

BTC/08/20

Minutes of a meeting of the Full Council of Buckingham Town Council held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021 online via Zoom

**Present:**

- Cllr. R. Ahmed
- Cllr. T. Bloomfield
- Cllr. M. Cole JP
- Cllr. Mrs. G. Collins                      Mayor
- Cllr. P. Collins
- Cllr. Mrs. M. Gateley
- Cllr. J. Harvey
- Cllr. P. Hiron
- Cllr. A. Mahi
- Cllr. H. Mordue
- Cllr. Ms. R. Newell
- Cllr. L. O'Donoghue
- Cllr. A. Ralph
- Cllr. M. Smith
- Cllr. Mrs. C. Strain-Clark
- Cllr. R. Stuchbury
- Cllr. M. Try                                      Deputy Mayor

**In attendance:** Mr. P. Hodson                      Town Clerk  
    Mrs. N. Stockill                      Committee Clerk  
    Cllr W. Whyte                      Buckinghamshire Councillor (from min 1141/20)

No members of the public attended and so there was no public session

**1133/20      Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies received.

**1134/20      Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**1135/20      Minutes**

Members received and **AGREED** the minutes of the Full Council Meetings held on:  
Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021 (Precept)  
Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021

**1136/20      Planning Committee**

Members received the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on:  
Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021  
Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021

**1137/20      Town Centre and Events Committee**

Members received the minutes and confirmed the recommendation therein of the Town Centre and Events Committee meeting held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

*1037/20 Holocaust Memorial Stone*

*The Town Council creates an appropriate ear-marked reserve to allow for the production of an engraved stone using the additional underspend now forecast for the TCE budget. For an appropriate future budget to be placed into the ear marked reserve to be reported to the next meeting of Full Council. **AGREED***

Cllr. Stuchbury thanked the Town Centre Manager and Events Coordinator for drafting a programme of events for the Fringe Festival 2021.

**1138/20 Environment Committee**

Members received the minutes and discussed the recommendations therein of the Environment Committee meeting held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

*1088/20 Tingewick Road Greenspaces*

*Members received a verbal update from the Town Clerk regarding discussions with Barratts about the option for the Town Council to take on the green spaces and play areas within the new development at Tingewick Road. Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Harvey and unanimously **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Town Council take on the green spaces and play areas, provided that Barratts agree a suitable initial payment, and that the development of the green spaces is completed satisfactorily, in line with the agreed plans.*

Cllr. Stuchbury said the above recommendation was the realisation of the Town Council's long term ambition.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. O'Donoghue and **AGREED** to issue a press release. **ACTION TOWN CLERK**

An amendment was proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury and unanimously **AGREED** to insert the following ... "Barratts agree to make a suitable..."

An amendment to the recommendation was proposed by Cllr. P. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Mahi and unanimously **AGREED**:

*1088/20 Tingewick Road Greenspaces*

*Members received a verbal update from the Town Clerk regarding discussions with Barratts about the option for the Town Council to take on the green spaces and play areas within the new development at Tingewick Road. Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Harvey and unanimously **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Town Council take on the green spaces and play areas, provided that Barratts agree **to make** a suitable initial payment, and that the development of the green spaces is completed satisfactorily, in line with the agreed plan. **Additionally, Members agreed for the Town Clerk to investigate the possibility of the Council taking on the Foundry Drive play area as well, subject to further information about options being identified.***

The amended motion becomes the substantive motion and was unanimously **AGREED**.

Cllr. Smith stressed the importance of ensuring that any adopted play area equipment is of the Town Council's approved standard.

### **1139/20 Resources Committee**

Members received the minutes of the Resources Committee meetings held on:  
Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021  
Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2021

### **1140/20 Economic Development Working Group**

Members received the minutes of the Economic Development Working Group held on:  
Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021

### **1141/20 To receive and question reports from Buckinghamshire Council Councillors**

**Cllr. Stuchbury** reported on his attendance at meetings of the North Bucks Planning Committee and Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority (BMKFA). Cllr. Stuchbury explained that Councillors at BMKFA felt their budget was “unsustainable” and they were forced to dip into their reserves to the tune of £1.1 million this year and could run out of money in a few years’ time. It was noted that the current rules only allow the fire service to put its share of the council tax up by two per cent without having to hold a referendum.

Cllr. Stuchbury reported on the ongoing issue with representation at the Buckingham & Villages Community Board in light of Buckinghamshire Council’s insistence on not allowing town and parish councillors to be called by their title of Councillor. The Buckingham and Villages Community Board voted against the use of formal titles at meetings. **Cllr. Mordue** explained that the structure of Community Boards could be reviewed after May’s election. Cllr. Stuchbury asserted there should be greater alignment between the structure of Community Boards and Buckinghamshire Council’s constitution.

