

Minutes of a meeting of the **Environment and Property Committee** of Buckingham Town Council held on **Monday 19th March 2012** in the Council Chamber, Cornwall's Meadow, Buckingham at 8.05pm following the Extraordinary Meeting.

Present: Cllr. T. Bloomfield
 Cllr. H. Cadd
 Cllr. J. Harvey
 Cllr. A. Mahi
 Cllr. H. Mordue
 Cllr. Ms. R. Newell - Chair
 Cllr. Mrs. L. O'Donoghue
 Cllr. M. Smith - Mayor
 Cllr. R. Stuchbury
 Cllr. M. Try

In attendance: Cllr. J. Harvey
 Cllr. D. Seabrook
 Mr. C. P. Wayman - Town Clerk
 Mr. L. Phillips - Green Spaces Manager
 Mrs. K. McElligott

860/11 Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED to receive and accept apologies from Cllrs. P. Collins, P. Hirons and D. Isham.

861/11 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

862/11 Minutes

The minutes of the Environment and Property Committee meeting held on 30th January 2012 approved at Full Council on the 27th February 2012 (**EP/06/11**) were received and accepted.

863/11 Action Reports

Mr. Phillips also noted that when there had been heavy rain it could be seen if the works to the drainage in Chandos Park had worked; he had contacted Anglian Water again by post about the grille held in by rotten wood bars as they had not responded to emails. The path could then be proceeded with. The Chair asked that 738/11 Moreton Road dog bins and 741/11 Chandos Park lime trees be added.

ACTION GREENSPACES MANAGER

211/11: The problem with the Circular Walk was bad underpinning when it was constructed; BCC do not guarantee road and path works for more than a year. Members discussed whether the maintenance budget could be used to repair the path and agreed that it would be reasonable to do so.

(617/11) The sign for the park would be installed as soon as certain modifications to the fixings had been made.

Cllr. Mordue left the meeting.

66/10 Gawcott Green: the matter was in abeyance, until BCC located the papers they had been sent.

Cllr. Stuchbury raised the question of land ownership at the corner of Castle Street and Bristle Hill; it was in the public interest to keep it for public use.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

864/11 Budgets

864.1 To receive and review the current budget sheets.

Members discussed roundabout income; one roundabout was not currently sponsored, but an enquiry had come in that afternoon for it. Mr. Phillips said that revenue was received monthly, quarterly and annually according to individual contracts; Members felt that unifying this – perhaps to quarterly – would be of benefit.

Balances remaining in budgets for the parks and cemetery were awaiting invoices for the tree work.

Chandos Toilets' budget excess was partly due to the estimate made for Precept being rather over the actual AVDC contract agreed from April.

864.2 To agree to carry forward this year's £1900 Memorial Testing budget (253/4617) into the 2012/2013 financial year.

864.3 To agree to carry forward this year's BTCV Grant Payment budget (255/4120) into the 2012/2013 financial year.

Members **AGREED** both the above.

Reference was made to a letter in the *Advertiser* about memorial testing; two phone calls had also been received in the office. Concerns had been expressed about the insensitive manner in which the last testing had been carried out, and the callers had been reassured on this point. It was not Council policy to respond to letters in the paper. Mr. Phillips had supplied a press release but it had not yet been printed; he would try again. Members asked that he circulate the release to them. Public notices would also be posted.

ACTION GREENSPACES MANAGER

864.4 To agree any other adjustments.

Members **AGREED** that any monies remaining in the park budgets after the tree works had been paid for would be transferred to Earmarked Reserves for Playground Replacement.

865/11 Bus shelter

Members had already agreed (Min.461/11) that the Bourton Meadow bus shelter be removed as it was beyond renovation. The Town Clerk's recommendation that no other bus shelters be installed was **AGREED**.

866/11 s106 Wish List

Members discussed Embleton Way open space, regretting that it was too costly to drain and level it to make a proper pitch area. The Scouts were in the process of acquiring use of the pavilion and a piece of the land for their headquarters, and AVDC were considering a play area on the remainder. The Mayor pointed out that Mount Pleasant had no play space, and advocated a MUGA (which has a hard surface) be included.

Moretonville JFC were looking for Council support to extend and upgrade their facilities. Members were happy to support their vision, but financial support would have to be sought via the grant system

Members also asked for public toilets to be added to the wish list.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

The Town Clerk left the meeting.

867/11 Dog fouling in Bourton Park

Some Members felt the posters were too graphic and might offend some park users. The small notice with the BTC logo on was acceptable. Free dog-bags and bag dispensers attached to dog-bins were also discussed.

Members decided that the small notices be put up all around the park, and that the posters put up only in places where there was a substantial problem.

ACTION GREENSPACES MANAGER

868/11 East Chapel, Buckingham Cemetery

The engineering appraisal considered that the subsidence was due to clay shrinkage made worse by the presence of tree roots; however monitoring of the subsidence would be carried out until November. It was considered that the porch damage was of sufficient age as to predate the policy, and would not be covered.

Members pointed out that the Council had been insured with this company for very many years and asked the Green Spaces Manager to go back to the company and query their decision.

There is no point doing remedial works until the cause is verified and trees removed as appropriate.

ACTION GREENSPACES MANAGER

869/11 Buckingham Community Wildlife Project

The Chair reported that there had been no meeting to report on, and that the Railway Walk Group were holding a Pond Life and Bat Evening on 2nd April.

870/11 Green Buckingham Group

Cllr. Newell reported that the Green Fair had had to be cancelled as only two paying stalls had applied, together with 8 free stalls. A review meeting would be held.

Cllr. Harvey had recently become a member of the re-formed MK & N.Bucks Chamber of Commerce and wondered if it might be possible to hold a Buckingham Business-Business event in the Community Centre. He would be put in touch with Mr. Riches of the Buckingham Economic Group.

871/11 Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Local Nature Partnership

To receive a report of the first stakeholder workshop and consider whether the Town Council should become involved.

Members agreed the Town Council should be involved; a representative would be selected at the May Full Council.

Cllr. O'Donoghue left the meeting

872/11 Chair's Announcements

872.1 BTCV bid for funds, with support of the Town Council, from the British Ecological Society to celebrate its centenary (event is 15th June – 4th August 2013) had been successful. They had been awarded £2000. Members suggested that a note be made for the next precept to consider an allocation of supporting funds from this Council.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

872.2 Cllr. Harvey was invited to report on a Fuel Poverty event he had attended.

An estimated 10.9% of people in Aylesbury Vale were in fuel poverty; Buckingham was not so bad, but the problem was worse in the rural hinterland due to lack of gas supply and the solid-walled properties being difficult to insulate. Insulation was the best way to tackle the problem, doing whole neighbourhoods or zones at once for economy.

The 'Green Deal' was a Government scheme which loaned the cost of the works, the loan to be repaid from the fuel savings made. Cllr. Harvey had asked if the Green Deal was applicable to those in Fuel Poverty – the answer had been No.

Cllr. Harvey was asked to produce a synopsis of the meeting to circulate to Members and form the basis for a Press Release. Circulation to the Green Group and Chapter 1 was also suggested.

ACTION CLLR. HARVEY

872.3 The Mayor had received a letter of thanks from the Twinning Association thanking the Council for their support at the recent 10th Anniversary event, and mentioning in particular the Green Spaces Team's help with the tree planting.

872.4 The Mayor also took the opportunity to remind Members about the Civic Service, 2pm on 25th March 2012.

872.5 The Chair thanked Members for their support over the year.

873/11 Date of Next Meeting 28th May 2012.

Meeting closed at 9.40pm.

Chairman..... Date.....