

BTC/03/20

Minutes of a meeting of the Full Council of Buckingham Town Council held on Monday 13th July 2020 online via Zoom.

Present:

Cllr. T. Bloomfield
Cllr. M. Cole JP
Cllr. Mrs. G. Collins Mayor
Cllr. P. Collins
Cllr. Mrs. M. Gateley
Cllr. J. Harvey
Cllr. P. Hirons
Cllr. A. Mahi
Cllr. H. Mordue
Cllr. Ms. R. Newell
Cllr. L. O'Donoghue
Cllr. A. Ralph
Cllr. M. Smith
Cllr. Mrs. C. Strain-Clark
Cllr. R. Stuchbury
Cllr. M. Try Deputy Mayor

In attendance: Mr. P. Hodson Town Clerk
Mrs. N. Stockill Committee Clerk
Mr. S. Ahmed
Mr. N. Bayley
Mrs. S. Hetherington
Mr. T. Humphries
Mr. A. Osibogun
Mr. S. Sobhan

PUBLIC SESSION

A member of the public attended the public session to speak to Members about community support for homeless and vulnerable people in Buckingham and if there were any fund raising suggestions to enable a recently deceased local man to be repatriated.

211/20 Apologies for Absence

Members received and accepted apologies from Buckinghamshire Councillors Whyte and Clare. Members noted Mrs. R. Ahmed's apologies for not being able to speak or appear on camera. Mrs Ahmed was represented by her son as she was unable to speak during agenda item 10 (Co-option of town Councillor) following emergency dental treatment.

212/20 Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Try explained that Mr. N. Bayley was a neighbour.

*Members **AGREED** to bring forward agenda item 10 (Co-option of Town Councillor) for the benefit of members of the public present.*

213/20 Co-option of Town Councillor

Members received personal statements from the following candidates, and discussed which candidate to elect to represent Buckingham North:

Six candidates had offered: Mrs. R. Ahmed, Mr. Nick Bayley, Mrs. Sue Hetherington, Mr. Tom Humphries, Mr. Adekunle Osibogun and Mr. Sajjad Sobhan.

The candidates present at the meeting were allowed to add a verbal summary to their written submissions (circulated with the agenda) and answer questions from Members. Each candidate summarised their experience and interests and answered questions about their reasons for applying to become a Town Councillor, their knowledge on the remit of the Town Council, their commitment to meetings and any concerns related to the role.

The Mayor thanked everyone for applying and Cllr. Smith called for a recorded vote.

The Mayor explained that votes would be taken for each candidate and – unless one candidate achieved an outright majority (9 votes) then the candidate with the least number of votes would be dropped and a new vote taken for the remaining candidates.

First round of voting

Mrs. R. Ahmed,

Vote for: Cllrs. Harvey, Ralph, Smith, Strain-Clark, Gateley, Stuchbury and Bloomfield: 7

Mr. Nick Bayley,

Votes for: Cllrs. Try: 1

Mrs. Sue Hetherington,

Votes for: Cllrs. O'Donoghue and Mahi: 2

Mr. Tom Humphries,

Votes for: Cllrs. Hirons and P. Collins: 2

Mr. Adekunle Osibogun

Cllrs. Cole, Newell and Mordue: 3

Mr. Sajjad Sobhan

Vote for: Cllr. G. Collins: 1

The casting vote fell to the Chair: Cllr. G. Collins voted in favour of Mr. Sajjad Sobhan.

