

**MINUTES OF THE BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT AND PROPERTY
COMMITTEE HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON MONDAY 6th MARCH 2006**

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs. P. Desorgher
D. Isham
H. Mordue (Chairman)
Ms. R. Newell
R. Stuchbury

In attendance Mrs. P. Stevens

Co-optee Mr. M. Gadd

Town Clerk Ms. P. J. Heath

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr. P. Collins (Mayor), Mrs. H. Saul, and Mrs. C. Strain-Clark.

2006/234 DECLARATION OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations of interest for items on the agenda.

2006/235 THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Members received and noted the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9th January 2006 which had been ratified on 20th February 2006.

2006/236 ACTION REPORTS AND UPDATES ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

236.1 (218.2) to receive an update re the bus shelter

Members were told that there would be a site meeting with BCC on Monday 13th March to discuss the location of the bus shelter. Members agreed to purchase a 2 bay, flat roof modular shelter with solar lighting, with the Town Council's name and logo.

Proposed by Cllr. Isham, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **AGREED** that the Clerk be given designated authority to purchase a 2 bay, flat roof shelter, with solar lighting and identification up to the budgeted amount of £5000; the Chairman to assist.

236.2 (222.2) to receive information on the repair of the penstock

This was deferred to the next meeting.

The following two items were added with the permission of the Members present:

236.3 (213/2005) Railway Walk tree survey

Members were informed that a quotation had been received for the carrying out of the tree survey in the Railway Walk. Companies who have experience or knowledge of the database used by AVDC had been approached, the list having been obtained from AVDC of companies they have used. Members discussed the quote and the need, as responsible landowners, to carry out the survey once every 5 years.

Proposed by Cllr. Isham, seconded by Cllr. Desorgher, and **RECOMMENDED** (as it was not on the agenda) that the Survey at a cost of £675 should be undertaken and that any balance of budget required be transferred from the Chandos Park Horticultural budget.

236.4 (216/2006) Community Plan

Mr. Gadd reported on the meeting held earlier with AVDC, BCC and Buckingham School re the future maintenance of the proposed extended circular walk. The Heartlands footpath will become a designated right of way and therefore will fall under the County Council for maintenance; any discussions with the RoW team will include the Town Council as AVDC have indicated that they intend to pass the land over to the Town Council's control. The bridge will also be included as part of the RoW. The section along the brook at 'Badgers' will only be sign posted and no proper path laid; this will continue to be AVDC responsibility. The section along the brook by Buckingham School will also be a designated RoW with the school being responsible for the grass area and the fence.

Members expressed concern that the section between the Railway Walk and the Scenic Walk is on private land owned by the University, which they have blocked in the past for one day to prevent a right of way being established. It was reported that the pathway and bridge to Station Terrace was built by public money and it was understood that this was a designated RoW; the Clerk was asked to investigate.

ACTION THE CLERK

2006/237 REPORT, IF REQUIRED, ON CEMETERY LODGE REFURBISHMENT

Members had been circulated with the current costing for the renovation work and given details of amendments that had been made as the work progressed. The Chairman and the Clerk had met with Grange Builders and Mr. D. Rhodes (surveyor) to discuss problems that had come to light.

Courtyard Wall

It was explained that due to a lack of foundations and the age of the brickwork the wall had moved and was now in a dangerous state; the wall moves when leant on. Members discussed the options and agreed that under a duty of care the Council as

landlords had to make the wall safe and keep the area secure for any potential users of the building.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Isham, and **AGREED** to rebuild the courtyard wall to a height of 6ft using where possible existing bricks with new bricks to match originals.

Doors

Members were given the cost to replace two of the doors which are not a standard size - the interior door to match the study door, and the back door for a more secure entrance; the quote from the builder for the supply and fit the replacement doors is £1315. Members were informed by a Councillor that this was too high and that they could source 2 doors to fit.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Isham and **AGREED** that Cllr. Stevens could source the doors and make ready for fitting up to a budget of £500.

Ceiling in Lounge and Study

Members were informed that the lath and board plaster was in a bad condition and needed replacing; this form of ceiling has a limited life span.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Isham, and **AGREED** to remove the lath and board ceiling in the Cemetery Lodge study and the lounge and replace with plasterboard and then plaster.

Members were informed that when the wallpaper had been removed it was discovered that previous repairs of the plaster had resulted in a mixture of breathable and impermeable plaster being used, the latter causing a damp problem. The Surveyor has recommended that the impermeable plaster is removed and a breathable lime plaster used.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Isham and **AGREED** to remove the impermeable plaster and replace with lime plaster.

