

Minutes of a meeting of the **Environment Committee** of Buckingham Town Council held on **Monday 6th April 2020 at 7pm** at the following web address:

<https://zoom.us/j/485140775?pwd=YWpTaWp6REo5MGtsUXloa2wwODMxUT09>

Present:

Cllr. M .Cole	
Cllr. Mrs. M. Gateley	Vice-Chair
Cllr. J. Harvey	
Cllr. A. Mahi	
Cllr. Ms. R. Newell	Chair
Cllr. Mrs. L. O'Donoghue	
Cllr. A. Ralph	
Cllr. M. Smith	
Cllr. Mrs. C. Strain-Clark	
Cllr. R. Stuchbury	

In attendance: Mr. L. Phillips Green Spaces Manager
Mr P Hodson Town Clerk
Cllr. M. Try
Cllr. H. Mordue

892/19 Apologies for Absence

Members received and accept apologies from Cllr Stuchbury who was unable to join the meeting due to technical difficulties in accessing the web address.

893/19 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

894/19 Minutes

Members received and **AGREED** the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 17th February 2020 and received at Full Council on the 16th March 2020

895/19 Action Report

Members received the updated Action Report and questions were raised under the following items:

566/18 (Great River Ouse) – The Estates Manager explained that the office was applying for grant funding, through various routes, to secure the future of the River Warden Scheme in Buckingham and hope that this might fund the group to start River Monitoring to monitor the health of the river following the pollution incident.

426/19 (Healthcare Public Event) – The Town Clerk informed Members that whilst all three parties (GP Practice, Commissioners and Adult Social Care) had been contacted he was not expecting a response until business returned to normal. Members **AGREED** to review the action at a future meeting of Environment Committee.

425/19 (Bridges at Bourton Park) – The Estates Manager explained that he hoped to have the structural designs and calculations for the necessary repairs for the next meeting of Environment Committee.

886/19 (Litter Bins) – The Estates Manager was still pursuing Buckinghamshire Council for an update on when a new litter bin and dog bin could be added to the Tingewick Road.

126/19 (TPO on Summerhouse Hill) – A response from the Planning Clerk will be circulated to the Committee. **ACTION PLANNING CLERK**

771.3/19 (Section 106 Funding for Soft Play Area in Swan Pool) – Members **AGREED** for the action to be added to the Action report and for the Town Clerk to report back to the next meeting of Environment Committee. **ACTION TOWN CLERK**

896/19 Budgets

Members received and noted the latest figures

897/19 COVID-19 update

The Estates Manager informed Members of the following updates:

- During the current COVID19 Emergency the Greenspaces Team was providing a reduced service with reduced numbers of green space maintenance staff being deployed outside. Vehicles and machinery are only to be used by one member of staff and PPE equipment and strict health and Safety guidelines were in place for the safety of staff and members of the public.
- The second grass cut at Brackley Road cemetery was scheduled for week beginning 13th April following which the team will start the grass cutting regime on the housing estates. The Estates Manager confirmed that the Team were working with the risk assessments and health and safety guidelines provided by the ICCM. The Town Clerk confirmed that, regrettably, the Brackley Road cemetery had been temporarily closed, for a few days, based on an interpretation of Section 5(8) of the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020. The ICCM have since confirmed that Section 5(8) only refers to cemeteries managed by crematoriums and the Brackley Road cemetery is now fully open to members of the public.
- The Council had closed its public toilets, in Chandos Park and Cornwalls Meadow. While the government has now allowed public toilets to stay open, the Town Council's contractor has been stood down, and the Town Council cannot guarantee the safety of the toilets at present. No complaints had been received from members of the public on the reduced service. The team have closed the Town Council and AVDC play areas around town as well as remaining vigilant for any issues and making repairs / re securing areas where needed.
- Prescription deliveries are now being managed by the community volunteer service and Buckingham's Library staff were contacting vulnerable members of the public to ensure they in are contact with the appropriate agencies.
- The Town Clerk confirmed that staff members who are funded by the precept could not be furloughed as this was only available for public sector workers whose salaries were paid from an external income.

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- Members discussed placing notices in the Parks asking for dogs to remain on leads throughout the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic

898/19 Cemetery Lodge Tenancy

The Town Clerk explained that the property was currently vacant and the Greenspaces Team undertaking some essential repairs. It was hoped that new tenants would move in at the end of April 2020.

899/19 Wildflower Planting

The Estates Manager reported that the Greenspaces Team had started on a new section of wildflowers located on the car park side of Bourton Park. The Team were also maintaining the older sections of the wildflower meadow in order to prevent them becoming swamped by competing grasses.

900/19 Wireless charging project

The Town Clerk had met with representatives of the Open University and Innovate UK research project to exploring the design of, and user interactions with, on-street wireless charging for electric vehicles (EVs). The project was looking for three locations to pilot the use of induction charging plates in roadside parking bays and had contacted the Town Council, Hospital Volunteer car service and Buckingham University. The Town Clerk **AGREED** to report back with any further information to a future meeting.

901/19 Access Awareness

Members discussed how best to publicise the social distancing measures within the town's parks and greenspaces. Cllr. Harvey said he would not want people to become vigilantes over enforcing the guidelines publicised by the Town Council. Cllr. Mordue agreed with Cllr Harvey and said the Town Council needed to offer advice and leave any enforcement up to the Police. Members agreed to preface any Town Council notices with the specific government guideline or policies.

ACTION COMMUNICATIONS CLERK

902/19 New Cemetery Designer

Members noted a report from the Estates Manager that Buckingham Town Council are seeking proposals to provide Design, Development and Project delivery services to provide a new Cemetery and allotments.

903/19 Greenspaces Complaint Log

Members received and noted the 6 monthly complaint log.

904/19 Climate Emergency Action Plan Timeframes

Members noted the updated Climate Emergency Action Plan and **AGREED** the timeframes for Environment Committee's Actions. Cllr. Gateley noted that the next tree planting session in 2020 should be amended to read Saturday 7th November.

ACTION COMMITTEE CLERK

905/19 Buckingham Community Wildlife Project

Members noted a report from Cllr. Newell on the activities of local wildlife and

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conservation groups. Members recorded their thanks to all of the Buckingham conservation and wildlife volunteer groups.

906/19 News Releases

Members **AGREED** to issue a positive press release on the availability of Buckingham’s parks, social distancing guidance and recommendations to keep dogs on a lead.

Cllr. Harvey announced that the Prime Minister had been taken into intensive care and the Town Council expressed their best wishes and hoped for his speedy recovery.

907/19 Chair’s Announcements

There were none.

908/19 Date of Next Meeting: Monday 15th June 2020

COMMITTEE IN PRIVATE SESSION

Exclusion of Public and Press

909/19 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.

910/19 Chandos Park Toilets

Members discussed a report from the Estates Members and unanimously **AGREED** to extend the Healthmatic contract to include the cleaning and planned maintenance of Chandos Toilets once they are re-opened until March 31st 2021 at a cost of £10,450 per annum. Members also **AGREED** that a single joint cleaning and planned maintenance contract for both Chandos toilets and Cornwalls Meadow toilets is put out to tender with a proposed start date of 1st April 2021 to be agreed by Committee by early 2021.

Meeting closed at: 20.14

Chair..... Date.....