

Minutes of a meeting of the Full Council of Buckingham Town Council held on **Monday 8th March 2010** in Room MB1 in the Masons Building, University of Buckingham, Hunter Street, Buckingham at 7.05pm.

Present: Cllr. T Bloomfield
Cllr. H Cadd Town Mayor
Cllr. P. Collins
Cllr. P. Hirons
Cllr. D. Isham
Cllr. A. Mahi
Cllr. H. Mordue
Cllr. Ms. Newell
Cllr. M. Smith
Cllr. Mrs. P. Stevens.
Cllr. R. Stuchbury
Cllr. M. Try
Cllr. W. Whyte

For the Town Clerk: Mrs. K. McElligott

In attendance: Mrs. A. Simonds Deputy Town Clerk

924/09 Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED to note that there were apologies from Cllr. Mrs. G. Collins and Cllr. G. Loftus.

925/09 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest at this point.

926/09 Minutes

RESOLVED to receive the minutes and confirm the recommendations therein of the Full Council Meeting held on Monday 11th January 2010 (**BTC/08/09**).

927/09 Interim Minutes

RESOLVED to receive the minutes and confirm the recommendations therein of the Interim Council meeting held on Monday 15th February 2010 (**IM/06/09**).

928/09 Special Meeting Minutes

RESOLVED to receive the minutes and confirm the recommendations therein of the Special Council meeting held on Monday 18th January 2010 (**BTC/09/09**)

929/09 Precept Minutes

RESOLVED to receive the minutes and confirm the recommendations therein of the Precept meeting held on Monday 25th January 2010 (**BTC/10/09**).

930/09 Planning Committee

RESOLVED to receive the minutes and confirm the recommendations therein of the Planning Committee meetings held on Monday 18th January 2010 (**PL/11/09**) and 15th February 2010 (**PL/13/09**).

931/09 Environment and Property Committee

RESOLVED to receive the minutes and confirm the recommendations therein of the Environment and Property Committee meeting held on 1st February 2010 (**EP/06/09**).

Cllr. Smith indicated that AVDC were not in favour of the proposed Page Hill MUGA; Members asked that he read out the text of the refusal.

Concern was expressed that the Council, having identified a need for play space on Page Hill in response to residents' complaints and worked on a proposal and funding, had had its plans dismissed. Residents near to the proposed MUGA had not yet been canvassed for their views; it had been considered better to obtain AVDC's permission first, as it was their land.

It was **AGREED** that a strongly worded letter be sent to the Cabinet Member and officer at AVDC immediately, with the request that response be made in time for the next E&P meeting on 22nd March, and that a press release be issued.

ACTION CLLR. SMITH/THE CLERK

932/09 Town Centre and Events Committee

RESOLVED to receive the minutes and confirm the recommendations therein of the Town Centre Events Committee meeting held on Monday 8th February 2010 (**TCE/06/09**).

Members **AGREED** the **RECOMMENDATION** from minute number **856.4** as follows:

Proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. Isham, and **RECOMMENDED** that the Council seek a meeting with AVDC to include an Environmental Health officer to discuss the impact on the markets of not having toilet facilities for traders and customers conveniently nearby.

and decided that, in light of recent developments lessening the urgency of such a meeting, that the matter be included in a broader discussion with AVDC over fiscal arrangements for the future.

Members **AGREED** the **RECOMMENDATION** from minute number **859/09** as follows:

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Hiron, and **RECOMMENDED** that the Council appoints 2 Members to work with the TIC management so as to be familiar with the needs of the TIC by the time AVDC funding ceases [six months notice of this is required].

Cllrs. Mordue and Isham volunteered; they would report to TC&E and any relevant matters passed on to the full Council.

933/09 Finance, Administration and Personnel Committee

RESOLVED to receive the minutes and confirm the recommendations therein of the Finance, Administration and Personnel Committee meeting held on Monday 22nd February 2010 (**FAP/06/09**)

934/09 Motion from Cllr. Stuchbury - Buckingham Festival Fortnight

The Chairman of the Town Centre & Events Committee seeks permission, due to the short timescale, because funding was only recently confirmed, to have designated authority along with the Vice-Chairman of the Committee and the Town Clerk to organise the Buckingham Festival Fortnight within the budget set by the Council.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Isham, and **AGREED** unanimously.

ACTION CLLRS. STUCHBURY & NEWELL, AND TOWN CLERK

Cllr. Mordue left the meeting

935/09 Motion from Cllr. Stuchbury

Buckingham Town Council to consider making a petition to Her Majesty The Queen for Buckingham to obtain a Royal Charter to grant Borough/District status.

Cllr. Stuchbury presented his reasons, which were

- to stem the loss of funds from this area to Aylesbury; Buckingham received little investment in return for the Council Tax paid to the District
- an Aylesbury District Councillor calling in the press for the division of Aylesbury Vale District Council into an "Aylesbury Borough" and a district to cover the rest of the Vale.
- All the major parties calling for more decisions to be made at a local level.