**Cllr W. Whyte** reported on a recent meeting with Anglian Water to help understand the sewage system in Buckingham. Buckinghamshire Council have confirmed that consultants have been appointed to undertake a Section 19 review (formal review of the flooding incident in December). Cllr Whyte was pursuing the Environment Agency for an on-site meeting to walk some of the key sites in Buckingham that were effected during the floods.

Cllr. Whyte reported on a meeting of the Buckinghamshire Growth Board, attended by the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group. Concerns over capacity gaps were discussed and Cllr. Whyte said Buckinghamshire Council set forth their intent and ambition for the growth of healthcare in Bucks.

The spring highways maintenance schedule has commenced and hopefully, by April 2021, the road surfacing programme can begin.

### **1142/20 Action List**

Public meeting to discuss healthcare in Buckingham (912/20) - Cllr. Stuchbury said that it was more important than ever to arrange a public meeting to understand the future of healthcare arrangements for Buckingham and hoped the Town Clerk would be able to arrange something at the earliest opportunity.

### **1143/20 Buckinghamshire Council Consultation: Biodiversity Accounting Supplementary Planning Document**

Members received and discussed a written report from the Town Plan Officer.  
Members discussed the following Officer recommendations:

- It is recommended that the Buckingham Town Council support this move to implement biodiversity net gain calculations on planning applications ahead of anticipated central government legislation.
- To inform the Buckinghamshire Council that the Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan contains relevant policies [DHE 1-6 but especially DHE2-5] and that consideration should be given to their inclusion in Chapter 2 and Appendix 1 of the document.
- Members note that the BNDP policies are consistent with the consultation policies, for example, the BNDP refers to the Warwickshire County Council Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculator, and thus will not lead to any confusion in planning applications within the Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan Area.

Members noted that the document was in line with the Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan and Climate Emergency Plan and the Town Council should seek to work with the new Buckinghamshire Council on its implementation, especially with respect to the location of new planting; noting only that the selected species should be native-grown and not imported.

Proposed by Cllr. Harvey, seconded by Cllr. Newell and **AGREED** that the Town Plan Officer's Recommendations be accepted and submitted. **ACTION PLANNING CLERK**

#### **1144/20 Diversity & Inclusion Working Group**

Members received a verbal update from Cllr. Ahmed who had chaired the last meeting of the group, and highlighted the following action points:

A suite of recommendations to be brought to the first meeting of the new Town Council, once elected in May. This is likely to include a recommendation for the Town Council to have a lead councillor – or champion – for equalities and diversity and that an agreed letter is sent to schools and nurseries in the town.

It was noted that, at the moment, not all schools had clear signposting to an equalities lead or support. Cllr. Newell said that schools would have a notice about the safeguarding lead and safeguarding lead governor on a noticeboard and hopefully on their website. It was **AGREED** that the office could work with the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group to assemble a list of contacts for each organisation.

The Town Clerk fed back that he had spoken to Adam Cheyo from Buckinghamshire Council about his work to clarify the reporting service available in the county. Once this is clearer, The Town Clerk would report back to the group to decide whether anything specific is required in Buckingham.

Cllr. Cole raised concern over Environment Committee's agreement (min 1070/20) to support a tree planting proposal in commemoration of Thomas Jefferson's visit to the town. Cllr. Cole informed Full Council that Thomas Jefferson owned more than 600 slaves throughout his adult life and that he did not believe that creating such a memorial would sit well with principles of the working group. Cllrs. G. Collins, Gateley, Harvey, O'Donoghue, Strain-Clark, Smith, Stuchbury and Ahmed said they would support the reversal of the decision at the next meeting of Environment Committee.

Members **AGREED** for an agenda item to be placed at the next meeting of Environment Committee with a note from the Diversity & Inclusion Working Group.

**ACTION COMMITTEE CLERK**

#### **1145/20 Motion – Cllr. Strain-Clark**

*'That this council, as it nears the end of its term, expresses its thanks to all councillors, residents, and supporters of the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group who, by taking part in the Group, have moved Buckingham one step on the way to becoming an anti-racism town.'*

Cllr. Strain-Clark made the following statement:

The (above) motion is important because it is all too easy to sit back and say 'I'm not racist', or 'I've never seen any problems in Buckingham', or even 'This isn't the United States!' But we can't deny that racism exists in this country even in our own town and that being well-meaning and non racist is not enough. We have already set up an Inclusion and Diversity Working Group which is working away behind the scenes. But now is the time to make a public declaration of our intention to fight against racism whenever and wherever it rears its ugly head in Buckingham.

Cllr. Strain-Clark accepted an amendment from Cllr. Smith to insert "...by taking part in and supporters of..."

The amended motion was seconded by Cllr. Smith and unanimously **AGREED**.

Proposed by Cllr. Ralph, seconded by Cllr. Strain-Clark and unanimously **AGREED** that, following the May election, the Council supports the working group to carry on, and to take forward the delivery of all aspects discussed by Full Council.

