

Minutes of the **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING** of Buckingham held in Buckingham Community Centre on Wednesday 28th March 2012 at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllr. M. Smith Town Mayor
Cllr. T. Bloomfield
Cllr. Mrs. G. Collins
Cllr. P. Collins
Cllr. J. Harvey
Cllr. A. Mahi
Cllr. Mrs. L. O'Donoghue
Cllr. R. Newell
Cllr. R. Stuchbury
Cllr. M. Try
Cllr. W. Whyte

Mr. Jon McGinty AVDC
Insp. E. Garside Thames Valley Police

Cllr. D. Isham Chairman, AVDC
Cllr. T. Mills Buckingham North, AVDC

Other residents:

Ms. F Bray
Ms. M. Bray
Mr. J. Darke
Ms. J. Harding Buckingham & Winslow CAB
Mr. A. Ogden Swan Community Hub
Mr. I. Orton Buckingham Society
Mr. D. Squibb S^t. Peter & S^t. Pauls Church
Mr. S. Townsend Swan Community Hub
Mr. B. Weston-Thomas
Mr. A. Wighton
Ms. J. Wighton

Non-residents

Mr. S. Orme Buckingham Athletic Sports and Social Club
Ms. H. Richardson Buckingham & Winslow Advertiser
Mr. J. Riches
Mr. R. Secret Buckingham Summer Festival

Also present: Mr. Christopher Wayman – Town Clerk
Mrs. Anita Simonds – Deputy Town Clerk
Mrs. K. McElligott

1. Apologies for absence

RESOLVED to note that apologies were received from Councillors Hirons and Mordue, Mr. J. Bercow MP, Cllr. M. Colston (Chairman, BCC), Cllr. M. Tett (Leader, BCC) Mr. C. Williams (Chief.Exec.,BCC), Cllr. J. Cartwright (Leader, AVDC), Mr. A. Grant (Chief.Exec., AVDC).

2. To receive and approve the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 23rd March 2011

The Minutes were approved. There were no matters arising.

3. To receive a report by the Mayor of Buckingham and the Chairmen of the different Committees on the work of Buckingham Town Council

The Mayor said that this had been another challenging year, where Town Council successes could only be attributable to the hard work and dedication of the Town Clerk and office staff and many Councillors.

Last year he had reported that the town was beginning to see some welcome inward investment by the District Council; as a consequence, the trader-led Buckingham Branding Group's efforts to develop Buckingham as a destination of visitor choice had moved on apace. New visitor maps had been produced, and some additional large-scale maps at key locations would shortly be installed, all pointing to *Thoroughly Modern Traditional Buckingham*. Funding had been promised for the coming year, to enable the now renamed Destination Buckingham Group to roll out further schemes to draw people to the town, and to encourage residents to make more use of its many facilities. The town also continued to receive District-led support for local businesses and for businesses seeking to move to Buckingham.

Discussions are currently on-going about further improvement works to the town centre, which would be more fully described later in the meeting.

Last year the Town Council took over funding of the Tourist Information Centre, and Tourism South East had been persuaded to take over its running. Regular visitors to the Visitor Information Centre at The Old Gaol should have noticed many improvements and more are planned.

The Mayor thanked Lee Phillips and his team, who - with assistance from the Thames Valley Probation Service Community Payback scheme – keep the cemetery and parks in good order. Many more trees had been planted in Bourton Park and new play area equipment is to be installed there. Consideration was also being given to reinstating the Trim Trail.

There were fewer empty shops in Buckingham than in many other small towns, which was good news.

The Town Council had begun to work more closely with the University, both on the vexed matter of behaviour by a tiny minority of students, and to enable their future aspirations to be integrated into the town's neighbourhood planning.