Second round of voting

Mrs. R. Ahmed,

Vote for: Cllrs. Harvey, Ralph, Smith, Strain-Clark, Gateley, Stuchbury and Bloomfield: 7

Mrs. Sue Hetherington,

Votes for: Cllrs. O'Donoghue, Try and Mahi: 3

Mr. Tom Humphries,

Votes for: Cllrs. Hirons and P. Collins: 2

Mr. Adekunle Osibogun

Cllrs. Cole, Newell and Mordue: 3

Mr. Sajjad Sobhan

Vote for: Cllr. G. Collins: 1

Third round of voting

Mrs. R. Ahmed,

Vote for: Cllrs. Harvey, Ralph, Smith, Strain-Clark, Gateley, Stuchbury and Bloomfield: 7

Mrs. Sue Hetherington,

Votes for: Cllrs. O'Donoghue, G. Collins, Try and Mahi: 4

Mr. Tom Humphries,

Votes for: Cllrs. Hirons and P. Collins: 2

Mr. Adekunle Osibogun

Cllrs. Cole, Newell and Mordue: 3

Forth round of voting

Mrs. R. Ahmed,

Vote for: Cllrs. Harvey, Ralph, Smith, Strain-Clark, Gateley, P. Collins, Stuchbury and Bloomfield: 8

Mrs. Sue Hetherington,

Votes for: Cllrs. O'Donoghue, G. Collins, Try and Mahi: 4

Mr. Adekunle Osibogun

Cllrs. Cole, Hirons, Newell and Mordue: 4

The casting vote fell to the Chair: Cllr. G. Collins voted in favour of Mrs. S. Hetherington.

Fifth and final round of voting

Mrs. R. Ahmed,

Vote for: Cllrs. Cole, Hirons, Newell, Harvey, Ralph, Smith, Strain-Clark, Gateley, Stuchbury and Bloomfield: 10

Mrs. Sue Hetherington,

Votes for: Cllrs. O'Donoghue, P. Collins, Mordue, G. Collins, Try and Mahi: 6

Mrs. Robina Ahmed was appointed to the position of Town Councillor for Buckingham North 2020/21.

Members thanked all of the candidates for expressing an interest in the Town Council and encouraged them to stand at the next election in May 2021. The Town Clerk explained that Mrs Ahmed would need to read and sign the Declaration of Office before the next meeting of Buckingham Town Council.

Members of the public left the meeting.

214/20 Minutes

Members received and **AGREED** the minutes of the Full Council meetings held on:

214.1/20 Annual Statutory Meeting 11th May 2020

214.2/20 Full Council 11th May 2020

215/20 Interim Minutes

Members received and **AGREED** the minutes of the Interim Council meeting held on Monday 22nd June 2020.

216/20 Planning Committee

Members received the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on:

- Monday 18th May 2020
- Monday 1st June 2020
- Monday 22nd June 2020

217/20 Town Centre and Events Committee

Members received the minutes of the Town Centre and Events Committee meetings held on Monday 8th June 2020.

218/20 Environment Committee

Members received the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on Monday 15th June 2020.

219/20 Resources Committee

Members received the minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on Monday 29th June 2020.

220/20 Economic Development Working Group

Members received the minutes of the Economic Development Working Group meetings held on:

220.1/20 Tuesday 26th May 2020

220.2/20 1st July 2020

221/20 Terms of Reference

221.1/20 Members reviewed the Terms of Reference as amended at Planning Committee (*min 37/20*).

Members **AGREED** to combine sections 10 & 11 across all of the Committees' Terms of Reference. **ACTION TOWN CLERK**

With the above amendment the Terms of Reference were **AGREED**.

221.2/20 Members reviewed the Terms of Reference as amended at TC&E Committee (*min 87/20*)

Section 10.14 - Members **AGREED** to amend the typographical error 'Old Goal'.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

With the above amendment the Terms of Reference were **AGREED**.