The Chairman explained that the leak in the 3rd bedroom, now the bathroom, was being investigated by the removal of the interior ceiling at that point. The leak has been in existence for many years and had been the subject of several investigations externally without any success at locating the source.

It was agreed that at the next meeting the future usage of the Cemetery lodge would be discussed and a decision made; this could have repercussions on VAT reclaim and building regulations/change of use application.

ACTION THE CLERK

2006/238 RRPORTS ON THE OPERATION OF BRACKLEY ROAD CEMETERY

238.1 Details of the ICCM Conference and agree if a representative should attend

It was agreed that it would not be beneficial to send anyone at this time.

The Clerk circulated details of a course received that morning which would be of benefit for the Clerk and a councillor to attend.

Proposed by Cllr. Isham, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury and **AGREED** to send the Clerk and Cllr. Desorgher on the Association of Burial Authorities day course on memorials at a cost of £95 each plus travel, from the training budget.

238.2 Membership of ICCM and subscription of £55

Proposed by Cllr. Isham, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury and **AGREED** that the membership of the corporate arm of the ICCM should continue.

238.3 Costing and procedures for exhumations

Members were informed that an application for an ashes exhumation had been received, with correct paperwork. The contractors have quoted a price of £70 for the dig; the undertakers have been given a price of £100 to cover the administration cost and the cost of the Town Clerk's attendance at the exhumation. It was agreed that a pricing policy of the contractors fee plus the Town Clerk's attendance fee and administration of the application approximately 2 hours. The Clerk explained that she had been dealing with the family for over 6 months but much of that time has been learning the correct procedures and legalities of an exhumation.

238.4 Additions to the Cemetery policy document

Members noted the updated policy document and agreed to defer discussion to the next meeting.

2006/239 REPORTS ON CHANDOS PARK

239.1 Costing to provide the alcohol free zone posters and signs

Proposed by Cllr. Newell, seconded by Cllr. Isham, and **AGREED** to purchase the alcohol free signs at a cost of £246 with the amended words of the bylaw; it was noted that the signs used by AVDC had inaccurate wording.

Members **AGREED** that a press release should coincide with the erecting of the signs explaining about the zone and the bylaw.

239.2 Report from the Chairman on Chandos Bowls Club

The Chairman reported verbally on a meeting held with the Chandos Bowls Club. The Club were pleased with the improvements to the green and hoped that even the end rink may be usable. They asked that the preparatory work at the start of the season be carried out.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Isham, and **AGREED** to designate the Clerk to spend up to £1000 for the initial work on the green required for the start of the season.

The Club report that the sprinkler system is not working properly; it was agreed to investigate possible maintenance. They would also like to remove two dead trees in the far left hand corner by the fence.

The edging around the green is deteriorating with age. It was agreed to obtain prices for its renewal.

ACTION THE CLERK

2006/240 REPORTS ON BOURTON PARK

240.1 Details of cost to repaint equipment in junior site

The Clerk reported that she had obtained a quotation to paint and renovate the play equipment in the junior play area of Bourton Park. This had come as part of the quotation for the next item so there may be labour cost implications as it was stated it was to be done with the wet pour.

Proposed by Cllr. Isham, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **AGREED** that the Clerk be given designated authority to get the play equipment in Bourton Park repainted and refurbished.

ACTION THE CLERK

240.2 Details of laying a skin of wet pour over the remaining of the junior play area.

The Clerk had obtained 2 quotes to put a wet pour skim over the remaining sections of the junior play area to match the new wet pour under the Rock and Cross. Member noted the state of the remaining areas, which are damaged and starting to lift. Members agreed to look at this next year.

240.3 Provision of information signs at the entrance to the park

Members discussed the lack of information signs in Bourton Park and Chandos Park. It was felt that the schools should be approached to see if they could help. Each school is asked to supply posters by the children on an aspect or feature of the park they like. The best of these would be displayed in the park and sections of them could be used on new information signs to be commissioned by the Town Council using the current budget of £2000 and money from Cllr. D. Polhill, Community fund. The Advertiser is to be asked to assist as an independent judge.

ACTION THE CLERK

2006/241 BUCKINGHAM TOWN AUDIT AND ANY ACTION REQUIRED

Members noted the report which had been circulated with the agenda and the new colour coded report from AVDC showing which departments were dealing with their issues.