Under the skilful direction of Town Clerk Chris and Deputy Town Clerk Anita, ably augmented by the indomitable Katharine, the office and staff had made the move to The Buckingham Centre seamlessly and efficiently last May. The Centre provided far more suitable office facilities and it also meant that all three councils looking after Buckingham were represented under one roof. This had enabled the Town Council to regain its Council Chamber (thereby saving room hire costs) and restored a meeting facility now enjoyed by many local groups and organisations. Of necessity, a few extra staff were taken on to enable the clearing of some arrears of work that had built up, and the handling of the many additional responsibilities that the Council has had to absorb. The newcomers were:

- a F/T Events Administrator, Amanda, who was proving to be worth her weight in gold;
- another Grounds Maintenance Assistant, Matt, who could often be seen about trimming hedges and watering the hanging baskets;
- a P/T Town Planning Officer on a fixed-term contract; Sam, who handles the bulk of our extensive Neighbourhood Development Planning (as a front-runner authority, the Council is funded for part of his cost); and
- a P/T General Administration Assistant, Louise, who seems undaunted by the weight of paper she has to juggle and who takes a leading role in the production of *Buckingham Town Matters*.

He was pleased to announce that next year's Town Council element of your Council Tax would remain unchanged for the fourth successive year.

The Council continued to work in partnership with Buckingham Economic Group, Buckingham Green Group, Destination Buckingham Group and Buckingham & Maids Moreton

Neighbourhood Action Group, all of whom added to the vibrancy of the town, and made it such a pleasant place in which to live.

However there would be some challenges:

Neighbourhood Planning still involved an immense amount of work and, at the same time, it was a constant battle to get developers and planners to recognise that this is an historic town, with a conservation area, and that cheap solutions or administrative expediency are not always the answer.

The cemetery was running out of burial space, and the increases in housing stock would make this more critical in the not too distant future and the Mayor appealed to residents to please keep going for as long as possible.

Cllr. Ruth Newell, Chair of the Environment & Property Committee, described the remit of the Committee, including ensuring that all street furniture owned by the Town Council (seating, planters, waste bins, dog bins etc) was properly maintained, managing the upkeep and maintenance of any land or property owned by the Town Council (including the Cemetery, Chandos Park, and Bourton Parks, the Ken Tagg play area, Railway and Circular Walks etc.), liaising with District and County Councils and other agencies on items falling within their remit, ensuring works carried out on the Town Council's behalf are as specified and completed to a satisfactory standard.

Lee Phillips, the Green Spaces Manager had now been with the Town Council for over two years, and had made a big difference to the Committee's work. He manages our 3 grounds staff, and organises their work, manages the burials, organises work in the parks and identifies improvements to our horticultural contracts.

During the last year, the Committee has:

- Made a number of improvements to the Brackley Road Cemetery, removing the hedge to the small triangle, rotivated the ground and are about to put grass seed down to give us approximately 90 more grave spaces. We will also be putting in a new Garden of Rest, in the same area. and have continued improvements to its general upkeep. We still have our regular grave digger that we use and burials have run smoothly.
- We continue to rent out the Cemetery Lodge.
- The Parks Policy group has met regularly during the year and has a planned list of priorities for the next few years that we are working through. We are encouraging responsible dog ownership, both in keeping dogs under control and cleaning up after them, have put up signs, and have publicised it jointly with Aylesbury Vale DC. We've agreed the style of new park furniture, and will be replacing the picnic benches in Bourton Park and the litter bins in Chandos Park shortly. We are in the process of applying for funding for the play area in Bourton Park, and have consulted the schools on what they would like; we are looking to replace the basketball court in Bourton Park with a MUGA as this is one key thing the children wanted. This is work in progress and we are aiming to get these built in the summer.
- We have surveyed our trees and have tendered for and agreed works to trees on the Railway Walk, Bourton Park, Chandos Park and the Cemetery.
- We have agreed signage for Chandos Park. We had problems of antisocial behaviour in the Park last summer and were able to get a redeployable camera for 6 weeks, and have since agreed to purchase one from our new year's budget.
- We have agreed to take on the maintenance of the play area at Otters Brook.
- We have set in place procedures for a rolling plan for memorial testing (legally required on health and safety grounds) and our Green Spaces Manager will be appearing in the *Buckingham & Winslow Advertiser* to explain about it.
- We have again increased the number of grit/salt bins in the Town; another 3 have been installed in areas requested by townspeople.

