

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
ON MONDAY 18th DECEMBER 2006 AT 7.00PM

Present	Councillor	J. Barnett H. Cadd P. Collins (Mayor) Mrs. P. Desorgher D. Isham H. Mordue (Chairman) R. Newell H. Lewis Mrs. P. Stevens Mrs. C. Strain-Clark P. Strain-Clark R. Stuchbury
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Clerk to the meeting In Attendance	Mr. M. J. Skinner, Deputy Town Clerk Ms. P. J. Heath, Town Clerk
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APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

351/2006 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Cllr. Cadd stated that as a member of the Royal British Legion he may have a personal interest in Item 15 on the agenda, Future Maintenance of the War Memorial, which the meeting noted.

352/2006 THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Members noted the minutes of the last Environment and Property meeting held on 6th November 2006 which were ratified by Full Council on 11th December 2006.

353/2006 ACTION REPORTS AND UPDATES AS PER ATTACHED LIST

325/2006 Toilet Provision

Cllr. Stuchbury raised the question of future provision of public toilets under this item. He had been advised by the Town Clerk that the matter was being investigated, and when this had been completed it would be reported back to the committee.

331.1/2006 Penstock

Cllr. Stuchbury informed Members that he would obtain the Allen Keys as soon as the water in the river was low enough to enable him to ascertain the size of Allen key required.

354/2006 REPORT ON CEMETERY LODGE

In response to a question it was confirmed that the only place the property was being advertised was on a specific room-to-let website. As there had been no expressions of interest in renting the property the lack of carpets was not causing a delay.

Cllr. Mordue reminded the meeting that the Lodge might be required to house the Council's officers while the new offices were being built. To progress the issue of the carpets it was decided the designated councillors would meet with the Town Clerk outside of the meeting.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

355/2006 REPORT ON OPERATION OF BRACKLEY ROAD CEMETERY

355.1 Base Tender Document

The Town Clerk reported that the base tender document would be going out this week, and would be sent to the existing contractor and two others who had expressed interest. It was doubtful if the tenders would be received before the Precept meeting.

Cllr. Collins arrived at 7.25pm during the following item.

355.2 Increase in Burial Fees

The Town Clerk presented proposals for an increase of approximately 5% in burial fees. In addition it was proposed that a new charge be made for Memorial Permits. This would be kept in a separate fund and would be used to pay for repairs if the owners of a memorial could not be traced or were unable to pay due to hardship. The proposal was considered at some length in a detailed discussion. It was noted that Buckingham Cemetery's charges were among the lowest within a forty mile radius. The principle of charging extra for those living outside the town was discussed. Concern was expressed that the Cemetery needed to be more cost effective, and not be an excessive burden on the council precept. There was some doubt whether the cemetery could be made to break even; however cost of burials should be covered.

Proposed by Cllr. Mordue, seconded by Cllr. Isham, and **AGREED** by 6 votes to 2 to accept the price increase proposed by the Town Clerk, plus the new cost for memorial permits.

355.3 Request to erect a memorial

Members noted this request, a copy of which had been circulated with the agenda, which was to erect a memorial in the old part of the cemetery near similar memorials. Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Newell, and **AGREED** to permit the erection of the memorial.

356/2006 CHANDOS PARK

356.1 Chandos Park Bowls Club

The meeting was informed it had been expected that the new secretary of Chandos Park Bowls Club would contact the Council following their committee meeting early in December. However, nothing had been heard prior to the meeting. The Bowls Club had again been reminded about the outstanding rent. Members discussed at length any future action that could be taken if the Bowls Club continued to not pay the rent, including the charging of interest,

changing the pavilion locks or Small Claims Court action. This would be placed on the next E & P Agenda for a course of action to be agreed.

It was understood the Bowls Club had paid for winter maintenance themselves as reported under minute no 335.4.

356.2 Lighting Failure

The Town Clerk reported that the failure was being caused by a fault with one lighting column, which was causing the others to short out. Owing to an administrative error within Central Networks the location of the connection point from the supply network had been lost. They had been due to investigate the problem in the last week and would be installing an isolation switch point. Once that had been done our electricians could then work safely and correct the fault.

356.3 Closure of male toilet at Chandos Park

Cllr. Stuchbury asked why the male toilet at Chandos Park was closed. There was, apparently, no minute authorising this. The Town Clerk reported that the toilet had been closed on safety grounds, following it being vandalised as reported in minute no 291/2006, pending installation of a new hand-dryer. This had now been installed, and the toilets were now open again.