241.1 Receive report from Councillors re EVA walks

Members noted the reports from the 2 councillors who undertook the EVA walks with the police which they found to be very useful.

2006/242 THE REPLACEMENT OF THE WAR MEMORIAL BOLLARDS TO PREVENT REPEATED DAMAGE

The Clerk explained that the war memorial bollard had been damaged during the Mayor's Civic service; the bollards were now becoming un-repairable. It was **AGREED** to carry out what repairs are possible for the 2006/2007 year and to place the complete replacement of all the bollards around the memorial on the 2007/2008 budget request as per minute number 84.1/2005.

2006/243 INFORMATION ON THE DE-SILTING WORK IN BUCKINGHAM INCLUDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TOWN COUNCIL-OWNED LAND

Members were informed that the de-silting work was due to commence in the week beginning 13th or 20th of March. It had been agreed to install a skip for the Town Council's section, AVDC having decided that their rubbish will be removed by their contractors and a lorry. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk write to all properties bordering the river in the parish reminding them of their riparian responsibilities.

ACTION THE CLERK

Youth Offending teams and the Probation Service would be used to help clean up the area once the dredging has been done.

ACTION THE CLERK

2006/244 INFORMATION FROM MR. HOPCRAFT IN RESPECT OF THE CONIFER HEDGE AND WALNUT TREE, WHARFSIDE PLACE.

Following the discussions at the Council meeting on 20th February, Mr. I. Hopcraft had been contacted: a copy of his report had been circulated to all Members prior to the meeting. Members were told that AVDC no longer intend to remove the Walnut but to "manage" the tree; Members asked that the form of the management be obtained from Mr Hopcraft. It was noted that the independent arboriculture report which accompanied Mr Hopcraft's response indicates that the conifers are causing damage to the building and out of a Duty of Care they must be removed; AVDC intend planting hedging such as holly in their place. In view of the new information Members agreed that an independent arboriculture report commissioned by the Town Council was not needed.

2006/245 OPENING TIMES OF MORETON ROAD TOILETS FOLLOWING A REQUEST DURING THE EVA WALK

Members were informed that requests had been received from the police and from AVDC for the Town Council to approve an earlier closing time of the Moreton Road toilets. Currently the timer is set for 11 pm but increasing problems with youngsters mis-using the facilities and vandalism it was requested that this be altered to 10 pm. Members noted that with premises in the town closing later there is not the need for the toilets to be open until 11 pm.

Proposed by Cllr. Mordue, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury and **RECOMMENDED** that this Council approve the amended closing time of 10 pm.

2006/246 AMOUNT FOR THE LOCKING OF CHANDOS ROAD TOILETS.

Members were told that the Caretaker would not be able to undertake the closing of Chandos Park Toilets; a volunteer had been found. Members discussed the amount to be paid for the 7 days a week locking of the Chandos Park toilets.

Proposed by Cllr. Isham, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **AGREED** that the Committee offers the volunteer £50 per month honorarium to lock the Chandos Park Toilets within a set time frame every night.

2006/247 DETAILS OF "CLIMATE CHANGE IN BUCKS" CONFERENCE

It was **AGREED** that Cllr. Mordue and Cllr. Desorgher attend this event on behalf of the Environment & Property Committee.

2006/248 TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF 2005/06 BUDGETS

A copy of the up to date figures and budget balances were circulated at the meeting. Members agreed that the Clerk and Chairman could action all items in the minutes that were awaiting confirmation of budget balances at the year end.

ACTION THE CLERK and CHAIRMAN

2006/249 CHAIRMAN'S ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The Chairman reported to Members on the current invoice dispute. The invoice which had been received in July 2005, and had been agreed by the Council to pay only part, was for contractors' work carried out in 2004/2005. The Chairman reminded Members of last July's meeting with AVDC over previously disputed invoices which had agreed a "full and final payment". AVDC had finally released details of the amounts they were claiming which have given rise to further questions and discrepancies; these were explained by the Clerk. Members agreed that no recommendation for payment could be made until all issues were resolved.

The following item was heard under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission of Meetings) Act 1960 which excludes members of the Public due to the confidential and financial nature of the business to be discussed

2006/250 THE PROPOSED EXTENSION OF THE COUNCIL OFFICES

Meeting closed at 9.55pm

CHAIRMANH. Mordue.....DATE10th April 2006.....