

Minutes of a meeting of the **Town Centre and Events Committee** of Buckingham Town Council held on **Monday 14th December 2009** in Room MB1 in the Masons Building, University of Buckingham, Hunter Street, Buckingham at 7pm.

Present: Cllr. T. Bloomfield
Cllr. P. Hirons
Cllr. A. Mahi
Cllr. R. Newell
Cllr. M. Smith
Cllr. R. Stuchbury Chairman

Also present: Cllr. M. Try
Mr. M. Foster Buckingham Traders' Association

For the Town Clerk: Mrs. K. McElligott

Cllr. Stuchbury noted that Cllr. Desorgher has passed away that morning; she had been a Councillor for 10 years, and during that time been Deputy Mayor for one year and Vice Chair of the Environment & Property Committee for three years. She had decided views and made some very pertinent points on various issues over the years; she was also good company, and he was sorry to lose a friend and colleague of her calibre. He spoke of her commitment to the Community Centre, where she had been Chairman of the management committee. She would be very difficult to replace.
A minute's silence was observed.

707/09 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs. H. Cadd (Mayor), D. Isham and Cllr. Stevens

708/09 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest for items on the agenda at this point.

709/09 Minutes

The minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 26th October 2009 ratified at Full Council on 23rd November 2009 were received and accepted.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Bloomfield and **AGREED** that item 6 on the agenda be taken next as Cllr. Hirons had another meeting to attend.

710/09 Markets

710.1 Summary of the market history - Chairman and Councillor Stevens
Members noted the history which had been circulated with the agenda. Approximately £510,000 profit had been recycled into the Council's general income, reducing the precept requirements.

710.2 (539.2) The report of the meeting of the Market SubGroup held on 14th November, with subsequent notes from the Market Supervisor, had been circulated with the agenda. Members agreed that the report would be included as an appendix to the minutes.

710.3 To receive an analysis of market revenues
Cllr. Hirons had analysed income for each market for the last 7 years and predicted income for 2009-10 and 2010-11. Revenues were 30% down over the period plus 20% decrease in the value of money due to inflation.
It was suggested that NABMA be approached for national figures on market revenue for comparison.

ACTION THE CLERK

710.4 Proposal that market revenues be ring-fenced or banked in a separate account as per the Market SubGroup report.

Members discussed the matter, bearing in mind the other calls on the Council's finances to be expected over the forthcoming year.

Proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. Hirons and **RECOMMENDED** that 10% of the previous year's market income be retained by the Committee for the purpose of promoting the markets.

710.5 Proposed introduction of parking charges, and allocation of Cornwalls Meadow to short-stay parking only.

Members discussed the effect on market traders including flea and farmers' market traders and decide that the Clerk should look into how neighbouring markets coped.

ACTION THE CLERK

710.6 Proposed termination of the cleaning contract for Moreton Road toilets. Members discussed the consequences for market traders of not having convenient toilets and handwashing facilities. Some were said to use the conveniences in the public houses, but these could not be guaranteed to remain available to non-customers.

NABMA would be asked about the environmental health aspects of the situation.

ACTION THE CLERK

Cllrs. Smith and Hirons declared an interest in the following item.

710.7 (539.8) Existing criteria for booking the charity space in the Saturday market. It was pointed out that fund-raising organisations are not always charities, though they may be linked to a charity – for example the Friends of the Old Gaol or the various Church organisations.

Proposed by Cllr. Mahi, seconded by Cllr. Newell, and **AGREED** that criterion 3 be changed to read "The stall can not promote an individual or business within the town *unless that business is directly associated with a registered charity.*" and criterion 4 to "Charity stalls are only ~~available~~ *permitted* at the Town Council's discretion."

Agenda order was resumed.

711/09 Action List

711.1 Members noted that the Coach Park signs and Town centre fingerpost have been installed.

711.2 (539.5) NABMA news. Members of the Market SubGroup preferred not to receive the frequent communications. The Clerk would advise and circulate anything of interest.

712/09 Traders' Association

712.1 To receive a report from the Traders' Association

Mr. Foster reported that the Christmas period had started slowly but was now picking up. The Thursday night events and related late shopping hours had not received the unanimous support of his members, and the layout of the town with individual shops interspersed with national chains and banks etc. made an organised campaign difficult.

Comment was made that some shops had not opened as advertised, leading to disappointed customers. Mr. Foster was unable to enforce compliance, and the Association was not supported by all shopkeepers. There would be a meeting in the New Year to review the Christmas activities, and also the likely effect of parking changes.