357/2006 BOURTON PARK

In reply to a question the Town Clerk reported that she was currently obtaining the installation specification of the RSJ our contractor had agreed to install. The overhead bar had also now been damaged and would need removal.

358/2006 COUNCIL OFFICES EXTENSION

358.1 Receipt of Planning Consent

Members were pleased to note that planning permission for the extension had been received.

358.2 Instruction to Architect to proceed with working drawings

It was **AGREED** that the Council should instruct the architect to proceed with the preparation of working drawings.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

In response to a question the Chairman explained that the working drawings would provide the ability to establish the cost of the building which would include different options re the heat exchanger system compared with air conditioning.

358.3 Contact with Willowlake Properties

Mr Hill had proved very elusive. The Town Clerk had been told last week that he was away until 8 January. She would attempt to make contact with Mr Hill then.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

359/2006 PLAY AREA WEEKLY RETURNS

There was nothing significant to report.

360/2006 ANNUAL INSPECTION OF PLAY AREAS

Members had been provided with their agendas a cost comparison showing that Wicksteed Leisure were cheaper than RoSPA. The Town Clerk pointed out that both provided independent and qualified inspectors.

Proposed by Cllr. Stevens, seconded by Cllr. Isham, and **AGREED** to appoint Wicksteed Leisure to undertake next year's inspections.

The Town Clerk declared a personal interest and informed the meeting that she only became aware that Wicksteed Leisure provided safety inspections following the employment by them of a friend as a playground equipment inspector.

361/2006 BUCKINGHAM TOWN AUDIT

The latest list was now available. Members discussed the Town Audit and the process used by the principal authorities to respond to the audit sheets sent by the Town Council. Members were informed that under the devolved services by Bucks. County Council some work may be carried out by the Town Council and recharged. The Clerk informed Members that letters were sent to private landlords concerning problems with their buildings.

362/2006 TO RECEIVE UPDATE ON COMMUNITY PLAN INITIATIVE

Cllr. Barnett declared an interest as a member of the steering group. He reported that he had received a programme timetable which he would circulate to all members.

363/2006 CIRCULAR WALK CONTRACT

Cllr. Mordue and the Town Clerk had met with Malcolm Godwin and Mark Gadd. Malcolm Godwin had agreed the letter was incorrect and a new letter would be sent. The letter had only been intended to cover the initial consultant stage, thereafter the project will comply with the Town Council procurement policy.

SEEDA had allocated the funding to the County Council who accepted the work would be completed in the 2007/2008 financial year.

364/2006 FUTURE MAINTENANCE OF THE WAR MEMORIAL

Members noted the report circulated with the agenda. It was confirmed that external funding would be sought for the project.

Proposed by Cllr Isham, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **AGREED** to spend up to £300 from budget 4057/203 for specialised advice as per the report.

ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

365/2006 TO CONSIDER QUOTE FROM PYRAMID FORESTRY

Proposed by Cllr. Mordue, seconded by Cllr. Isham, and **AGREED** to accept the quotation from Pyramid Forestry for a full survey of all Town Council-owned trees as per the letter circulated with the agenda.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

366/2006 UPDATE ON AGREEMENT WITH BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL TO PROVIDE DEVOLVED SERVICES

The Town Clerk reported that the agreement with the County Council had been signed. The launch had taken place at the *Getting Closer to Communities* event on 30th November. Under the agreement minor works such as removal of illegal signs, cleaning of road signs, and removal of overhanging branches could be carried out by the council's caretaker. There was a short discussion about offering services to neighbouring parishes, but it was felt this was premature.

367/2006 ENTRANCE REAR OF 55 NELSON STREET

Proposed by Cllr. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **AGREED** that the Town Council pays for the repair of the fence which had been damaged during a break-in at N^o. 55.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

Cllr. Collins also informed the meeting that N^o. 55 had been sold. He suggested writing to the new owner via the selling agents advising that access was not permitted through the fence.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

368/2006 REPORT ON LITTER BINS REQUESTED BY CLLR. NEWELL

The Clerk reported that the Council's caretaker was repairing and replacing bins. As yet, none have been installed at new locations. It was **AGREED** that the priority should be installing of bins at new locations and not the replacement or repair of damaged bins.

369/2006 BUDGET

Members discussed the budget requirement for 2007-2008. Proposed by Cllr. Lewis, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **AGREED** that the Committee budget request would be £183069, the same as 2006-2007, with the Committee allocating the budget after the precept meeting as per their terms of reference.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm.

CHAIRMANH Mordue.....DATE5th February 2007.....