#### **1146/20 20mph Speed Limits**

Members acknowledged that Transport for Bucks would be sending through costing to the Town Clerk and it would be a matter for the new council to consider after May 2021.

#### **1147/20 Council Chamber Update**

Members received a verbal update from the Town Clerk, noting that works were almost complete. The Chamber should be ready for the new Council in May 2021 and the office were investigating suitable equipment for hybrid meetings in the next few weeks.

#### **1148/20 Covid 19**

Members received a verbal update from the Town Clerk noting that the office was working toward reopening the TIC and Shopmobility in line with government guidance.

#### **1149/20 Unitary Council**

Members received a verbal report from the Town Clerk.

#### **1150/20 Police Counters**

Members received and noted correspondence from the Police and Crime Commissioner. Proposed by Cllr. Cole and seconded by Cllr. Harvey to respond to the new elected PCC (post May 2021) asserting that a 51% response opposing the closure means a majority and that Buckingham Town Councillors insist that local police counters remain open.  
**AGREED ACTION TOWN CLERK**

#### **1151/20 Town Council Awards Memorabilia**

Members discussed suggestions for alternative options to be investigated in time for discussion by Interim Full Council on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

Cllr. Newell suggested silver pins in the form of a Mayor's gavel or swan.

#### **1152/20 Town Council Elections and Purdah**

Members received a written report from the Town Clerk and noted the following dates:

**Monday 10 May (7pm)** Informal Town Council meeting to discuss Mayor and Deputy Mayor roles

**Monday 10 May (following informal meeting)** First induction session for new councillors

### **1153/20 Climate Emergency Action Plan**

Members received and discussed an update to the Town Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan.

Proposed by Cllr. Newell, seconded by Cllr. Harvey and unanimously **AGREED** for a quarterly update to be presented to Full Council.

Cllr. Newell informed Full Council that each of the Climate Emergency Champions had adopted objectives from within the Action Plan and had committed to driving forward the Council's aims.

Members **AGREED** Cllr. Harvey's proposal to insert an action to:

*Protect against the needless destruction and/or removal of trees from our parish.*

### **1154/20 Town Council Business Plan**

Members received a four-year business plan for the Town Council.

Cllr. Harvey said that following discussion on social media there had been concern raised with regards to people, especially women, feeling safe in the town, parks and green spaces.

Proposed by Cllr. Harvey, seconded by Cllr. O'Donoghue and unanimously **AGREED** that the Action Plan include an action for the Town Clerk and Estates Manager look into options for more streetlight and illumination through the town's parks and bring a report back to the new Council in early May 2021.

Members **AGREED** to adopt the Plan with this amendment.

**ACTION TOWN CLERK**

### **1155/20 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies**

1155.1/20 Members received a thorough report from Cllr. Hirons on the work of the Bucks & Ouzel Drainage Board, North Bucks Parishes Planning Consortium and HS2/EWR.

Members thanked Cllr. Hirons for his time and service representing the Council on outside bodies.

1155.2/20 Cllr. Newell explained the background for the Buckingham Alms-house and Welfare Charity, Buckingham Community Wildlife Project, Twinning Association and Buckingham Tree Wardens. Members thanked Cllr. Newell for her time and service representing the Council on each organisation.

### **1156/20 Mayoral Engagements**

Functions the Mayor has attended:

- Buckingham Alms-house and Welfare Charity January 12th, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, February 21<sup>st</sup> and March 9th 2021
- Commonwealth Day - Monday 8th March 2021

### **1157/20 Chair's Announcements**

Thanks was given to councillors who had chosen to stand down ahead of the Parish elections. All Councillors were praised for their hard work and commitment to promote and improve the town, whilst supporting each other.

### **1158/20 Date of the next meeting:**

- Interim Council – Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021
- Annual Statutory Meeting Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021
- Full Council - Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Exclusion of Public and Press

**1159/20 COMMITTEE IN PRIVATE SESSION**

RECOMMENDED In terms of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, the following items will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment and contractual matters and it is, therefore, RECOMMENDED that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded. **AGREED**

**1160/20 Purchase of new cemetery and allotments land**

Members received and discussed a written report from the Town Clerk.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. O'Donoghue and unanimously **AGREED** that the Town Council proceed with the immediate purchase of the allotment and cemetery land outlined from money held with the Council's general reserve for a total cost of £87,000. **ACTION TOWN CLERK**

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. O'Donoghue and **AGREED** to issue a press release on the purchase of the allotment and cemetery land. **ACTION TOWN CLERK**

**1161/20 Extension to Insurance Policy**

Members received and discussed a written report from the Town Clerk. Members unanimously **AGREED** the recommendation to extend the agreement with Zurich Insurance to provide cover for 2021/22 in accordance with the attached policy at a cost of £16,242.13. **ACTION TOWN CLERK**

Meeting closed at: 21.27

Signed ..... Date .....

Town Mayor