He said he had not known a period when so much dissatisfaction at the attitude of the District Council to the areas outside Aylesbury itself was being publicly expressed, and the unfair distribution of funds had already meant the Town Council picking up cut expenditure to maintain viability of the town.

Members discussed the motion, noting that it was 'to consider' not 'to make' and reasoning that a considerable amount of background information needed to be researched before any decision could be reached. Considerable expansion of staff numbers and skills would be involved, and receipt of Government funding would imply rate-capping, which did not apply currently to the Town Council.

Cllr. Stuchbury noted that he had already received letter of support from a resident. He asked for, and received the necessary support for, a recorded vote on the motion.

For the motion, to consider petitioning the Queen for a return to Borough status:

Cllrs. Bloomfield, P. Collins, Ms. Newell, Mrs. Stevens, Stuchbury;

Against the motion:

Cllrs. Cadd, Hirons, Isham, Smith, Try, Whyte

Abstention: Cllr. Mahi

The motion was therefore defeated.

936/09 Fair Trade

Cllr. Newell presented the new Fair Trade Town certificate to the Mayor.

937/09 Member/Officer Protocol

The draft Member/Officer Protocol had been circulated with the agenda. Members felt that some clauses were more relevant to larger councils with more staff, and thus less need for Councillor involvement in the actual organisation and the Council already had an agreed grievance procedure. Political affiliations were irrelevant at Town Council level. Some matters could well be included in the revised Standing Orders.

Members **AGREED** that the Protocol be revised in line with the above suggestions and submitted to FA&P for discussion, and then brought back to Full Council with the Committee's recommendations.

ACTION FINANCE, ADMIN & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

938/09 Coombe Hill Monument

Cllr. Mordue circulated a written report at the meeting, noting that one man from Maids Moreton was commemorated, but none from Buckingham. Members discussed whether it was legal to subscribe to a project with no clear benefit to Buckingham residents.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Hirons, that the Clerk seek legal advice from BALC as to whether this Council could make such a donation;

Amendment proposed by Cllr. Isham, seconded by Cllr. Collins, that this Council thank the organisation for contacting the Council, but take no action in the matter;

The amendment being carried by a majority, it became the substantive motion and was **AGREED** by a majority of those present.

939/09 Flooding

Cllr. Mordue circulated a written report at the meeting, in the form of a draft letter to be sent out in the Council's name. Members pointed out that the proper person to issue such information was Gary Dawson at AVDC, and that this Council had no remit. The unidentified author of the letter should be referred to AVDC.

940/09 Maids Moreton Avenue Restoration

Concern had been expressed by the Buckingham Society that an opportunity to move the Primary School fence and include its 'nature area' in the Avenue land, together with some necessary tree works in the Avenue itself, had been lost due to delays at BCC (which owns the land on both sides of the fence). The funding put in place had been lost due to the delays.

Members discussed the project, which would have opened up the upper part of the Avenue path as far as Watchcroft Drive, and which was supported by the Friends Group, AVDC's tree officer and Maids Moreton Parish Council. The lower part of the Avenue which is owned by AVDC had seen considerable work and was now very pleasant, but the condition of the upper part made a continuous walk difficult. Comment was made that this was another example where the will, planning and funding was available, but another authority had not supported the project and thus it had failed.

Proposed by Cllr. Isham, seconded by Cllr. Stevens, and **AGREED** that the concerns be aired at the next LAF meeting.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

941/09 Flooding at the Tesco site

This had been referred from the Planning meeting as being more relevant to the Full Council. [PL/12/09-893/09 enforcement]

The drain in the verge of the A413 below the Tesco car park overflowed in periods of high rainfall, washing mud across the footway and flooding the Toucan crossing on the A421 before flowing down the London Road. Complaints over a number of years had not resolved the issue, Anglian Water indicating that the drain/sewer was not adopted by them, and Tesco denying that it was their water causing the problem. As the crossing point flooded, pedestrians were obliged to take less safe alternative routes.

As Tesco were proposing (planning minute 816/09) to extend the store and the car park, Members felt that this problem should be resolved before it was made worse, and pointed out to the Highway and Planning Authorities before formal application was made.

Mention would also be made of the bypass flooding from the Hallam site.

ACTION THE CLERK

942/09 Services in the Town

Members felt representatives from the Town Council should meet AVDC officers to discuss possible cuts in service for the Town in the next financial year and to discuss devolved services.

Cllrs. Smith and Stuchbury volunteered; Cllrs. Cadd and Isham wished to be kept informed.

ACTION THE CLERK

943/09 Buckingham Community Plan Laptop

To agree to replace the Power Supply for the Buckingham Community Plan Laptop at a cost of £44.99 including postage. To come from budget 901/9024 which is earmarked reserves Circular Walk reserves which has a total of £58,890.