Members held a discussion on whether 'Chairman' should be used in all of the Town Council's documents.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury and seconded by Cllr. Hirons to refer the item to a future meeting of the Resources Committee. A vote was taken and the result were:

In favour: 8

Against: 5

Abstentions: 3

Motion carried

ACTION TOWN CLERK

221.3/20 Members reviewed and **AGREED** the Terms of Reference as amended at Resources Committee (*min 172/20*)

221.4/20 Members reviewed and **AGREED** the Terms of Reference as amended at Economic Development Working Group (*min 191/20*)

222/20 To receive and question reports from Buckinghamshire Council Councillors

Cllr. Mordue explained the constitution of Buckinghamshire council would be reviewed as part of the Work Programme of Buckinghamshire Council's Standards Committee

Cllr. Stuchbury reported on his attendance at recent meetings, including Audit Committee, Planning (North) Committee, Education and Children's Select Committee, Community Board and Buckinghamshire Fire Authority. Cllr. Stuchbury explained that he had placed a motion on the forthcoming meeting of Buckinghamshire Council's Standards Committee to review the Council's constitution.

223/20 Action List

The Town Clerk **AGREED** to update the dates in column 'G' of the Action List.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

224/20 Major Planning application

18/04290/APP West End Farm, Brackley Road, MK18 1JA

Variation of Condition 2 of planning permission 16/00847/APP to vary the wording of the condition by substituting plan numbers

This application is so radically different from that permitted by the Planning Inspector that the description “to vary the wording of the condition by substituting plan numbers” bears no relation to the actual changes to the design, the facilities offered, the consequent traffic volumes to be expected, and many other matters.

This Council has always maintained that this development is a housing complex, not a care home, and this is borne out by the applicants and their consultants referring to it as a Retirement Village throughout. The redesign has deleted many of the communal seating areas, which are vital for social interaction, and specialist rooms such as the cinema and therapy room. The bistro was never intended to be a communal dining room in the sense that residents would eat meals together, despite the statement by the Planning Inspector, and its size has been considerably reduced so that this would not now be feasible anyway. Every flat has a serviceable kitchen, which implies shopping trips or food deliveries.

The site is in part outside the Neighbourhood Plan Area, the integrity of which has already been confirmed by the Secretary of State in his decision to refuse 14/02601/APP. Its access is on a dangerous bend on a busy road, and access to and from Buckingham involves the very narrow West Street and the Town Hall junction which has no excess capacity.

Members noted that little attention had been paid to the Buckingham Vision & Design Statement. This development is on one of the principal entrances to the town, and the diminished design characteristics of the modular buildings do not enhance the town approaches. Regret was expressed that the Inspector’s report on the previous application – which did have many aspects that would keep residents within the site, which the new designs do not – is binding on conditions Highways might have wanted to impose on this application. In our original response (17/12/18) we advocated that the Traffic Assessment be conducted on the basis that this was a residential settlement with vehicle movements associated with trips for shopping and entertainment, visits and visitors, deliveries to 72 flats not a single entity, and outsourced carers; not a care home with staff working shifts catering for all residents. The minimum age is 55, so some residents may well still be working or active in the local community, safe in the knowledge that a frail partner is in a safe environment. A care home’s traffic data will be based on careworkers working shifts and deliveries to a single area.

Concern was expressed that the individual stairwell design could mean that residents on upper floors would be effectively trapped in their flats in the event of lift failure or – worse – fire. Communication corridors to adjacent stairwells would provide not only an alternative means of exit, but also a dry link for careworkers with several clients getting from flat to flat in inclement weather. Members wondered if the Fire Service had offered any comments on this safety aspect.

The delay in submitting the Archaeological Report required by the previous application was regretted, especially as the site could well extend beyond the area under test (bones found in the adjacent property could well be linked) and the scientific analysis might indicate further investigation was necessary.

The LPA was requested to look again at

- The C2 class assigned by the Planning Inspector on grounds not valid for this application with a view to assigning a C3 class;
- The implications of this on the traffic volumes to be expected;
- And on the 35% Affordable Housing which a retirement village would incur;

- It would also allow Highways to suggest conditions or insist on amendments to satisfy their usual requirements, especially with respect to road widths and parking
- The provision of 72 parking spaces for 72 flats; no Visitor spaces or parking for carers. As only one of a couple needs to be signed up for 1½ hours care/week, the other may well keep a vehicle for trips as suggested above; whatever bus service is eventually operated it is unlikely to be flexible enough to cater for trips further afield or attending sports club events, for example;
- Give appropriate regard to the Vision & Design Statement SPG given the site's prominence on the edge of town.