- We have been very lucky to have 2 very successful Conservation Groups working in Buckingham - the Railway Walk Conservation Group, ably coordinated by Jenny Manning, and the Maids Moreton Avenue Conservation Group, coordinated by Bill Truscott. We've also continued with the Buckingham Community Wildlife Project and work in partnership with the conservation groups, Matt Dodds of AVDC, and David Peevers of the Buckingham Society, to preserve and enhance our natural environment via various "friends" groups, whose work in all weathers is wonderful. The Railway Walk Conservation Group have a bat and newt evening planned for 2 April. With BTCV we are arranging wildlife conservation events in Bourton Park and started with bluebell planting a few weeks ago.
- Members of the Town Council also work in partnership with the University and *Buckingham & Winslow Advertiser* on the Green Buckingham Group to work on green issues in Buckingham.

That is a brief resume of the activities of the Environment & Property Committee and I should like to thank its members, who actually comprise most of the Town Council, for their hard work in what has been another very busy year.

Cllr. Mrs. Geraldine Collins, Chairman of the Finance, Administration and Personnel Committee noted that her Committee worked behind the scenes rather than in the public eye, but monitored spending to keep it within the budgeted amounts, and had overseen the appointment of new staff and the move to the new office. The Committee was proud that it had managed nevertheless to maintain a 0% increase in the Council Tax and hoped to be able to do this in the future.

Cllr. Warren Whyte, Chairman of the Planning Committee, which now included transport issues in its remit, reported that it had been a very busy year with new legislation to cope with. The Committee had considered 136 applications – more than last year, but not as many as in earlier years – and supported 91. Appropriate response had been made to consultations on the English Heritage Guide for Local Listing; BCC Speed Limit Review Area 14, LTP3, Planning Validation requirements and Minerals & Waste Strategy; the National Planning Framework; the Community Infrastructure Levy; the 'Community View' for the Vale of Aylesbury Plan; and the DCLG Neighbourhood Planning Regulations. The National Planning Framework had been launched the day before this meeting, 50-60 pages replacing 1000s, and the next 12 months would see much change.

The Town Council was producing its own Neighbourhood Plan and there would be various events later in the year enabling consultation with local people. The Committee was trying to be proactive rather than reactive; it was happy to receive developers at meetings to discuss proposals and provide local knowledge.

He thanked the Committee, the Clerk and the Town Plan Officer for their hard work, including time spent attending Development Control meetings and other training and learning events.

Cllr. Robin Stuchbury, Chairman of the Town Centre and Events Committee, thanked the Deputy Clerk and the Events Assistant for their tireless work - Mrs. Brubaker was full of ideas, and Mrs. Simonds had proved an excellent Market Co-ordinator. Cllr. Bloomfield had stepped in as Market Manager, so special thanks for that.

There had been many well-attended events throughout the year, especially the two music festivals and the bonfire and fireworks and the Committee members all helped. The events drew an audience from both the town and the surrounding area.

The "Festival Fortnight" had proved confusing so the two parts had been separated, the Council part becoming the Fringe to the Buckingham Summer Festival. The 2011 Fringe had been a great success and popular events would be repeated in 2012, the Oxford Fiddle Group were coming, there would be cream teas with music at the Villiers, and jazz at Buckingham Athletic.

The increasing amount of legislation involved with putting on events took a great deal of office time, but ensured a safe environment for all the people attending.

The Council also funded events such as the Christmas Parade, and had maintained the additional funding found for the 25th Parade for the 26th.

A regular Comedy Night had been started on Sunday nights in the Town Hall; these sold out quickly, with tickets for nationally known comedians priced so as to cover the outgoings only.

The Committee had also provided hanging baskets, and summer and winter planters for the Bull Ring, White Hart island and the bus station, and had arranged for planting at the Welcome to Buckingham signs at the entrances to the town.

The Diamond Jubilee and the passing through the town of the Olympic Torch provided new opportunities in 2012, and new ideas for other events were always welcome.

He felt there was nothing better than entertaining 1500 people of all ages at a free event.

4. To receive presentations from representatives of other entities on their work in 2011/2012

4.1 Buckinghamshire County Council

Mr. M. Grindall later apologised for his non-attendance.

