

**MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD
ON MONDAY 5th JANUARY 2009 at 7pm**

<u>PRESENT</u>	Councillor	T. Bloomfield P. Collins P. Hirons D. Isham G. Loftus A. Mahi H. Mordue Ms. R. Newell M. Smith P. Stevens R. Stuchbury W. Whyte	(Mayor) (Chairman)
	Co-opted Member	Ms. S. Le	BTCV Project Manager
	Deputy Town Clerk	Mr. C. Wayman	
	Clerical Assistant	Mrs K. McElligott	

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Mrs. G. Collins, Mrs P. Desorgher and M. Try.

638/2009 DECLARATION OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Cllr. T. Bloomfield declared a personal interest in item no 10 "Ken Tagg Play Area" as a local resident.

Cllr. R. Stuchbury declared a prejudicial interest in item no 13 "To receive a verbal report from the Mayor concerning a complaint" as a family member of the person making the complaint.

639/2009 RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Members accepted the minutes of the last meeting held on 10th November 2008, which were ratified at the Council meeting held on 15th December 2008.

640/2009 RECEIVE ACTION REPORTS AND UPDATES ON ITEMS NOT ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA AS PER ATTACHED LIST

The Deputy Town Clerk circulated a report prior to the meeting and reported verbally on the following action items at the meeting:

494/602.1 Chandos Park Path

The response from AVDC was disappointing in that they appeared to have mislaid the specifications discussed in August 2008 and were now seeking a further meeting to discuss requirements. It was **AGREED** to write to AVDC to seek a

prompt response and if this was not forthcoming to seek alternative ways of completing the work.

ACTION THE DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

565.3 Transfer of assets

As no further information had been received from AVDC it was **AGREED** to write to them and insist that the transfer of the Heartlands be kept separate from the Chandos Park areas and to arrange a meeting to discuss the transfer of the Heartlands.

ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

605 Chandos Park Play Area

The Council is currently awaiting a response from AVDC regarding a play value assessment for the town, although this is expected in the next fortnight.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Isham, and **AGREED** to give the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Mayor delegated powers to make any necessary decisions between meetings.

616 Allotments

No reply has yet been received concerning Tingewick Road allotments. It was **AGREED** to send a follow-up letter.

ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

618 Embleton Way Pavilion

Members noted that no response had been received from AVDC concerning the enforcement of planning conditions. It was **AGREED** to write to AVDC again to find out the current situation.

625.2 Bowls Club

The Council were awaiting a confirmation from the Bowls Club as to whether they would be able to attend a meeting on the 15th January; as the office has moved into the Council Chamber another venue would have to be arranged.

635 Flood Alleviation

It was **AGREED** to not pursue another avenue dealing with flooding in the town and to concentrate on current avenues with the relevant agencies.

It was **AGREED** to write to Bucks. CC asking them to remove the old Tingewick Road Bridge, which had been left in the river, as Members felt that this caused an unnecessary weir before entering the new bridge.

ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

It was **AGREED** to write to the Environment Agency to enquire the reasoning behind withdrawal of Buckingham's Flood Alleviation Scheme.

ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

Cllr. Mrs. Stevens would forward on the contact details at the Environment Agency to the Office.

ACTION CLLR. MRS STEVENS

It was **AGREED** for the Mayor and Chairman to compose and send out a press release regarding the flood alleviation situation, the Town Council's stance and the work being done by the Town Council.

ACTION THE MAYOR AND CHAIRMAN

641/2009 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE PARKS POLICY GROUP

It was **AGREED** for the Parks Policy Group to meet with the Office and the Chairman to discuss outstanding actions on the Parks Policy.

Members discussed the possible funding for Green Gym projects in the area with reference to replacing the equipment in Bourton Park.

It was **AGREED** to discuss this in more detail with Susan Le.

642/2009 TO RECEIVE ITEMS ON THE MANAGEMENT OF CHANDOS PARK AND ITS FACILITIES

Members were informed that the toilet time locks were fully installed.

643/2009 TO RECEIVE ITEMS ON THE MANAGEMENT OF BOURTON PARK AND ITS FACILITIES

The Penstock key has been received.

Overgrown hedges obstructing the cycleway were reported: Cllr. Whyte to provide the Office with more details so that appropriate action could be taken.

ACTION CLLR. WHYTE

644/2009 TO RECEIVE REPORT FROM BTCV WILDLIFE PROJECT MANAGER – SUSAN LE

Ms. Le gave a verbal report on the work of BTCV which Members noted. A written report would be provided in advance of future meetings.

The Town Council expressed their thanks for the hard work and enthusiasm of Ms. Le and BTCV.

644.1 To receive letter from BTCV re further funding for Buckingham Wildlife Project Manager

Members discussed the letter from BTCV which had been circulated with the agenda.

Proposed by Cllr. Hiron, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **AGREED** to vire £2,000 from 4650 Heartland/Holloway Spinney/Other to 4120 BTCV Grant Payment.

644.2 To discuss and agree proposals for conservation tasks for the Friends of Bourton Park and the Heartlands

Ms. S. Le outlined proposed tasks for the Friends group for the next few months, including building and installing bird boxes and helping to remove the Himalayan Balsam. Members raised no objections to the proposed work.

Members discussed cut and clear options for the meadows in Bourton Park. It was **AGREED** to investigate what other authorities' practices are.

ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

Members also discussed the problem of molehills in the Heartlands and possible solutions, to enable the grassed areas to be used for leisure activities; it was suggested that volunteers could rake the soil over the surrounding area where it would be colonised by the grasses.

