

**MINUTES OF THE BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT AND PROPERTY
COMMITTEE HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON MONDAY 12th JUNE 2006**

PRESENT

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

Town Clerk Ms. P. J. Heath

APOLGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mrs. H. Saul.

2006/266 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Stevens, and **AGREED** that Cllr. Mordue should be elected as the Chairman of the Environment and Property Committee

2006/267 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Stevens, and **AGREED** that Cllr. Desorgher should be elected as the Vice Chairman of the Environment and Property Committee.

2006/268 DECLARATION OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Members declared the following personal interests in the following items on the agenda.

Agenda item 8.1 Cllr. Stuchbury, Cllr. Barnett, Cllr. Loftus, and Cllr. Newell who have relatives in Buckingham Cemetery.

Agenda item 15 Cllr. Desorgher as Chairman of the Community Centre Management Committee.

2006/269 THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Members received and noted the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24th April 2006 which had been ratified on 30th May 2006.

2006/270 ACTION REPORTS AND UPDATES ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

270.1 (260) Chandos Road and Station Terrace right of way

Members were informed that despite chasers being sent to the County Council Rights of Way Team there had been no response as to the legal standing of the footpath between Chandos Road and Station Terrace.

270.2 Bus Shelter

The Town Clerk reported that she was meeting with two representatives on Thursday for a site visit re the bus shelter quotations.

2006/271 REPORT, IOF REQUIRED, ON CEMETERY LODGE REFURBISHMENT

271.1 (254) Update by the Chairman on the doors

The Chairman confirmed the comments made at Full Council that following discussions with the builder the back door is included in the original quote so is not an additional item, the internal door has been given a 50% discount.

The internal works have now finished; the Town Clerk is to obtain quotations for flooring in the lodge. In the front room (wooden floor boards) carpet, with the rest of downstairs in good quality vinyl flooring; the stairs, landing and bedrooms to carpet, bathroom to vinyl; the Town Clerk and Chairman to have designated authority to choose the colouring.

The Town Clerk reported that three companies have been asked to quote for work to the pillars: to date two have replied, both of which are above the limit set by the Committee so the contingency under minute number 255.4 will be activated. One company has highlighted the crumbling bricks at the base of the pillars; the Chairman and Clerk to investigate.

2006/272 REPORTS ON THE OPERATION OF BRACKLEY ROAD CEMETERY

272.1 Grass cutting regime in the Brackley Road cemetery and complaints made

Members received the letters of complaint and noted the comments made at the public session. The Town Clerk reported in detail on a meeting held with the Manager from Wyevoles (the Cemetery contractors) on the 6th June. The contractors were to rectify the situation and the Town Clerk would meet with the Manager again in the week commencing 12th June to look at the work and see if additional work is required. The grave digging is sub-contracted by Wyevoles and the Contract Manager has been informed that the council will not accept the damage that has been reported to adjacent graves and that they must ensure they abide by the Council's agreed policy. Members discussed the comments and the report and agreed the action taken so far by the Town Clerk. Members noted that the regime was a monthly cut unless the weather conditions dictate then it can be

cut fortnightly, the contractors have been instructed to do this currently, and that only the first cut is done as a cut and collect because of budgetary reasons.

It was **AGREED** to contact the complainants once the problems have been resolved giving them the information.

Buckingham Access for All had written about the grass cutting and also highlighting the paths in the extension, which were not renewed in 2004. It was **AGREED** that the Town Clerk obtain details of paths that could be laid to allow the access of wheelchairs and be robust enough to carry the digger which must be used in the Extension; the ground does not allow for hand digs.

272.2 Letter from Mr. T. Webster with offer of his services.

Members discussed the letter received from Mr. Webster suggesting his services for management of the Cemetery. Members noted that there was no budget for the employment of a Cemetery Manager but if Mr Webster wished to volunteer his services Members would be pleased to accept; the Town Clerk is to contact Mr. Webster.

Members discussed the idea of forming a "Friends of Brackley Road Cemetery" to assist with some of the basic maintenance work; this would have to be done within strict guidelines. It was **AGREED** that the Town Clerk would investigate the feasibility of starting a group and gauging favourable reaction from users of Brackley Road Cemetery.