4.2 Aylesbury Vale District Council & Buckingham Partnership

Mr. Jon McGinty reported that the Buckingham Centre now offers an improved service to customers, with the weekly planning officer attendance augmented by housing and other specialist surgeries.

There were 280 new affordable houses in Buckingham (at Moreton Road, Bridge Street and London Road) and AVDC were working with private owners at Fleece Yard and Market Hill.

In the public realm, the second phase of the project to improve HGV signage was nearly complete, and AVDC had carried out minor refurbishment of Moreton Road toilets and essential works to Chandos Park toilets, and contributed to the refurbishment of the Bull Ring bollards by Town Council staff. The town had been provided with a dressed Christmas tree.

Anti-social behaviour: AVDC were working with the University, the Town Council and the Police to deal with recent problems.

The Community Engagement Officer was liaising with groups of older people and had, for example, organised a Dementia Awareness event.

Cllr. Pearl Lewis had chaired the Town Council's Local Democracy Week debate between The Buckingham School and the Royal Latin School.

Licensing: enforcement action on taxis illegally plying for hire, especially at the University, had been carried out. They were also working with the University on problems associated with the Graduation Ball. A Saturation Policy (how many drinking establishments were to be permitted in one town) had worked well in Aylesbury and whether to extend this to Buckingham was being discussed. 13 High Street had been persuaded not to extend its opening hours.

Parking: They had listened to residents' views and reduced the daily fee at Stratford Fields and Western Avenue to £1.50.

Leisure & Green Spaces: new play equipment had been installed at Overn Avenue and Ottersbrook. The Swan Pool was coming up for its 15th birthday; it received 350,000 visits per year. The new energy saving lights allowed 34,000kg carbon saving. A new footpath had been laid in Holloway Spinney, and a stand of black poplars planted.

Flooding: Works to protect vulnerable properties had been completed and a Local Flood Group met regularly.

Planning: AVDC had supported the Town Council's application for Front-runner funding.

The Partnership was working to support the Neighbourhood Plan with Town Vision planning.

Economic development: AVDC had given financial support to the branding exercise and this would be rolled forward by the Partnership and the Economic Group, though without the Project Officer who had helped launch the initiative.

4.3 Thames Valley Police

Inspector Garside was now in her 3rd year being responsible for the rural areas of the Vale. She felt that public confidence in the Police was critical, and therefore her staff should be visible and neighbourhood policing tackled matters important to local people. She thanked the *Advertiser* for its support.

Looking to the wider TVP area, the new national non-urgent call number (101) had been introduced which was easier to remember, and calls to this number were cheaper from mobiles and a standard charge, ie not dependent on length.

The Force's planned savings were on target, with some staff cuts and a review of counter opening times had been carried out. Many areas had had opening hours reduced, but she had fought hard to retain the 10am – 2pm 5 days a week of the town centre police office though she had been unsuccessful in extending the opening to Saturdays.

In November Police & Crime Commissioners were to be introduced and would set the targets for the Force to work to – until then these would be set by the Police Authority. They included metal thefts, which were a current cause of concern.

There were changes to the boundaries for neighbourhood policing – these were now the same as for the LAF area ie not divided into North, Central and South – but there would be no changes in personnel. The Chief Constable was committed to retaining the number of officers in Neighbourhood Teams and the PCSOs and there were to be no staff cuts, though a new shift pattern would be introduced finishing later on Friday and Saturday nights, giving cover into the small hours. She was happy that she had the right PCs & PCSOs in the right jobs; Sgt. Cladingboel was Acting Inspector in Aylesbury and a temporary Sergeant had been appointed.

Statistically, the crime figures were better than last year, and burglary/robbery/vehicle crime was down 50% due to targeted initiatives, intelligence-led patrolling and offender management. Anti-social behaviour remained a priority; the town had suffered such behaviour in the public spaces and around the University, and the police were working with the University on this. A small number of students were giving the rest a bad name.

