

Minutes of a meeting of the **Environment Committee** of Buckingham Town Council held on **Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2015** in the Council Chamber, Cornwall's Meadow, Buckingham at 7pm.

**Present:**

Cllr. Ms. J. Bates	
Cllr. T. Bloomfield	
Cllr. Mrs. M. Gateley	
Cllr. P. Hirons	
Cllr. D. Isham	Vice Chair
Cllr. A. Mahi	Mayor
Cllr. Ms. R. Newell	Chair
Cllr. Mrs. L. O'Donoghue	
Cllr. M. Smith	
Cllr. R. Stuchbury	

**In attendance:**

Mr. L. Phillips	Green Spaces Manager
Mrs. C. Bolton	Committee Clerk

**618/15 Apologies for Absence**

**RESOLVED** to receive and accept apologies from Cllrs Strain-Clark, G & P Collins.

**619/15 Declarations of Interest**

Declarations of interest.  
None

**620/15 Minutes**

**RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2015, ratified at Full Council on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2015, and 26<sup>th</sup> October 2015 to be approved at Full Council on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Cllr Smith noted the minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> October had a minor error in minute 496/15 had referred to 497/15 when the correct reference was 498/15 – to be amended.

**ACTION: COMMITTEE CLERK**

**621/15 Action Reports**

To receive the report and note the updated information.  
(330/14) Ken Tagg play area – The GSM informed Members work would start on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2016, a letter to local residents would be sent out.  
(87/15) Cllr Newell said that reminders not to park on the grass outside the church were regularly given in the weekly church newsletter.

**622/15 Precept**

To receive a report from the Deputy Town Clerk  
Members received the report; Cllr Newell informed the committee that the proposed precept figures had increased significantly due to a number of new projects taken on by the Environment Committee, in the main due to the expansion of the town and facilities.

Members held a brief discussion agreeing that the town's rateable value element would increase over time; more and more services were being forcibly devolved from AVDC to the Town Council and that it was important to be in a fully prepared financial state for repairs that would inevitably be required.

Members **AGREED** the recommendation with 8 votes for and 1 against. Members thanked the Deputy Town Clerk and Green Spaces Manager for a comprehensive report.

**ACTION: DEPUTY TOWN CLERK/GREEN SPACES MANAGER**

**623/15                      Budgets**

623.1 To receive the latest figures

623.2 To agree that any unspent funds in the Environment budgets be put into the Parks Development budget in Earmarked reserves (9035/901) at year end.

**AGREED**

**624/15                      Grounds Maintenance Tender Response**

To receive and agree the preferred Tender applicant; supplementary information to be provided at meeting.

Tenders had been opened on the day of the meeting; the Deputy Town Clerk, Green Spaces Manager and Councillor Newell had analysed the information; Members were circulated with the resulting options.

Proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr O'Donoghue and **RECOMMENDED** that the Town Council proceed with the Tender produced by Burley's subject to satisfactory references. Should references not be approved, the GSM would take up the second choice.

**625/15                      Cemetery Provision – Tingewick Rd**

To receive a written report from the Green Spaces Manager

Members **AGREED** the recommendation.

Cllr Smith commented the cemetery handbook; including burial charges would be reviewed once the new cemetery was operational.

**ACTION: GSM**

**626/15                      Lace Hill Community Centre**

To receive a written report from the Green Spaces Manager

Members expressed concern that a local out of hour's caretaker should be employed.

**627/15                      Riverbank**

To receive a written report and quotation

Members **AGREED** the recommendation.

**ACTION: GSM**

**628/15                      Railway Walk**

To receive a report about registering the walk on the BCC definitive map

Members discussed the proposal and **AGREED** that they would fully support

the registration on the BCC map. Members also expressed the need to ensure adequate lighting along the route and ensure a right of way through Buckingham University car park.

#### 629/15 **BCWP**

To receive a verbal report from Cllr Newell

Cllr Newell reported on a successful meeting; species name plates would be fixed to some trees on the Railway Walk.

