

Minutes of a meeting of the **Environment Committee** of Buckingham Town Council held on **Monday 12th February 2018** in the Council Chamber, Cornwall's Meadow, Buckingham at 7.00 pm.

Present:

Cllr. T. Bloomfield	
Cllr. P. Collins	
Cllr. Mrs. M. Gateley	
Cllr. J. Harvey	Town Mayor
Cllr. P. Hirons	
Cllr. D. Isham	Vice-Chair
Cllr. A. Mahi	
Cllr. Mrs. L. O'Donoghue	
Cllr. M. Smith	Chairman
Cllr. Mrs. C. Strain-Clark	
Cllr. R. Stuchbury	

In attendance:

Mr. L. Phillips	Green Spaces Manager
Mrs. K. McElligott	for the Committee Clerk

770/17 Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED to receive and accept apologies from Cllrs. Ms. J. Bates and Ms. R. Newell.

771/17 Declarations of Interest

Declarations of interest.
None.

772/17 Minutes

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on Monday 11th December 2017 ratified at Full Council on the 22nd January 2018.

There were no matters arising.

773/17 Action Reports

I: (771/15; Church Street step) Members asked for a progress report.
M: (517/16; schools poster competition) Members asked for a progress report.
J: (630/15; wildflower planting, Bourton Park) The GSM reported that work would start the week after next; he had selected a good mix of grasses and wild flowers, bearing in mind some parts of the park had a rich soil, and the mowing regime would be adapted to maximise self-seeding.
D: (521/16; Signs, Bourton Park) Awaiting addition of AVDC logo (to acknowledge funding) and would then be installed.
H: (309.5/17; additional benches) New (memorial) benches had been placed outside the Old Gaol; the old ones would be refurbished and repainted. Suggestions for sites would be brought to the next meeting.

774/17 Gates at Lace Hill play area

Members suggested that the Residents Association write to the Management Company asking why no gates had been installed, and whether they were prepared to remedy this.

Cllr. Stuchbury reported that David Rowley (AVDC s106 Monitoring Officer) was setting up a meeting with the Residents Association prior to agreeing to sign off the play areas and transfer them to the Management Company. There were other areas of concern, and installation being not up to the required standard, and this could be included. He suggested it would be of advantage if the GSM attended the meeting.

Proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. Harvey, and **AGREED** that – should the Management Company not agree to install the gates – then Option A should be pursued. **ACTION GSM**

775/17 Chandos Park CCTV

Cllr. Hirons asked whether permission to mount the cameras on AVDC & BCC property had been obtained. The GSM said he had permission from BCC to use the column, but there not yet from AVDC, but he was not expecting any difficulty though the process could be lengthy. Cllr. Smith noted that AVDC's Safety Group were aware of the problems in the area.

The Recommendation was **AGREED**.

776/17 Budgets

Cllr. Harvey requested reasons why 249/4709 Maintenance of the public toilets was considerably more than estimated. **ACTION GSM**

Cllr. Bloomfield asked why so little had been spent on tree maintenance – GSM said more work is planned.

777/17 Moreton Road Toilets

Members discussed Cllr. Ward's answers to Cllr. Stuchbury's written question. No approach had yet been made by AVDC on the question of taking on the toilets; reviewing the previous list of pre-takeover conditions was requested, in case any update was needed, so that the Town Clerk would have current information should the approach be made.

ACTION: CIRCULATE RELEVANT MINUTE FOR REVIEW NEXT MEETING

778/17 Purchase of ride on mower

Option A was **AGREED**. The mower would be housed in the unit; floor bolts were advocated for security. **ACTION GSM**

779/17 Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council

To receive a written report from the Town Clerk.

Members discussed the report at some length, expressing concern at the lack of detail on actual processes to be followed in the longer periods between meetings, and the maintenance of service to residents; if sub-committees were to be formed, what powers they would have, especially if expenditure was involved. A system of written questions was suggested to provide a paper trail in case of subsequent problems, also amending Standing Orders to allow 2 or 3 Members to add an item to the next agenda. Consideration was also

given to attracting new Councillors, especially those who had young families and might be reluctant to attend so many meetings. Restricting the number of Committees a Member could join was discussed and discarded, as any Member could attend any Committee, and all received the copies of Minutes. The Mayor felt that greater emphasis on outcomes was needed; Cllr. Hirons would like more detailed progress reports at meetings.