The detection of crime remained the №1 priority, but attention had also been given to the NAG target of reducing the number of HGVs in the town (new signs had been installed); speeding in towns and villages (support from the LAF and the purchase of a speed gun would help enforcement operations); parking at schools (educating parents to park sensibly given the lack of space); working with the Drug & Alcohol team on a programme of diversionary events at Easter. the monthly Have Your Say and NAG meetings kept her in touch with resident's views; and they had also worked with Trading Standards on under-age alcohol sales, rogue traders and cold calling vulnerable people.

Officer in their own time had formed a football team to play local youths, and also played badminton and tag rugby.

She asked that if police presence was to be required at any Jubilee or Olympic events, including the Torch Relay, the request be made in good time to optimise planning.

5. To receive reports by recipients of 2010/2011 grants over £1000

5.1 Buckingham Athletic Sports & Social Club

Mr. Orme outlined the improvements the Club had made to the clubhouse and pitch. The clubhouse was now fit to rent to local organisations (free to charities) – the Twinning Association, Mencap, Inner Wheel, Bio-detection Dogs, RAF Freedom Parade, British Legion, Moretonville FC and Cancer Research were mentioned – as a benefit to local people and the wider community. It was proving so popular it was sometimes difficult to fit them all in. The Club had allowed the use of the pitch for the Buckingham Charity Cup games, which assisted them in raising around £2000. It was still primarily a Football Club used by 10,000 local people, both spectators and players, and was run solely by volunteers; they hoped to continue expanding their facilities both as a Sports and a Social venue.

5.2 Buckingham Summer Festival

Mr. Robert Secret reported on the 23rd Festival, which was held as usual in the first week of July. There had been seventeen or eighteen concerts including morning piano recitals, lunchtime and evening events. In 2012 There will be the return of an early music group called The Frolick who are great fun, and local saxophonist Snake Davis is performing with a string quartet on the Friday night. By going for a mix of styles it is hoped to encourage audiences to try something different and enjoy the friendly welcome extended to all attending by the loyal band of volunteers helpers.

Mr. Secret felt that he was pretty good at persuading musicians to come for extremely reasonable fees; however the Festival was very expensive to run. All the administration is done by volunteers, so that, aside from printing and distribution costs, all the funds go on the concerts. Ticket prices are kept as reasonable as possible, which means that additional money has to be raised to break even, and this is not easy. Last year saw record attendances: the 11.00am piano recitals, he was pleased to report, attracted audiences of about 100.

The Town Council's grant, for which they were very grateful, had enables them to put on a Gala Concert at the end of the Festival with professional musicians. Not all Festival-goers are Buckingham residents, and the others generate revenue for local hotels, restaurants and shops.

5.3 Buckingham & Winslow Citizen's Advice Bureau

Mrs Harding described the work of the Bureau, and noted that prompt advice on resolving a problem can often prevent one problem spiralling into a cluster of problems resulting in recourse to public services; stress can cause health problems - affecting the ability to work, creating family problems, and all too often resulting in the loss of a job and relationship breakdown.

Clients are offered advice tailored to their problem, whatever it is, and support through the difficult period to ensure a positive outcome. There are no other organisations in the area offering the same service, and demand continues to increase; each year they deal with about 14,000 different problems and 25% of the people they see are from Buckingham.

The repercussions of the national financial situation are still affecting local people: changes in Employment Support Allowance and the proposed cuts in Housing Benefit mean their advice is more needed than ever, and affects the more vulnerable members of the community, especially those who find form filling difficult enough to deter them from appealing.

The CAB also provides volunteering opportunities for local people; we ensure volunteers have training and support which gives clients confidence, and many move on into paid work or further education.

Securing sufficient funding is always challenging and in recent years the reduction in funding streams makes local funding more essential. This allows the CAB to provide not only the core services but the ability to expand services without additional costs to the Council. A local community is best placed to understand the needs of its residents, especially its most vulnerable members, and everyone at the Bureau thanked the Town Council for recognising the need for their service in the area and providing the means by which they can address it.

5.4 St. Peter and St. Paul's Church

Mr. D. Squibb, Churchwarden, thanked the Council on behalf of the PCC for the contribution to the roof repairs. The copper on the 60-year-old roof had been prone to lift in high winds, leading to water penetration, and damp had been affecting the walls and plaster. He showed slides to demonstrate the works, and noted that Phase 1 (£250,000) as now complete. Drainage from the roof had been improved, and internal walkways installed within the roofspace. Phase 2 would replace the remaining copper on the chancel roof at a similar cost, 50% of which would be met by English Heritage.