The group was concentrating on litter picking throughout Maids Moreton Avenue and had noted the footpath had been recently filled and was significantly improved.

The GSM had given an update on the Bourton park ponds project.

The Canal society reported working with the landowner on a solar pump system for the canal in 2016.

Cllr Newell had received the following information from Paul Holton, AVDC Ecologist who had not been able to attend the meeting:

Coronation meadow creation at Heartlands Paul has been working with Plant life to establish a coronation meadow in Buckingham. in the heartlands in the fenced area which currently has a conservation cut. Green hay from a BBOWT site will be laid out in the summer of 2016, and preparatory work will be required to help the seed establish. This will become Buckinghamshire's coronation meadow, there will be more details in the new year.

- Otters and water vole continue to be present on the river in the town.
- Paul continues to support the Railway Walk group, and hopes to run another bat and newt evening in April May 2016.
- Buckingham sand pit continued link with Oxford University to rekindle open days.
- Paul is the lone survivor in a major shake-up in the green spaces team at AVDC and now sits in the planning department with core responsibilities for planning applications. Paul hopes to retain the few days a week he works on conservation projects, and would appreciate our support in his plight.

Members **AGREED** the Town Clerk should write to the AVDC Chairman, copying in District Councillors to ask how AVDC would continue to maintain those areas of green spaces throughout the town for which they were responsible. **ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

#### 630/15 **Wild flower planting for bees – Bourton Park**

To receive a request from Cllr Stuchbury

Cllr Stuchbury reported on the ever increasing decline in native bees in the UK; well reported in the media and now at crisis point. Cllr Stuchbury said that to provide and encourage areas of wildflower planting in Bourton Park, over a number of years in various sites could reinvigorate the species and planted areas should successfully self-proliferate. Members **AGREED** the request and asked the GSM to identify sites and come back to the committee with costs. **ACTION: GSM**

**631/15 Edible Buckingham**

To receive a verbal update from Cllr Newell

Cllr Newell informed Members of other towns where the initiative was in use and involved siting tubs or planters with edible plants for public use and providing educational material for those interested. Cllr Newell asked Members to consider the project and would discuss further at the next meeting.

**ACTION: ALL COUNCILLORS/FEBRUARY AGENDA**

**632/15 (549/15) Festival of Health – delegated from Full Council**

To discuss item delegated

Councillors nominated Cllr Harvey (as proposer of the original motion from Full Council 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014) to explore the item and report back to committee.

(Original Motion – Full Council 30/6/2014)

Cllr. Harvey proposed and described the reasons for the following motions:

- 133.1.1 Following Ed Grimsdale's excellent article in the Buckingham Advertiser about Dr De'ath and the conference held in Buckingham in 1892 which established community nursing as a progressive approach towards boosting public health for all, this Council agrees to allow the Town Clerk and a named Councillor (to be agreed) to explore the possibility of convening a 'Festival of Health' on the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary (2017) of this conference, in partnership with the County Council (and others as appropriate).

Cllr. Stuchbury seconded the motion. Members discussed whether there would be much public interest, and how wide-ranging the event should be. The District Council might also be interested in participating.

Members unanimously **AGREED** to look into such an event, Cllr. Hirons abstaining.

**ACTION: CLLR HARVEY**

**633/15 Bus Shelters**

Cllr Harvey - To review the provision of bus shelters in the wider town and decide upon any action to take.

Deferred to the next meeting in the absence of Cllr Harvey.

**ACTION: FEBRUARY AGENDA**

**634/15 Access Awareness**

To receive a verbal update from Cllr Strain-Clark

In Cllr Strain-Clark's absence, Cllr Isham reported the next meeting of Access for All was 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

Members briefly discussed and agreed the access issues at the Church Hill access from Church Street should be included in the Disabledgo initiative.

**635/15 News Releases**

Depletion of Green Spaces services from AVDC

The registering of the Railway Walk footpath on the BCC definitive map

Wildflower planting for bees

**636/15**      **Chair's Announcements**  
None

**637/15**      **Date of Next Meeting:** Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2016

Meeting closed at: 8.05pm

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