Mr. Foster was asked for his opinion of the effect of the Parade on trading: he said that during the Parade itself everyone was standing watching, of course, but after the Parade there was a steady and increased number of customers. Not all shops were in favour of the Parade, but the feeling was that it raised the profile of the town and non-residents might well return having seen shops that interested them.

712.2 To discuss the allegations made by a representative of the Association at the recent Partnership meeting.

Mr. Foster had not been at the Partnership meeting but had been informed of the matter. The individual concerned was not fully conversant with the processes involved and was impatient to achieve her aims. Part of the problem had been the agenda order; answers to some points had been made later in the meeting under the appropriate agenda item.

Members pointed out that an abrasive manner was not conducive to co-operative working with the three Councils at the Partnership, but left the matter for the Traders' Association to deal with.

Cllr. Hirons left the meeting.

Cllr. Try asked if the traders had any comments on the lighting for their events; these were working well, although there was a problem with the lower strands of the tree lights.

712.3 (583.3) To receive a report on the regulation of A-boards

Mr. Foster would see what could be done about A-boards obstructing the passage of pedestrians.

Mr. Foster left the meeting.

713/09 **Event Reviews**

713.1 (415.1) Buckingham in Bloom 2009

Cllr. Newell reported that she and the Mayor would combine the presentation of the prizes with the tree-planting, and undertook to seek a response from the RLS.

713.2 (543.3) Charter Fairs

The report of the post-Fair meeting had been circulated with the agenda.

713.2.1 To discuss the points raised by Cllr. Whyte re the Fair

The Chairman posited out that items for the agenda should be submitted in writing to himself or the Clerk; however he had raised Cllr. Whyte's concerns at the meeting as minuted in the report.

Both the Police and Parking Services were in favour of the mid-morning pull-on as there was a lull in traffic so that the large vehicles caused fewer problems as they came into town; the afternoon dip in traffic volume was much shorter. There was no evidence that noon was a set time, and if this had been the practice 30-40 years ago, there was a lot more traffic now. Saturday was impossible as Parking Services had no staff available, and Police duty rotas might lead to charges being levied, as those made on football clubs requiring Police cover. It was also safer to build the rides in daylight and without time pressures and building in the night would disturb residents with lights and noise.

If unsafe reversing procedures had been observed, Cllr. Whyte as a Town Councillor could have approached the driver himself.

713.2.2 To receive an insurance claim related to the Charter Fair

A copy of the claim (with claimant's details blanked out) had been circulated with the agenda.

Members felt that there was sufficient ambient lighting and clear road marking to show the position of the island even though the bollards were not replaced until some hours later; it behove drivers to drive with care in a town centre and approach junctions at reduced speed. The claim was for two tyres though the recovery service had placed only one.

Members agreed to reject the claim on these grounds.

ACTION THE CLERK

713.3 (540) Bonfire & Fireworks 31st October 2009

Cllr. Mahi reported that the event had gone very well; the only down side was that a barrier had ended up in the river. He suggested they be linked and locked overnight next year. He suggested the Council allow for a sum in the budget to pay for free food for the Cadets/Guides/Scouts/etc. who were helping with the event. He thanked Cllr. Try for all his help on the night, and hoped for a few more Councillors to help with the Sunday clear-up next year.

It may be that pa-boom will not be able to provide the 2010 fireworks – they would let us know by the end of January – and the Committee would have to seek alternative suppliers.

713.4 Remembrance Sunday 8th November 2009

A letter of thanks from the British Legion branch was circulated with the agenda.

No preliminary work had been done by the Legion in respect of their Road Closure Order, including the posting of warning notices around the Church; this had been done by the Office to ensure that cars could be legally towed if necessary. The Council had, as requested, provided barriers and signs, and the Rotary Club and

Council staff had manned the barriers. No hitches with the actual closure had been reported.

Members expressed concern that the Parade had set off earlier than scheduled, without the Mayor leading, and thus had arrived at the Church far too early. The dignitaries had been behind the ranks of Scouts and other organisations, which made it awkward when it came to laying the wreaths. Chalk marks for each organisation were suggested, and wreath-layers being called by name.

A meeting would be arranged with the Legion representatives, attended by Cllrs. Stuchbury and Mahi.