2006/273 REPORTS ON CHANDOS PARK

273.1 Request from Buckingham Lawn Tennis Club for work to trees and notice board

Members discussed the letter from the Buckingham Lawn Tennis Club. It was **AGREED** that the Town Clerk 1) obtain quotations for the tree work requested; 2) Obtain cost for a new double notice board at the entrance, this to be put into 2007/2008 budget request unless money can be found from 2006/2007 budget at year end; 3) Instruct the Caretaker to remove the metal AVDC notice board.

273.2 Letter from Chandos Park Bowls Club; request for lease and proposed non payment of rent

Members discussed in detail the letter from the Bowls Club. The Town Clerk explained that the invoice JB42 was for ½ year rent to 31st March 2006, previously the club had paid September to September and this was to bring the invoices into line with the Council's financial year end. The Town Clerk provided the Chairman with a breakdown of expenditure over the year not including the capital purchase of the equipment. In response to a question the Town Clerk explained that no communication had been received in respect of the water heater and no further information could be obtained from the club; the heater apparently fixed itself. Members noted that there had been no increase in the rent since 2000 to reflect the involvement of the club in the maintenance. Members acknowledged the request for

a lease which would have to reflect the rent and agree a percentage inflationary increase.

2006/274 REPORTS ON BOURTON PARK

274.1 Information on the penstock repair/refurbishment

Cllr. Stuchbury reported that due to work commitments he had not been back to look at the penstock. He confirmed he would purchase the items agreed at the last meeting with an invoice to the Town Council.

274.2 Investigate solution to the increasing antisocial behaviour at the Bourton Road car park – speeding vehicles in and around the car park/loud music

Members noted the comments made in the Public Session and the Town Clerk's report on the problems which include the speeding of vehicles in and out of the car park, the use of the adjacent roads as a race track, hand brake turns in the car park, driving across the grass and around the picnic area and littering; the contractor reports it takes up to 2 hours to clear that area alone. The Town Clerk reported that the Police were monitoring the area in respect of speeding on the adjacent road and noise levels from car stereos, and taking action where appropriate. It was **AGREED** that 1) a strategically placed bollard should be installed to reduce the width of the entrance to a single car width, so making it undesirable to enter at speed; 2) Fence posts to be placed around the car park so that vehicles can not drive on to the grass but pedestrians have easy access; 3) Install new bins in the area.

2006/275 SAFETY REPORTS FROM RoSPA

The Members received the safety reports on the Town Council's play areas and noted that there were no high risk items, and very few medium risks; these would be checked and work carried out as required.

The largest problem is the two gates for the Bourton Park Junior Area which have been classed as medium risk and requiring action. The Clerk has obtained cost which indicates the gates will cost approximately £1000 each. It was **AGREED** to place this into the 2007/2008 budget request list unless there was budget left in account 4061/402 at the end of the current year.

2006/276 WEEKLY SAFETY REPORTS ON PLAY AREAS AND AGREE ACTION PROPOSED

Members received the weekly play area reports and confirmed the repair action taken by the Town Clerk.

2006/277 BUCKINGHAM TOWN AUDIT AND ANY ACTION REQUIRED

Cllr Isham arrived during the following item

Members were informed of the response from Bucks. County Council which stated they did not know why the slabs laid at the White Hart end of the new pavement are a different colour from the rest.

Members raised the condition of the London Road Bridge which is being engulfed in vegetation; the Town Clerk was request to contact BCC Bridge Section and have the vegetation cleared.

Chris Nicholls Walk was discussed: in particular the state it has been left since the bank repair work was carried out; Members will monitor.

2006/278 UPDATE ON THE COMMUNITY PLAN INITITATIVES - M. GADD

Cllr. Barnett reported that although Mr. Gadd had been co-opted on to the committee he was not able to attend the meetings; Cllr. Barnett will give the report in future.

The application has been made to SEEDA for funding following the land valuation being carried out; it is hoped to be able to report on the outcome at the next meeting. Cllr. Barnett confirmed that the plan would look at bins, seats, signage and lighting as part of the project but the final details had not been agreed as it depended on the funding obtained.

2006/279 CORRESPONDENCE FROM BUCKNGHAM COMMUNITY PANTOMIME RE LIGHTING BARS - FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Members were reminded that this was for information only as it had been raised at the Annual Town Meeting.

