Judith Hart (Town Clerk).

**In attendance:** Cllrs Stuart Rogers (Devon County Council & Teignbridge District Council), John Nutley and Jack Major (Teignbridge District Council) and 4 members of the public

**Press:** None

**25/39. Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Paul Georghiades and Sylvee Phillips

**Councillors invited to declare any interests:** None

**25/40. To approve and sign the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025 and review actions from this meeting:**

Minutes signed by Cllr Sue Clarke.

**Actions:**

- Members agreed that suggestions for naming the ram should be sent to the Clerk. An online public poll will select the most popular name.
- Participate Arts have organised some children's activities for the Buckfastleigh Water Day which meet the remit for participation by local school children.

The Chair called a short Part II session at the end of this meeting to raise a matter of concern.

**25/41. Questions and comments from the public:**

A resident from Dart Bridge Road would like to pursue a campaign to reduce the current 40mph speed limit from Plymouth Road to the Dart Bridge Road roundabout to 30mph. There is no pavement on one side and vehicles consistently speed along this section of road which is dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians. The area is clearly part of the town due to the number and spacing of streetlights with residential property on both sides and two residential homes for the elderly.

Government guidance states that all towns and villages should have a 30mph speed limit and a new 20mph limit has already been introduced to Ashburton.

This stretch of road which also includes the eastbound slip road from Dean Prior, is frequently used for A38 diversions when roadworks take place with high volumes of fast traffic including HGVs coming through the town. Residents often complain that diverted traffic from the A38 does not reduce in speed despite signage to this effect.

**Action:** Resident to liaise with Cllr Rogers who will also consult with his County Council representative for South Hams.

**25/42. Representation from the Buckfastleigh W.I following the adoption of the motion 'Bystanders can be lifesavers' regarding the replacement/installation of a new community defibrillator:**

Alison Austin, President of the Buckfastleigh W.I explained that the installation/replacement of defibrillators has been chosen as their good cause project for 2025. Two of the community defibrillators at Duckspod playing field (the Football Club) and Glebelands are reaching their end of life and Members were asked if the Town Council would support their replacement.

The Town Council manages the defibrillator opposite the Coop on Chapel Street which was originally purchased from funds raised by the W.I. The other 3 are managed by the local Fire Service. The Town Council funds all consumables for all 4 defibrillators including replacement batteries.

It was noted that Devon Air Ambulance provide free training and the W.I are keen to raise funds.

**Action:** Cllrs Stuart Rogers and Jack Major to research replacement schemes and report back to this meeting.

### **25/43. Questions to District and County Councillors and comments on reports relevant to this meeting:**

Cllr Nutley reported that Cllr Rob Steemson has been appointed as the new Chair for Teignbridge District Council with Jack Major as Deputy Chair. Cllr Clarke conveyed her congratulations.

The legal case to permit wild camping on designated areas of Dartmoor National Park has been upheld by the Supreme Court.

The Household Support Scheme has been extended by Government and is currently going through Council. Cllr Rogers to send information to the Clerk when available.

In a potential u-turn the winter fuel allowance for pensioners may be reinstated by Government.

Cllr Rogers is currently undertaking his induction process at County Hall and can use a portal which will allow him direct access to communicate with officers.

Devon County Council (DCC) are looking at creating a volunteer warden scheme managed through Town and Parish Rangers and is meeting with the DCC Recycling Officer regarding the disposal of waste collected by Rangers as part of their day-to-day duties.

Cllr Rogers is waiting for an update regarding the new Housing Needs Survey and how this will feed into the identification of exception sites for new housing.

A land survey is required for the land identified at Duckspod playing field before the new scout hut proposal can be considered further.

The new community bus service is due to start in June 2025, but volunteer drivers are still needed.

Funding for new defibrillators may be sourced from the Ashburton and Buckfastleigh Hospital League of Friends through an online application.

New Teignbridge District Council (TDC) recycling lorries are now in service together with a pilot Tetra Pax recycling scheme in 6 other parishes. Cllr Clarke and the Clerk expressed their disappointment that despite trying to initiate this service for Buckfastleigh which was effectively blocked by TDC, yet again Buckfastleigh has not been selected to participate in a

trial and questioned why?

The TDC Councillors Community Fund is again open for applications.

The Town Council request to engage a local artist to paint a bright wildlife and wildflower themed mural on the TDC owned Plymouth Road bus stop has been approved.

The mystery bench which recently appeared in the pétanque court has been identified as belonging to TDC. It is not known why and who authorised it!

Cllr Bailey asked Cllr Nutley if the tennis court lights could be reconnected and Cllr Clarke also asked what has happened to the free tennis coaching which had been promised as part of the Lawn Tennis Association funding award for the refurbished courts?

**Action:** Cllr Nutley to make enquiries.

**25/44. Planning Applications for commercial sites and areas of significant development or interest:**

None.

Cllrs Nutley, Major and Rogers left the meeting at 8.20pm.

**25/45. To review the Police Report for April 2025:**

It was noted that it would be useful to have month to month trends identified in the report.

**25/46. Budget Analysis Report 01.04.25 – 30.04.25:**

Noted.

**25/47. Bank Payments Report and Bank Statement 01.04.25 – 30.04.25:**

Noted.

**25/48. Following completion of the internal audit – to receive and the note the following:**

- **Audited End of Year Accounts and Bank Balances 2024/25:**
- **The Annual Internal End of Year Audit Report 2024/25 and to agree the appointment of the Internal Auditor for 2025/26:**

Appointment of Internal Auditor agreed. Audit report noted.

The Clerk was thanked for her hard work regarding the end of year audit and accounts.

**25/49. To approve and sign the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25:**

Annual Governance Statement recorded and signed by the Chair of the Town Council and Town Clerk

**25/50. To approve and sign the Accounting Statement of the Annual Return 2024/25:**

Annual Accounting Statement recorded and signed by the Chair of the Town Council and Town Clerk.

**25/51. To note the Exercise of Public Rights which will commence on 3rd June 2025 and end on 14th July 2025:**

Notice of Public rights – dates of publication noted.

Clerk to action the above.

**25/52. Chairs Announcements.**

Cllr Clarke attended the commemoration of VE Day at the War Memorial on 8<sup>th</sup> May and met the new vicar, Rev Alex Holmes for refreshments at the Football Club after the ceremony. Cllrs Clarke and Georghiades also attended the formal confirmation of the new vicar at St. Luke's Church.

**25/53. Councillor updates relevant to this meeting.**

Cllr De Groot-Marzec reported that she was welcomed as a representative of the Town Council to the Buckfastleigh Action for Nature Group meeting. She also highlighted the lack of reference to Buckfastleigh compared to other Dartmoor towns in a promotional guide when the town has so much to offer visitors.

**25/54. Items requiring urgent attention.**

None

**25/55. Summary of Key Messages.**

Clerk to action

**25/56: Motion to move into a Part II (private) session to discuss items of confidential business in accordance with Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972**

The public and County/District Councillors left the meeting.

**Meeting returned to Part I and closed at 9.30pm**