Proposed by Cllr. Cole and seconded by Cllr. O'Donoghue to oppose the application on the grounds that it is a housing complex, partly outside the Neighbourhood Plan Area, not a site designated for development, and thus not compliant with policies HP1 (Allocate land for new housing), HP4 (Diverse housing mix) and HP5 (Provision of Affordable Housing).

Cllr. Stuchbury said he would not be voting on the application as he had already asked for it to be called in by the North Bucks Planning Committee of Buckinghamshire Council. A vote was taken and the results were:

In favour: 13

Abstentions: 3

ACTION PLANNING CLERK

Members noted a statement from Buckingham resident Mr. E. Grimsdale which was read out by Councillor Ralph:

“Re-interment of human remains from the site should occur in a purpose-built vault on a new site close to the original site, possibly within a landscape-designed garden with above-ground access. It may be appropriate for the vault and its setting to be created within Buckingham Cemetery which lies adjacent to the archaeological site. The landscaped Garden should include archaeological pieces recovered during investigation, and fixed panels illustrating and describing the archaeology of the skeletons”.

225/20 Motion – Cllr. Christine Strain-Clark

That Buckingham Town Council establishes a Working Group to examine issues arising from the Black Lives Matter movement, seeking to establish how these may affect Buckingham and the steps that it may be possible to take in order to improve the lives of all residents. Membership of the Working Group would comprise Town Councillors plus an equal or greater number of residents drawn from the BAME community, including from the University. We would expect the Working Group to bring their first progress report to Full Council on November 23rd, and present their final recommendations by the end of this council year.

The following amendment was proposed by Cllr. Strain-Clark and seconded by Cllr. Smith:

Amended Motion: That Buckingham Town Council establishes a Working Group to examine issues which have been brought to public attention by recent racist events, seeking to establish how these may affect Buckingham and the steps that it may be possible to take in order to improve the lives of all residents. Membership of the Working Group would comprise Town Councillors plus an equal or greater number of residents drawn from the BAME community and their supporters, including from the University. We would expect the Working Group to bring their first progress

report to Full Council on November 23rd, and present their final recommendations by the end of this council year.

Cllr. Strain-Clark spoke to the above motion and referenced Rebecca Clark's presentation on diversity and inclusion during the Public Session before Interim Full Council on the 22nd June 2020. Cllr. Strain-Clark said it was important for the Town Council to tackle these issues in order to:

1. Ensure the Council was fully compliant with all aspects of the Equalities Act 2010.
2. Challenge social responsibility to ensure all resident feel equally valued, especially as Buckingham University has a higher proportion of students from diverse backgrounds.

Members held a lengthy debate on the membership of the working group.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury and seconded by Cllr. Hirons that Councillors move to vote on the amended motion. A vote was taken and the results were:

In favour: 7

Against: 6

Abstentions: 2

Proposed by Cllr. Strain-Clark and seconded by Cllr. Smith that Buckingham Town Council establishes a Working Group to examine issues which have been brought to public attention by recent racist events, seeking to establish how these may affect Buckingham and the steps that it may be possible to take in order to improve the lives of all residents. Membership of the Working Group would comprise Town Councillors plus an equal or greater number of residents drawn from the BAME community and their supporters, including from the University. We would expect the Working Group to bring their first progress report to Full Council on November 23rd, and present their final recommendations by the end of this council year.

A vote was taken and the result were:

In favour: 8

Against: 7

Abstentions: 1

Motion carried

ACTION TOWN CLERK

226/20 Covid 19 Update

Members received a verbal update from the Town Clerk on the reopening of the Tourist Information Centre and Lace Hill Sports & Community Centre. The Town Clerk explained that the Town Council office remained closed to the public as the majority of staff were still working from home.