2006/280 DETAILS OF SALTEX EXHIBITION 5-7th SEPTEMBER AND TO AGREE IF THE TOWN CLERK/COUNCILLORS SHOULD ATTEND AND PAYMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENSES

Members discussed the attendance of the Town Clerk and Councillors. Proposed by Cllr. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **AGREED** that the Town Clerk could not be spared from the Office, but if any Councillor wished to attend the Committee approved their travelling costs; interested Councillors should notify the Town Clerk.

2006/281 LOSS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL FLAG FROM THE FLAGPOLE AND THE PURCHASE OF NEW REPLACEMENT FLAGS

Members discussed the Town Council Flag which was removed by persons unknown within 24 hours of it being put up. Proposed by Cllr. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Desorgher, and **AGREED** that the Town Council purchase 2 new Town Council flags. Cllr. Stuchbury and Cllr Isham **AGREED** to install the new flag and fix the halyard to prevent removal.

2006/282 EMPTYING OF THE BINS AND LITTER PICK ON RAILWAY WALK FOLLOWING THE CESSATION OF THE MARKET REFUSE CONTRACT

Members were informed that following the cessation of the street market refuse clearance contract the Contractor informed the Town Clerk that the cost of the fortnightly litter pick and bin emptying would have to increase. Currently the contractor does the work on a Tuesday coupled with the Street Market.

The Town Clerk informed Members that a motion had been received for the next Council agenda asking for the Street Market clearance to be reconsidered by the Events Committee; this will be heard on 17th July and if successful will be considered by the Events Committee on 21st August 2006.

Proposed by Cllr. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Barnett, and **AGREED** that the Town Clerk would obtain the comparative costs for the next meeting.

2006/283 CHAIRMAN'S ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

283.1 Letter from Mr. S. Martin re litter

A letter from Mr. S. Martin who runs a fishery downstream of Buckingham had been received by the Chairman, Clerk, and Cllr. Stuchbury just prior to the meeting. Cllr. Stuchbury also had photographs which had been posted through his door earlier in the day.

Mr Martin asked the Town Council to dispose of litter and rubbish which had washed down the river which he had cleared out and was currently sitting in a trailer on land he uses for the fishery business. He also asked for the Town Council's assistance in preventing any future rubbish ending up polluting the river. Members discussed in detail the problem highlighted by Mr Martin which is of a general social nature of lack of respect for the environment.

Members were reminded that as this was a Chairman's item therefore as it was not on the agenda they could not make a decision.

The Town Clerk advised that there was not a specific power which allowed the Council to clean up land in private ownership. Any payment or action that was not covered by a specific power could lead to a charge of the Council acting "Ultra Vires" which could result in a court challenge or investigation by the standards board

Members sympathised with Mr Martin's problem of disposing of the waste and noted that the pictures showed beer barrels and crates, garden furniture, AVDC recycle bins, estate agent's signs, a wheelbarrow and what appears to be a child's motorbike, cardboard, polystyrene blocks (similar to those known to have come from the Grenville Cottage site last year), bottles and fast food containers.

It was **AGREED** to write to Mr Martin and suggest he contacts AVDC Environmental Heath who may have the power to remove and dispose of the rubbish and also inform him of the Town Council's river rinse which takes place each year.

Cllr. Stuchbury raised a query as to the legality of the river rinse; the Town Clerk to investigate with BALC.

It was **AGREED** to look at ways to reduce the litter in the river by way of education and publicity.

283.2 Community Wildlife Project

Cllr. Newell is the Town Council's representative but is unable to attend the next meeting on 21st June 2006 at 10am and asked for a deputy to attend; Cllr. Isham agreed.

[Amended at Full Council, 17/07/06, to add

"283.3 Litter Bins

Cllr. Newell asked for an update on the new litter bins that had been agreed by this committee a year ago, but were still not in place.

The Clerk explained that there had been difficulties finding a contractor and the Chairman offered to look into it with the Caretaker"]

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 discussed.

284 Provide options for the future office space for members of staff up to and including the remodelling of The Council offices.

285 Contents of the letter from Mr D. Betts re the Town Council Lease

Meeting closed at 9.35pm

CHAIRMANH. Mordue..... DATE17/7/06.....