645/2009 TO RECEIVE THE WEEKLY MAINTENANCE REPORT AND AGREE ACTION PROPOSED

Members received the maintenance reports in a new spreadsheet and were unhappy at the contractor's level of reporting, accuracy and description. It was suggested that "exception reporting" would be more appropriate.

It was **AGREED** to contact the contractor and see if these issues can be addressed.
ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

646/2009 TO RECEIVE INITIAL RESPONSE FROM RESIDENTS OF MEADWAY IN RESPECT OF KEN TAGG PLAY AREA

Cllr. Bloomfield was thanked for his work in this area. Members noted the overwhelming majority of nearby residents supported the removal of the wall.

It was **AGREED** to go out to tender on the removal of the wall, making good the spur wall and extending the existing side and rear fence across the front of the play area.

ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

647/2009 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON PRICES FOR PLAY AREA INSPECTIONS

Members received and noted the report. It was **AGREED** to appoint Wicksteed to carry out the next annual inspection.

648/2009 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON BRACKLEY ROAD CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

Members were informed that the Town Clerk and the Chairman had completed the Draft Family Originated Interments Policy.

Cllr. Stuchbury left the meeting and took no part in the discussion of the next item

649/2009 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT FROM THE MAYOR CONCERNING A COMPLAINT

The Mayor gave a verbal report on the events surrounding the complaint. The conclusion was that there was a mis-communication between the contractors and the funeral directors which resulted in a memorial stone not being moved before the hole was dug and a delay to the funeral whilst it was removed and the area prepared.

Proposed by Cllr. Mordue, seconded by Cllr. Loftus, and **AGREED** by 10 votes to 1 to refund 50% of the burial digging fee, Heritage to refund the other 50% and re-coup our remaining cost from the contractors.

ACTION THE MAYOR

Ms. S. Le left the meeting

650/2009 TO RECEIVE VERBAL REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON THE LATEST BUCKINGHAM TOWN AUDIT AND AGREE ANY ACTION PROPOSED

Members expressed deep disappointment at remarks made at the last Partnership meeting and the lack of commitment shown by the two other authorities especially in matters which were in their legal remit. At the last Partnership meeting AVDC asked for their responsibilities to be graded and listed with key tasks to carry out.

It was **AGREED** to write to the Leaders and Chief Executives of AVDC and Bucks. CC highlighting the benefits of the Town Audit as a reporting facility for their respective bodies, and asking for a cost analysis of the work and to enquire as to what their legal costs were in relation to complaints and injury cases.

Members identified Castle Street as an area in desperate need of work and asked BCC to cost the necessary remedial works to bring it up to a good standard, as an example.

ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

It was **AGREED** to code the Town Audit to show statutory responsibilities, urgent work etc. and to send the result to AVDC for inclusion with the agenda for the Partnership meeting scheduled for 27th January 2009.

ACTION CHAIRMAN/CLERICAL ASSISTANT

651/2009 TO RECEIVE REPORT ON WORK UNDERTAKEN UNDER THE BUCKS. COUNTY COUNCIL DEVOLVED SERVICES

The Deputy Town Clerk gave a verbal report explaining the work undertaken since the last meeting.

652/2009 TO RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE DE-SILTING OF "THE FORD" IN FORD STREET AND THE WORK ON THE BANKS OF "THE FORD".

The Environment Agency will be undertaking work around the Ford in the near future.

653/2009 TO RECEIVE REPORT ON PRICE FOR HIRE/PURCHASE OF A VAN.

Members noted the report circulated with the agenda. Members discussed the usage of a van for the maintenance staff. It was **AGREED** to hire a van occasionally for use by the maintenance staff, once a programme of usage for the next 12 months had been drawn up, enabling different types of vehicles to be hired depending on requirements.

It was **AGREED** to purchase BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL magnetic signs for mounting on the hire vehicle's doors (from 203/4063).

654/2009 TO RECEIVE A QUOTATION FROM SOUTHERN ELECTRIC CONTRACTING FOR INSPECTION AND TESTING OF ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS; TO DISCUSS REQUIREMENTS AND WHETHER ALTERNATIVE QUOTES SHOULD BE SOUGHT

Members noted the quotation documents circulated with the agenda. Members felt that with the extension work starting soon that a fixed wire test was not necessary. It was **AGREED** to seek two other quotes for PAT testing and for the Office to appoint the company with the lowest quote to carry out the work.

655/2009 TO RECEIVE AND MONITOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND PROPERTY BUDGET, AND MAKE SUCH ADJUSTMENTS AS NECESSARY

Members noted the budget as circulated with the agenda.

655.1 To discuss and agree 2009/10 precept request

Although the figures had yet to be agreed with the office, the Chairman suggested that the 2009/10 precept bid be based on the 2008/09 budget less the ring-fenced unspent capital in respect of the Parks Policy (as per Minute 624/2008) and the amount earmarked for the recently authorised tree works. To the balance, 5% would be added for inflation, plus the following:

- (a) an amount reflecting the first year running costs for the van (Minute 653/2009 above); and
- (b) existing and awaited quotations from CGM in respect of residual tree works, cemetery works (remaining work on yew trees, hedge work including the rose garden, removal of suckers etc), bridge work (including timber treatments and non-slip footway surfacing) and hedge clearance at the entrance to Bourton Road car park.

This was **AGREED** in principle.

656/2008 CHAIRMAN'S / MAYOR'S ITEMS FOR INFORMATION.

There were no items for information from the Chairman or the Mayor.

Meeting closed at 9.45 pm

CHAIRMAN DATE