ACTION THE CLERK

713.5 (541) Christmas Lights

The tree – leaning as usual – had been installed on the Wednesday before the ceremony on the Saturday and dressed on the Thursday. The light string had been left with bare wires and no plug, and no barriers had been erected. Cllr. Try had fitted the necessary connector but discovered that the wiring connecting the socket to the Old Gaol was faulty and had corrected this also. The Chairman received agreement that AVDC be informed that the wiring was in a bad state and should be replaced, and invoiced for the necessary electrical part and labour, and the use of the barriers at the Council's normal rate (£5/barrier/week).

The timer at the King's Head needed adjustment.

The pea-lights would be repaired this week.

713.6 Continental Market 28th November 2009

Members agreed that this had been a good market and should be booked again.

713.7 (536) Christmas Parade 12th December 2009

The report of Pre-meeting had been circulated with the agenda.

Several complaints had been received from Addington Road residents that, having moved their own vehicles as requested to allow free passage of diverted traffic, the marshals had allowed visitors to park there. An apology would be sent, and the reasons why this happened investigated at a meeting with the Heywoods in the New Year.

There had also been problems in Chandos Road with parents dropping off children coming in at the London Road end instead of Station Road. The Chandos Road barriers had not been moved after the Parade had dispersed until 1.20pm. Town Council staff had collected up all the barriers and signs with no assistance from the Parade people. Two of the classic cars had sported UKIP flags; Members asked if permission for their inclusion in the Parade had been sought.

Letters of thanks would be sent to the Mr. Bercow, the Heywoods and Mouvaux.

ACTION THE CLERK

713.8 Community Fair 12th December 2009

Members congratulated Cllr. Lehmann on a successful and well-attended event; most of the organisations appeared to have done well, and it had been a useful networking occasion for the charities involved.

714/09 Forthcoming Events

714.1 (542) Pancake Race

Cllr. Bloomfield indicated that he would co-ordinate with the office to send letters to the schools in the New Year, and that the event would take place in Bourton Park

around the basketball court; contestants would have to bring their own pan and the office would supply tortillas for tossing.
He would also issue a press release at the appropriate time.

715/09 Buckingham Summer Festival and Buckingham Festival Fortnight

In light of the funding difficulties, a meeting would be arranged with the Summer Festival representatives. It would be a great loss to the town if the Summer Festival had to fold through lack of funding.

AVDC had contributed promotional services, liaison with the Civic Centre over visiting acts, and the banners and signs, besides funding. The banners would be of no use to them, and they would be asked to pass them to the Town Council.

The Chairman reported that he was working on an event, possibly a ball, to celebrate the 75th anniversary of The Buckingham School which may be incorporated into the Festival Fortnight.

716/09 (545) Buckingham Community Wildlife Project

Cllr. Newell noted that the five-year Heritage Lottery funding would run out at the end of March. The project co-ordinators could supply the Council with contact details for the various experts who had assisted with events, base artwork and circulation lists, but without a fulltime officer the Council could not possibly organise as many events, and publicity would be restricted to the plasma screen, noticeboard posters and the *Advertiser*. Possibly the Green Spaces Manager could take on some of the work.

717/09 Feeder Pillar

717.1 To receive an update on the new feeder pillar in Bridge Street

The feeder pillar had still not been installed. Mark Grindall would be asked if he could expedite the matter as the problem seemed to be with Eon and traffic management during the works.

ACTION THE CLERK

717.2 To receive an update on power supply in the parks

A sample price had been obtained of £10,000 for a pop-up unit, meter and power line, including installation. Cllr. Try gave his opinion that 63amps was more than required, and he had concerns about flood problems in the park.

Members decided to refer the matter to the Parks Policy Group for its consideration.

ACTION PARKS POLICY GROUP

718/09 (549) Hanging Baskets, Planters and additional planting

Cllr. Bloomfield had sought three quotes from local firms and two had been received. One quoted for either wire or wicker baskets, the other for wire; both would contain slow-release fertilizer and water-retentive granules. Wire baskets drained better than wicker. The Committee chose quotation B (Barrs Nurseries).

Cllr. Try left the meeting.

These would be ordered and paid for from the balance of this year's budget.

It was also suggested that deeper and heavier planters would be better for the Bull Ring/ bus station than the shallow ones ordered for this year.

ACTION CHAIRMAN/CLLRS. NEWELL & BLOOMFIELD

719/09 Tree planting

The trees would be held by the nursery until the planting date was set (see 713.1).

720/09 Fair Trade Banner

Cllr. Newell had asked if the Council would contribute towards the purchase of a banner to publicise the FairTrade events. She would obtain a quotation; the Clerk would supply details of the source of the Events banners.

Members agreed £150 – budget to be identified by the Chairman/Clerk.