No evidence had been offered on whether the frequency of meetings affected recruitment of new Councillors, and several had applied at the last co-option. Dealing with everything at Full Council meant that the Town Clerk had to be able to answer questions on any Committee matter, as the relevant officer would not be present.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Collins, that the Town Clerk's report be noted, but that an additional report be submitted, recognising the functions and accountability of elected Councillors, and acknowledging democratic process and Members part in the new structure and changes to the powers of Chairmen within the legal framework of the Local Government Acts.

Proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. O'Donoghue, that the report include a mechanism for decision-making between Committee meetings.

Members agreed, Cllr. Hirons excepted, that consideration of the change be deferred until the parallel detail report was available. **ACTION TOWN CLERK**

Cllr. Collins left the meeting at 8pm.

780/17 Tree Survey

The GSM reported that the tree survey had been completed – there were more than 3000 in Bourton Park alone. Every tree had been surveyed and mapped. Some 250 trees required some work, 180 in Bourton Park due to the prevalence of willows and poplars; 8 needed to be felled, plus 3 in Chandos Park and 1 in the Cemetery. Bourton Park will need a lot more work over the next 3-4 years. The work has been put out to tender for response by the week after next, and will be covered by budget rolled over from last year.

The entire survey will not have to be done at one time again, it can be done in smaller sections, and any maintenance work on trees will be added into the tree details as required. The system will also flag up when re-inspection is due.

The large Cedar in the Cemetery lost a large limb in the winter storms – approximately 2 tons of timber. The damage to the remaining tree is not as bad as feared, but an arboriculturalist will be doing a detailed recommendation on remedial works which may involve reduction of some branches and cable bracing. Regrettably the limb has damaged a child's grave beneath it, and the GSM is tracing relatives. He asked for the Committee's agreement to pay its restoration. **AGREED** unanimously, bar Cllr. Hirons, who disliked voting an unknown expenditure.

The Mayor thanked Mr. Phillips formally for carrying out such a comprehensive task.

In answer to a question about the fruit trees planted at the eastern end of the park, the GSM said that trees under a certain size were not included in the survey, but that he planned to renew the stakes and guards this year.

781/17 Easter at LHSCC

Proposed by Cllr. O'Donogue, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury and **AGREED** that the expenditure be met from the Lace Hill Events budget 250/4166.

Cllr. Gateley, noting that the budget mentioned napkins and straws, requested that plastic straws not be used. Members discussed the use of disposable plastic items and

Proposed by Cllr. Gateley, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **AGREED** that this Council not use plastic straws, plastic cups and similar disposable items as a matter of policy. *[The Lace Hill Co-ordinator has since confirmed that she does not use plastic straws].*

Members would like to see the final budget, with any profit, after the event, noting that responsibility for Lace hill events was being passed to TC&E after the year-end.

782/17 Castle House Section 106

Members noted that this Council had a wish list for use of s106 funds, and this did not feature on it. Comment was also made that this was a little-used area and the project was not a good use of money.

Proposed by Cllr. O'Donoghue, seconded by Cllr. Harvey, that the proposal be **OPPOSED** until the Council's wish list had been fulfilled.

AGREED.

783/17 Access Awareness

The Mayor reported that he had walked the route of his Mental Wellbeing Walk (at a slower pace than his usual rate). Concern was expressed that the timings were still impractical, and he agreed that he had not factored in time for conversation.

He noted that the bridge over the river between Chandos Park and Tanlaw Mill (which belongs to the University) was not accessible for mobility scooters or wheelchairs at either end and he would discuss the possibility of ramp access with the Vice- Chancellor.

ACTION THE MAYOR

784/17 BCWP

Cllr. Newell's notes of the 11th December meeting were circulated in folders on the night.

Noted.

785/17 News Releases

The GSM to prepare a release on the tree survey and its benefits.

786/17 Chair's Announcements

Cllr. Smith reminded Members about the Pancake Race event to be held next day.

787/17 Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 3rd April 2018.

Meeting closed at: 8.25pm.

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

12th February 2018 final

Ratified 12th March 2018

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EQUALITIES ACT 2010/CRIME AND DISORDER ACT, 1988: the decisions made during the course of the meeting were duly considered and it was decided that there were no resulting direct or indirect implications in respect of crime and disorder, racial equality or diversity.

Initial