Cllr. Stuchbury thanked the Town Council staff on their work during the Covid-19 pandemic and enabling Fringe Week to take place online.

Temporary crossing, Moreton Road - Cllr. Cole said the signage was incorrect and should read 'give way to pedestrians'. Cllr. Harvey questioned whether the crossing was legally compliant and whether a temporary road order was required. Members **AGREED** for the Town Clerk to investigate and report back.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

227/20 Unitary Council

The Town Clerk explained the devolution project pilot had been delayed because of Covid-19 and he would report back to the September meeting of Full Council as to whether Buckingham Town Council has been selected to take part.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

228/20 Annual Governance statement

Members **AGREED** Section 1 of the Annual Return Part 3 – the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20. The Mayor and Town Clerk signed the document accordingly.

229/20 Annual Return

Members **AGREED** Section 2 of the Annual Return Part 3 – Accounts Statements 2019/20. The Mayor signed the document accordingly.

Members received and noted the final internal audit report for 2019/20

229/20 Emergency Active Travel Fund

Members receive a verbal update from the Town Clerk noting that the proposed cycle route from Gawcott to Buckingham was on the reserve list.

231/20 Silverstone Circuit Events

Members received a verbal update from Councillor Mark Cole JP following the Buckinghamshire and Community Villages Board meeting and to discuss the potential impact on the town's risk from Covid 19. Cllr. Cole explained that the two Austrian Grands Prix held over the past two weekends were restricted to around 2,500 personnel, and Silverstone would presumably have a similar number each weekend. Cllr. Cole pointed out that Buckingham Town Council has first raised this with Silverstone on May 26th, but on the morning of the Community Board had a reply only that a traffic plan would be circulated the following week. The Town Clerk has previously circulated a copy of the circuit Residents' Information document, in which it states "we have worked with the police, public health, highways England and local councils to ensure that the event can take place in the safest possible environment." Cllr. Cole stressed that Buckingham Town Council, as the largest close town to Silverstone, had not been consulted. Members noted that Cllr. Whyte continued to liaise between Buckinghamshire Council and Silverstone and **AGREED** for the Town Clerk to write to Circuit highlighting the lack of consultation. **ACTION TOWN CLERK**

232/20 Grants Review

Members received and discussed a report from the Town Clerk.

Proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. Harvey and unanimously **AGREED** the following report recommendations:

- It is recommended that a Task and Finish Group be formed to review the Town Council's grant applications process.
- The Group's remit would be to analyse who is benefiting from the current approach, compare the process to other grant giving authorities and to make recommendations on any changes or improvements which could be made to the scope of funding and the process of grant making.
- It is recommended that a report and new grant policies proposed by the Group be presented to the Resources Committee on 21st September 2020.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

233/20 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies

Members noted the reports listed below:

22.1 Pontio minutes from the 9th May 2020 – noted.

22.2 Community Board verbal update from 7th July meeting.

The Town Clerk explained the Buckingham and Villages Priorities and Sub Groups were agreed as:

Priorities

- Covid Support and Economic Recovery
- Green Space and Communities
- Road Safety and Cycleways

Sub Groups

- Covid Support and Economic Recovery
- Green Space and Communities
- Road Safety and Cycle ways
- HS2
- Young People/Youth

The Town Clerk **AGREED** to circulate the paperwork to Members.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

234/20 Mayoral Engagements

Members received and noted a list of events attended by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Functions the Mayor has attended:

None

Functions the Deputy Mayor has attended:

None

235/20 Chair's Announcements

There were none.

236/20 Date of the next meeting:

Interim Council – Monday 14th September 2020

Full Council - Monday 5th October 2020

Meeting closed at: 21.50

Signed Date

Town Mayor