ACTION CHAIRMAN/CLERK/CLLR.NEWELL

721/09 Youth Projects

721.1 The Chairman reported that he had been in discussion with the schools and it looked as if there would be a drama project and a photography exhibition. When dates were proposed he would liaise with Cllr. Bloomfield over booking the Community Centre.

Support was also suggested for the Buckingham Festival of Music & Drama, but this would not benefit just the young people of Buckingham.

721.2 (701.1) To receive an update on a dance project from Cllr. Newell
Cllr. Newell would bring a report to the next meeting.

722/09 (referred from E&P 7/12/09) Path walking event

Members supported this idea, suggesting a Spring date, possibly April 23/24 so as not to conflict with the Conservation Area Survey in March. The Clerk would contact the University, the Walking Group and Simply Walk to see if they were interested in participating in the assessment of the condition of the footpaths in the Parish.

723/09 To receive for information:

723.1 Cancer Research Relay for Life – 19th June 2010 – Bourton Meadow

723.2 It was decided at Full Council that there would be no Armed Forces Day event in 2010

723.3 The Clerk has responded to a Request to Participate in *Countryside 2010* an interactive website supported by SEEDA, Tourism South East and others, where events can be publicised. So far registration of interest is all that is required.

Members noted the information.

724/09 Budgets

The figures circulated with the agenda were noted.

725/09 News releases

725.1 To agree an open letter of thanks to all the organisations the Committee works with throughout the year.

The Committee agreed a letter of thanks should be drafted by the Clerk and sent to all the organisations listed.

725.2 To agree any other news releases.

See min. 714

726/09 Chairman's Items

There were no Chairman's items.

727/09 Date of the next meeting:

Monday 8th February 2010

Meeting closed at 9.50pm

Signed Date
Chairman

**NOTES ON THE MEETING OF THE MARKET SUBGROUP HELD AT
10.00am ON 14TH NOVEMBER 2009**

Present: Cllr. Bloomfield
Cllr. Smith
Cllr. Stevens
Cllr. Stuchbury
Mrs. K. McElligott

The day was exceptionally blustery and few traders had attended; the only flea market trader had been accommodated in the street market.

There was no barrier at the Whale end of the market; and it was agreed that a general letter would be sent to traders reminding them about not parking their vehicles in the market area, and covering cables.

Members discussed the NABMA Healthcheck document. Comment was made that the EU was seeking the same trading conditions for market stalls as for shops; NABMA was resisting this.

It was agreed that a less complex licence/contract for traders could be drawn up, with the trader's contact details etc. and indicating pitch size, position and fee payable. If there was space, stalls could still expand at no extra charge to make the market seem fuller. Pitch spaces should be marked discreetly and a map produced, and appended to the contract.

There was a feeling that the Healthcheck emphasised negative aspects, and the market had been treated as new, with no history or context, with some points more applicable to an indoor managed market, and that the Council left the organisation too much to the Toby. However, while not as thriving as in previous years, the market was still working well when other town's markets had failed, producing c£30K pa income to set against the rate. Reports on the markets had been taken to Committee regularly and acted upon. The Farmers' Market (which the Healthchecker had not inspected) did need a re-think, but the primary matters for action were

1. Finance
2. Legal.

NABMA do a model Traders Licence; Cllr. Smith would do a comparison.

ACTION CLLR. SMITH

Ref the 18point plan in the Healthcheck: KM to work on possible implementation.

ACTION MARKET SUPERVISOR

It was felt that the market should have its own bank account so that its finances could be kept separate as formerly and used for investment, promotion and entertainment; remaining profits could be allocated to special projects, with a percentage feeding back into Council funds. This would be put on the agenda for the next TC&E meeting for recommendation to the Full Council.

A business plan should be drawn up, with a Market Management Board composed of Councillors which would report periodically to the Council.

Once the contracts/licences were in place, attendance sheets would be filled in by the Toby for each market and the Market Supervisor would collect the fees due at the beginning of each month, in advance. Non-attendance would be charged at the same rate, as a pitch holding fee. Fees for casuals could be collected by the Toby and passed to the Supervisor at this time.

Funding sources for the Farmers' Market should be explored – Winslow had obtained leader funding.

The traders would be asked if they could do the whole day (electricity was available for those who needed to keep food chilled).

A bounty for introducing a new trader who stayed for several months was suggested, as also farm suppliers who might wish to sell items of clothing, pet foods etc. A firewood supplier was also suggested.

Business concluded at 11.15am