

**MINUTES OF THE BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT AND PROPERTY
COMMITTEE HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON**

MONDAY 24th April 2006

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs. P. Desorgher
D. Isham
G. Loftus
H. Mordue (Chairman)
Ms. R. Newell
Mrs. C. Strain-Clark
R. Stuchbury

In attendance Mrs. P. Stevens

Town Clerk Ms. P. J. Heath

APOLOGIES

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

2006/251 DECLARATION OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations of interest for items on the agenda

2006/252 THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Members received and noted the minutes of the previous meeting held on 6th March 2006 which had been ratified on 10th April 2006.

2006/253 ACTION REPORTS AND UPDATES ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

(246/2006) Chandos Park Toilets

Members were informed that a volunteer had accepted the amount offered by the Town Council and that the toilets are being locked every evening.

2006/254 REPORT, IF REQUIRED, ON CEMETERY LODGE REFURBISHMENT

Future use of Cemetery lodge – report by Town Clerk

The Clerk reported on a letter received from HM Customs and Excise which states that the Council can reclaim the VAT on the building work even if the Lodge is let on a short term basis. It was **AGREED** that the Lodge be used initially by the Town Council for storage and overflow office space, and then leased for short term lets, with a view to using the Lodge for a Town Council employee.

Cllr. Stevens raised the issue of the doors: when the carpenter she had asked to prepare and fit the doors had gone to the Lodge he found new doors already fitted. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk and Chairman would investigate.

2006/255 REPORTS ON THE OPERATION OF BRACKLEY ROAD CEMETERY

255.1 Policy document for the Cemetery

The policy document had been circulated at the last meeting under minute no.238.4

[3E] Members discussed the planting on the grave and the problems that could be caused if the plants were not maintained. It was agreed to provide a 5 year licence to plant with a clause reserving the right to remove the plants, or charge the owner for the maintenance if not maintained. Proposed by Cllr. Newell, seconded by Cllr. Loftus, and **AGREED** to adopt the policy document as circulated with the above condition.

255.2 Decision on the request for memorial benches

A letter from Mr. Webster with details of the bench had been circulated with the agenda.

Proposed by Cllr. Isham, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **AGREED** to allow the installation of a memorial bench in Buckingham Cemetery at the location specified in the letter, and agreed with the Town Clerk, subject to a written undertaking by the family to maintain the bench.

Proposed by Cllr. Isham, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **AGREED** to allow the installation of a memorial bench in Bourton Park, a design and location to be agreed between the family and the Town Clerk.

ACTION THE CLERK

255.3 Report on the exhumation (min no 238.3)

The Town Clerk reported on the early morning exhumation of the ashes. Members discussed whether to insist on liners to ashes boxes to assist in any future recovery of ashes but it was felt that the infrequency of the problem did not warrant the additional expense.

255.4 Cost of repairing and refurbishing the Cemetery gates

Members were given details of the 3 quotations to repair the Cemetery Gates and side railings.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. C. Strain-Clark, and **AGREED** to accept the quotation by Roecraft of £870 plus VAT.

Members discussed the cleaning up and re-pointing of the pillars whilst the gates were away being refurbished. Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Isham, and **AGREED** to having the pillars re-pointed. (The Clerk with the assistance of the Chairman to have designated power to accept a quotation up to £1000; if above that amount then Cllr. Desorgher, Cllr. Stuchbury and Cllr. Isham have designated power to accept an increased amount.)

The above amounts to be taken from the 2005/2006 horticultural budget as specified in minute no. 248/2006.

ACTION THE CLERK

2006/256 REPORTS ON CHANDOS PARK

Cost of servicing the sprinkler system for the bowling green.

The Clerk informed Members that the sprinkler system was in need of a service and annual maintenance. Proposed by Cllr. Isham, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **AGREED** that the Clerk, with the assistance of the Chairman, be given designated authority to spend up to £750 on the servicing and annual maintenance of the bowling green sprinkler system.

The Clerk informed members that the annual starring of the Green would take place on 25th April.

The Club have approached the Council requesting that a thatch treatment is applied to the green. Members felt that if the problem was extensive the Clerk would have designated authority to get it done; it was agreed to obtain a quotation and an independent assessment of the problem.

ACTION THE CLERK

2006/257 REPORTS ON BOURTON PARK

257.1 Penstock repair/refurbishment

Cllr Stuchbury reported that he had been able to clear the penstock and get the gate to move but special Allen keys were needed in order to make the system work correctly. It was noted that some river work may be needed to completely clear the penstock and any blockages in the back stream. Proposed by Cllr. Isham, seconded by Cllr. Desorgher, and **AGREED** to purchase a size 11 pair of waders and a set of Allen keys.

