

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD AT BUCKINGHAM  
COMMUNITY CENTRE ON TUESDAY 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2004 AT 7.30 PM**

<b><u>PRESENT</u></b>	Councillor	H Cadd P Collins Mrs P Desorgher D Isham G Loftus H Mordue Ms R Newell Mrs H Saul Mrs C Strain-Clark P Strain-Clark R Stuchbury
	Town Clerk	Ms P Heath
	Members of the Public	26

**APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors J Barnett, R Lehmann, K Liverseidge, and Mrs P Stevens

**MINUTES OF 2003 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2004 were agreed as a true record and signed as such by the Chairman.

**REPORT BY THE MAYOR OF BUCKINGHAM**

The Mayor spoke of the work of the Council over the last year. Due to health and safety requirements, sections of the cemetery, which are owned by the Town Council but managed by AVDC, have had the monuments checked for stability. Unfortunately the modern design meant that several were declared dangerous and had to be laid down; the Town Council and AVDC were working together to minimise any distress.

The toilets at Moreton Road are due to be revamped during the summer and we are informed that this will take 3 to 4 weeks.

Parking in Buckingham will cease to be free from later in the year. The Town Council had been unable to persuade the District Council to class Buckingham as a special case and continue to support free parking in the town. Over the years the Council had contributed over £160,000 towards parking costs on the proviso that parking remained free and Members of the Town Council would continue to talk to the District Council.

The Mayor was pleased to report that Buckingham had been awarded Quality Parish Council Status, the first in Buckinghamshire and one of only 35 in the Country. The Mayor thanked the Councillors and staff who made it possible; a presentation of the certificate would be held at the end of the meeting.

The Mayor reported that the Town Clerk had been elected as the Buckinghamshire representative on the National Executive Council of the Society of Local Council Clerks, the professional organisation for all Parish, Town and Community Clerks in England and Wales.

## **REPORTS BY THE COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN**

### **Environment Committee – Cllr P Desorgher**

The Environment Committee has the responsibility for providing hanging baskets and planters in the town, these being done in partnership with the traders and Consignia. These formed part of the town's entry into the Best Kept Village of the Year competition; this year we were second in the cup winner's cup. The Roundabouts are being sponsored by local companies and it's hoped they will all be maintained to a higher standard using the sponsorship money.

The two parks are being well used and the Town Council is hoping to improve the facilities over the coming years as the complete control of the parks reverts back to the Council.

The Environment Committee is responsible for the Town Audit which looks at the town centre highlighting any work required which is then reported to the appropriate authority.

During the year, the Committee in conjunction with the County Council, has been looking at ways in which to make some roads safer, in particular, Addington Road and Westfields.

The Council had this year installed the first of the specialised waste bins which contain rat bait boxes, unfortunately within 2 days of the bins being installed 4 of them were vandalised and at least 2 will have to be completely replaced.

### **Planning – Cllr Stevens**

The Town Council looks at all applications appertaining to the Parish and this year has been no exception in the diversity of applications. At the start of each meeting, a public session is held whereby members of the public can comment on any planning matter. The Chairman urged those making a response to an application to pass a copy to the Town Council in order that it is aware of the views expressed. This will gain more importance as the Government streamlines the planning process and the implications of the Milton Keynes and South Midlands study are felt.

### **Administration – Cllr Mordue**

The Administration Committee is the quietest of all the Committees, dealing as it does with the running of the Council and personnel. The finances of the Council are constantly monitored to ensure the smooth running of the Council and creating a build up of reserves to allow the Council to improve facilities.

This year we are reorganising the internal running of the Council to take into consideration the increased work load and responsibility generated by the Parks, Cemetery and achieving Quality Parish Status. Next years Annual Town Meeting will include reports from the Chairmen of;

- Finance and Administration whose remit is the internal administration of the Council and personnel,

- Environment and Property whose remit is the management of land and property owned by the Council,
- Planning whose remit remains unchanged and
- Events whose remit will be the organisation of the Town Council run events and promotion of the town.

Over the year, the current Committee has signed a 25 year lease with the Tennis Club for the use of the clubhouse and courts, continued its discussion with the County Council for the transfer of Verney Close wooded area to the control of the Town Council, worked on Church Hill to improve the visual aspect and obtained structural reports on the Cemetery Lodge with a view to restoring this old building. The Committee wished to thank all members of staff for work over and above that expected, which meant the Council was able to achieve Quality Parish Status.

### **Town Centre and Events – Cllr P Strain-Clark**

The Committee has been very active during the year and the Chairman wished to thank not only the members of the Committee, the Town Council's staff but also the many organisations who worked with the Council to organise:-

- The Spring Music Festival involving many of our talented local musicians;
- Pancake Race;
- Weekend in the Park;
- Charter Fair which will be celebrating its 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year;
- Bonfire and Fireworks display in Bourton Park;
- Christmas lights;
- Christmas Parade;
- Community Fair.
- The Twinning with Mouvaux which was established in 2002, saw a weekend visit in November, an event enjoyed by those from both sides of the Channel. Representatives will be going over to Mouvaux later this year for a return visit.

## **REPORT BY GRANT RECIPIENTS OF £1000 AND OVER**

### **Buckingham & Winslow CAB**

The Manager of the CAB thanked the Council for the grant which enabled them to upgrade their computer systems allowing volunteers to deal with the increasing and more complex enquiries.

### **Buckingham & Winslow Crossroad Carers**

The Council was thanked for the grant which allows the group to continue to support carers in the area.

### **Buckingham Summer Festival**

The Council was thanked for the grant which has assisted in the Summer Festival becoming an international event.

### **Project Street Life**

The Council was thanked for the grant which supports the work undertaken by PSL to continue providing support, advice and a drop in centre for the youth of Buckingham.

**QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

Mr T Farmer – expressed concern that blockages in the river would cause major flood problems in the town if they were not cleared.  
The Clerk would chase the relevant authorities

Mr T Farmer – expressed concern that the tree work in the Maids Moreton Avenue had not included the clearing of hedges and overhanging branches. He also expressed concern that the contractors had left piles of wood next to the path and cut up the pathway.  
The Clerk would pass the concerns on to AVDC

Mr T Farmer – advised that the footpath on Page Hill is causing concern following the dropping of several of the kerbs by the County Council’s contractors. The footpath and roadway have been left in a rough condition.  
The Clerk would chase Bucks County Council

Mr J Shoeler – as Chairman of the Access for All Group, informed the Council that they have been establishing areas of access concern in the Town Centre, unfortunately the Officer in AVDC who had been acting as the liaison point with relevant departments has moved to Bucks County Council and has not yet been replaced. The Mayor offered the Town Council’s assistance to act in a liaison capacity until AVDC replaces the Access Officer.

Mr McKay – Gawcott Fields still has problems with speeding traffic despite his campaign for the last 6 – 7 years to have the speed limit reduced. The current County Council speed review is recommending the reduction of the speed limit by 10 mph. Cllr Isham would raise the concerns in relation to the Gawcott Field speed limit, with the transport group at AVDC.

**MAYOR’S ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

Presentation of Quality Parish Council Certificate

Mr R Pushman as President of BALC had pleasure in presenting the Quality Parish Status certificate to Buckingham Town Council, the first in Buckinghamshire. Mr Pushman was accompanied by Mr P Martin Vice Chairman of BALC and Mr M Hall Chairman of AVALC.

The Mayor paid tribute to the work undertaken by the Councillors and staff members who made it possible for Buckingham Town Council to achieve this prestigious status.

CHAIRMAN ..... DATE .....