5.5 Swan Hub

Mr. A. Ogden outlined the work of the Hub, to improve the wellbeing of the community by organising activities helpful to the disadvantaged. Intergenerational activity, such as the Space Bar on Saturday mornings when pupils of The Buckingham School provided tuition for those unused to computers, and also access to computers for those without their own. The Children's Centre had been looking for someone to teach sewing so costumes could be made for the Christmas Parade, and Lynne Maddocks, AVDC Community Engagement Officer used the Hub for meetings. The grant had been used for running costs for the building and updating computer software. The landlord was seeking to repossess the building, so they were looking for new premises suited to their needs.

6. Questions from the Residents of Buckingham

6.1 Written questions

Mr. Weston-Thomas: What is the current situation regarding future provision of Public Toilets in the town?

Mr. McGinty: AVDC would like to pass responsibility for maintenance to the Town Council. Until agreement is reached they will be kept open without further work. Minor refurbishment has been carried out.

Cllr. Smith: BCC has agreed to a feasibility study on whether new ones can be built at the garage end of the Library.

Mr. Weston-Thomas: Why did the building of toilets as part of the community centre never go ahead, what happened to the money put aside for this and if the rates were put up by 37% in 2009/2010 and 23% in 2008/2009 for this purpose why did they not go down?

Cllr. Smith: The proposed extension of the Town Council Offices, creation of a new Community Room and public toilets did not come about due to legal issues over the land upon which it was to be built.

The precept was not increased just to support the proposed building extension. Since the project stopped more money has been spent on additional work, such as the new Play Area and MUGA in Chandos Park; increased staffing to undertake the Council's work; suitable office facilities for those staff has been provided; more has been spent in the parks, open spaces and Cemetery; more has been given out in grants; more has been provided for Town Events and more investment has been made to secure the long-term future of our markets, the parks and the cemetery.

Mr Weston-Thomas: How many people were employed by the Town Council in 2007 when the admin cost was £131,204 compared to 2008 when it was £248,511 and how many now and what is the cost?

Cllr. Mrs. Geraldine Collins: Staff costs for the year-ending 2007 were £93,544 (this paid for 3 full-time equivalents). For year-ending 2008 the staffing costs were £85,312 (still 3 full-time equivalents – however, due to vacancies the actual spend was lower).

The current staffing budget is for 10 full-time equivalents. The staffing budget for the coming financial year 2012/13 is £287,224 out of an overall administration budget of £383,547.

Cllr. Stuchbury: Costs have also risen, and new legislation demands additional staff. The Council has been understaffed for some time leading to a backlog of work, and the investment in new staff and premises will have huge benefits down the line.

Mr Weston-Thomas: I would like to know the destiny of the old cinema on the corner of Chandos Road and London Road? Is it subject to a preservation order due to its Art Deco design?

Cllr Warren Whyte: It is not sufficiently significant to merit Listed Building status, and has been substantially modified to turn it into a vehicle repair shop and showroom. The Town Council had

looked at it when researching new office space, and applications to turn it into a doctors/dentists surgery or replace it with flats over a Sainsbury store have been withdrawn.

It is still in private hands and a developer has been in touch to try and arrange to come to a future Planning Committee Meeting. All we were able to get out of them on the phone was that are planning a wholly residential development for the site.

Mr Andrew Wighton: In our area of Buckingham several planning decisions have been made of which we have been ignorant until builders have started work. Planning notices have been posted on lampposts or fences not necessarily adjacent to the site or are subject to removal or vandalising. The local paper carries notices in the classified ads which necessitates buying the paper or they are shown on the web site which requires access to the internet. Other planning authorities notify by post those residents likely to be affected by the application. This is easily achieved with current IT tools available to Planning Departments. Could the AVDC explain why this process cannot be adopted.