ACTION THE CLERK

257.2 Bourton Park Car Park

The Clerk informed Members that complaints were beginning to be received in the office about the "boy racers" in Bourton Park Car Park. It appears that the groups

that used to congregate in the Cornwall's Meadow Car Park are now using the car park at Bourton Park. Complaints are about the traffic noise as vehicles race in and out of the narrow entrance, the near misses with traffic on the road, and the noise from car stereos. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk monitor the complaints and liaise with the Police over the problem, giving a full report to the next meeting.

ACTION THE CLERK

Cllr. R. Newell left the meeting

2006/258 BUCKINGHAM TOWN AUDIT AND ANY ACTION REQUIRED

The newly installed slabs of the footpath between the White Hart and NatWest Bank change colour abruptly from cream to grey outside Wine Rack. It was **AGREED** to write to the County Council and obtain an explanation.

ACTION THE CLERK

Cllr. Stevens asked if the blacktop by Markham's Court could be toned down as it was too shiny a black.

2006/259 UPDATE ON THE COMMUNITY PLAN INITIATIVES

In the absence of Mr Gadd there was no report on the Community Plan.

Members discussed the front page article on the Community Plan SEEDA bid, noting that the Town Council's involvement had not been made clear. Members discussed the history of the Community Plan and the reasons behind its set up.

Members **AGREED** that 1) a letter should be sent to the Steering Group reminding them that the Town Council as a principal partner and fund-holder needs to be included in the publicity; 2) a press release should be sent to the *Advertiser* highlighting the Community Plan as a success story of the Town Council; 3) request copies of all the Community Plan steering group and committee minutes; 4) that the Town Council representatives on the Steering Group ensure that the flow of information is two-way.

It was noted that this is the last year of the funding and information on the future of the Community Plan should be discussed at the next meeting.

2006/260 INFORMATION ON THE SUSPECTED RIGHT OF WAY BETWEEN CHANDOS ROAD AND STATION TERRACE

The Clerk informed Members that no response had been received from the County Council but the University stated that it was a permitted right of way and not designated; this is evidenced by the fact they close the path once a year. It was agreed to defer to the next meeting pending a reply from the County Council.

2006/261 CLEANER NEIGHBOURHOOD AND ENVIRONMENT ACT 2005 AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE TOWN COUNCIL

The Clerk gave Members a full explanation of the Cleaner Neighbourhood and Environment Act explaining each of the powers it allows the Council.

Members discussed the Fixed Penalty Notices (Fan's) which are issued by designated personnel only. The Council would need to draw up a policy on who would have the authority and the criteria for issuing. Issuing staff would have to receive training before they can issue tickets unless it is the PCSO, who is exempt. Part of the responsibility of the Act is the enforcement of the tickets issued which may include prosecution. The Clerk informed Members that exploratory discussions had taken place with the PCSO as to the possible designation to issue FPN and also with revenue department of the District Council who may be able to undertake the prosecutions at a cost.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Isham, and **RECOMMENDED** that the Town Council agree in principle to accepting and using the powers under the Cleaner Neighbourhood & Environment Act 2005, and the Council agrees to the Environment & Property Committee investigating fully the powers, possible implementation and full costing, reporting to the Council for final approval before implementing the powers.

2006/262 TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF 2005/06

A copy of the budget would be circulated to all Members.

2006/263 CHAIRMAN'S ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

263.1 St. Rumbold's Well

Members discussed the story which appeared in the local newspaper about the damage done at St Rumbold's well by vandals; the Town Council had originally been involved in the funding of this project. It was **AGREED** that the Chairman would talk to the Buckingham Society to see how the Town Council could assist in the clean up and restoration of the site.

ACTION THE CHAIRMAN

263.2 Bucks. Tree News

Cllr. Stuchbury brought to Member's attention an article which indicated that BTCV had been taking trees from Railway Walk and transplanting them at Holloway Spinney. The Clerk confirmed no permission had been sought but pointed out that BTCV, AVDC and BCC refer to the whole of the disused railway as Railway Walk although part is owned by the University and part (known as the Scenic Walk) by the District Council; therefore the trees may not have been from Buckingham Town Council land. It was **AGREED** to write to BTCV and Jason West, the Wildlife Project Manager, pointing out the designations and ownership and stating that any trees removed from the Railway Walk must have Town Council permission.

The following items were 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

2006/264 APPLY FOR PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE EXTENSION OF THE COUNCIL OFFICES

2006/265 TIMESCALE FOR PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE PLANS FOR THE COUNCIL OFFICES

Meeting closed at 9.20pm

CHAIRMANH. Mordue.....DATE30th May 2006.....