AGREED

944/09 Meeting with BALC

To agree representatives to meet with BALC on the 9th March, 10th March, 12th March or 15th March, the 9th, 10th and 15th evenings meetings 12th daytime.

Members felt this was too short notice and suggested that the Town Clerk discuss further dates with BALC.

ACTION THE CLERK

Cllr. Cadd declared an interest in the following item, as Chairman of the Trust, though he sat as an AVDC representative.

945/09 The Buckingham and Gawcott Charitable Trust

Summary information as submitted to the Charity Commission had been circulated with the agenda. Members vigorously expressed the view that more information should be made available to the Town Council, if necessary in the 'Confidential Matters' section of the agenda. They would like to see the Articles of Association of the Charity, the list of investments, a complete balance sheet and a detailed list of creditors and grantees.

Proposed by Cllr. Try, seconded by Cllr. Mahi, and **AGREED** unanimously, Chairman abstaining, that the Trust be asked to supply this information, in confidence if necessary.

ACTION THE CLERK

946/09 Aylesbury Vale Cohesion Strategy (Draft)

Members would like the document circulated for discussion at Interim Council on 12th April.

ACTION THE CLERK

947/09 Honorary Freeman of Buckingham & Friends of Buckingham

To agree to award Cllr. Loftus the title of Honorary Freeman of Buckingham and to agree to award any Friends of Buckingham awards.

Award to Cllr. Loftus – **AGREED** unanimously

The Friends Award – as agreed last year and deferred.

ACTION THE CLERK

948/09 Subscriptions

To agree to renew the Town Council's subscription to Aylesbury Vale North Sports Council at a cost of £12.00 and Campaign to Protect Rural England at a cost of £29.00.

AGREED

ACTION THE CLERK

949/09 Other Correspondence

949.1 BCC Prohibition and Restriction of Waiting (Amendment) (No 1)

The lay-by by the Old Gaol had been changed to a taxi rank 8pm – 8am and restricted parking 8am – 8pm. Members expressed concern that none of the other recommendations made by this Council in respect of loading bays etc. had been actioned. A letter would be sent reiterating these comments.

ACTION THE CLERK

949.2 BCC Speed Limit Review

The review dealt mainly with other areas, but placed a 40mph section around the Tesco roundabout, south along the A413 as far as Benthill and west along the A421 beyond the Great Slade junction. It did not extend east as far as the Badgers Way junction.

Members considered that this made the bypass an urban road by implication, and the speed restriction was unnecessary; volume of traffic kept speed down adequately. There should be a move to reduce signage in rural areas, not increase it. Concern was also expressed that the lower limit would relate to a lower level of maintenance on a strategic route. Members would also like to see 20mph limits in parts of the old town such as Mitre Street, and asked for a cost analysis of the additional signage measured against reduction in maintenance.

ACTION THE CLERK

949.3 BT Removal of Public Payphone

Members felt this should be kept as it was the only one at that end of town.

ACTION THE CLERK

949.4 Buckinghamshire Community Action - Invitation to Community Led Planning Recognition Awards

No Members wished to attend.

949.5 BCC Invitation Speed Limit Review Area Briefing Meeting

Cllr. Hiron and Cllr. Try would attend for the Council; Members asked that they bear in mind the comments made above (949.2).

ACTION Cllrs. HIRONS & TRY/THE CLERK

950/09 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies

Members noted the reports listed below from representatives on outside bodies:

- Buckingham Twinning Association 13th January & 3rd February 2010 minutes
- Buckingham Economic Group Minutes 20th January 2010
- Buckingham Community Association Sub Committee and Management Committee Minutes 26th November 2009
- Aylesbury Vale North Sports Council Minutes 28th July and 1st October 2009
- Buckingham & Maids Moreton NAG Meeting Minutes 10th February 2010
- BCWP Steering Group Minutes 20th October 2009
- Buckingham Youth Centre Management Committee Minutes 27th January 2010
- Buckingham Local Area Forum minutes 26th November 2009

Members noted that the following were available in the Town Council Office:

- Options – Well Street Centre Newsletter
- Sustainable Community Strategies for Aylesbury Vale & Buckinghamshire LSP
- Buckingham Twinning Association Newsletter
- The Buckingham Society Newsletter
- Options – Well Street Centre Newsletter March 2010
- Project Street Life Newsletter January 2010

951/09 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman gave a brief update to Members on the situation at Buckingham Town Football Club.

952/09 Dates of the next meetings:

Annual Town Meeting Wednesday 24th March 2010

Interim Council - Monday 12th April 2010

Annual Statutory Meeting - Tuesday 4th May 2010

953/09 COMMITTEE IN PRIVATE SESSION

Exclusion of Public and Press

RESOLVED In terms of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, the following items will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment and contractual matters and it is, therefore, **RESOLVED** that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

Meeting closed at 9.45pm.

Signed Date