Mr. McGinty: National planning legislation gives Councils a choice on how an application is publicised; some place an advert in the local paper. AVDC only does this when the Conservation Area is affected. The 'yellow notice' is recognised throughout the District, and reaches people who do not take the paper. All applications are on the website, and residents can register for email alerts, although of course some have no internet access. There were no plans to change to individual letters to neighbours, it is not an ideal system particularly in rural areas.

Cllr. Whyte: Planning agendas list all Buckingham applications, and meetings are open to the public.

Mr. Wighton: These require actions – access the internet, buy the paper, go to the meeting. The two that affected us, there was no notice. It would be fairer and cheaper to notify us by post.

6.2 Audience questions

Mr. J. Darke: What problems are the Town and District Councils experiencing with Houses in Multiple Occupation? 1) How do they affect private rental charges? 2) How so they affect the value of adjacent properties? and 3) What is the long-lasting damage to the community?

Cllr. Whyte: This is a topical question which the Committee has sought to take action on; family houses are being turned into HiMOs without planning permission. We are concerned at the additional pressure on waste services, parking and the pressure on the rental market, but the landlord can make more money from an HiMO. There is a mechanism called an Article 4 Directive, which would mean that planning permission must be obtained for the change which Milton Keynes has applied, but the District Council has declined to consider it.

Cllr. Stuchbury (speaking as a District Member): I have asked the question of the Cabinet Member, but the reply answered none of our concerns; there is a problem in Buckingham and I will pursue the matter.

Mr. McGinty: AVDC do not believe Article 4 is the right way to go about resolving the problem, and believes more in using the carrot than the stick. It would be better to work with the Housing Officer, and also the Neighbourhood Plan should include the University's Campus Development proposal.

Mr. T. Mills: Is there any Local Authority involvement if a drought is declared?

Mr. McGinty: AVDC Is working with the Thames Valley Resilience Forum to decide on what the Local Authority should be doing – eg turn off fountains, stop watering flowerbeds etc. No conclusion has yet been reached.

Cllr. O'Donoghue: I would like to ask the views of the Town Council and District Council on the prioritising of Affordable Housing for local people.

Cllr. Smith: Resounding support.

Cllr. Whyte: We will use the Neighbourhood Plan process if we can to inform a policy and we hope AVDC will support it.

Mr. McGinty: A new corporate plan is in development for the next 4 years; a certain number of Affordable houses will be allocated for the District.

Cllr. O'Donoghue: When Cllr. Stuchbury put the motion to AVDC, it was opposed 19-10.

Mr. McGinty: The Government is about to bring forward changes to housing allocation; best to wait for this.

Mr. I. Orton: A question for Insp. Garside – What can the Police do about the constant parking on the pavement outside Marriotts at the Castle Street/Elm Street corner? The double yellow line goes right round this corner, although the pavement used to be a garage forecourt. Surely this is obstruction, it is certainly a nuisance for pedestrians.

Insp. Garside: I'm not sure about this location, I will have to look it up. A vehicle on double yellow lines is a matter for parking enforcement officers, as it would be if it was parked in a disabled bay. If it is in a dangerous place or causing an obstruction the police can act. It is not illegal to park on the pavement if there is room for a pram or buggy to pass.

Mr. McGinty: As of last week BCC have taken back responsibility for on-street parking enforcement; it is subcontracted out. Their wardens wear dark blue uniforms. AVDC warden (in green) only look after the car parks.

Cllr. Mrs. G. Collins: It hasn't been a forecourt for many years now.

Cllr. R. Stuchbury: I would have liked to ask Mr. Grindall

- to explain the changes to the 32 bus service?*
- plans for public health in light of the changes*
- how BCC are going to provide 6th form & further education in Buckingham – a College?*

He felt it was shameful there was no representative of the County council at the meeting.

8. Mayor's points for information

The Mayor noted that the Queen's Jubilee was being celebrated with a Big Lunch at the Church as well as numerous street parties – a good opportunity to enjoy yourself.

Furthermore, the Olympic Torch would be passing through Buckingham on the 9th July, between 10.20 and 10.30 – residents should turn out and cheer it on its way.

He thanked everyone for coming.

The Meeting finished at 9.25pm.

.....
Chairman of Buckingham Town Council

.....
Date