

Minutes of a meeting of the **Environment and Property Committee** of Buckingham Town Council held on **Monday 3rd September 2012** in the Council Chamber, Cornwall's Meadow, Buckingham at 7:00pm.

Present: Cllr. T. Bloomfield
 Cllr. H. Cadd
 Cllr. J. Harvey
 Cllr. P. Hirons
 Cllr. D. Isham Vice Chairman
 Cllr. A. Mahi
 Cllr. R. Stuchbury
 Cllr. W. Whyte

In attendance: Mr. L. Phillips Green Spaces Manager
 Mrs. K. McElligott

Cllr. Isham chaired the meeting in the absence of Cllr. Smith.

327/12 Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED to receive and accept apologies from Cllrs. Ms. R. Newell (Mayor), P. Collins, Mrs. L. O'Donoghue and M. Smith (Chairman).

328/12 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest at this point.

329/12 Minutes

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Environment and Property Committee meeting held on Monday 16th July 2012 ratified at Full Council on the 13th August 2012.

330/12 Action Reports

211/11 Cllr. Bloomfield reported that the path was beginning to crack again. Mr. Phillips said that he was discussing repair solutions with contractors, which would be carried out as soon as possible.

Cllr. Stuchbury noted that public toilets were not on the Action List (see Interim Council 30/10/11; Min 485).

Cllr. Whyte declared an interest during the following item, as having produced a report on the War Memorial.

64/10 Cllr. Mahi was concerned that the War Memorial needed to be dealt with before Remembrance Sunday. Mr Phillips said that it would be cleaned this year, and he had a meeting with the vicar the following week to discuss the long term. There was £11,291 in the budget (901/9011).

331/12 Committee name and Terms of Reference

To discuss and agree the name of the Committee and Terms of Reference for the Committee, per decision made at Full Council (Min. 268/12).

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Bloomfield, that this be postponed to the next meeting so the Chairman's views could be taken into account;

Proposed by Cllr. Harvey, seconded by Cllr. Bloomfield, and **AGREED** that the above proposal be amended with the addition of “and to ensure that the name of the Committee reflect the Terms of reference as agreed”.

AGREED unanimously.

ACTION OCTOBER AGENDA

332/12 Grounds Maintenance Contract

The report regarding the Grounds Maintenance Contract was circulated with the agenda. Mr. Phillips outlined the options:

1. To have a contractor for litter-picking and grass-cutting and staff to carry out the remaining work.
2. To have separate contracts for litter-picking and grass-cutting, and staff to do the rest.

The duration of contracts could be agreed by himself and the Chairman.

Members discussed the report, and whether the staff had the necessary expertise and equipment. Some training in chemicals and weed-spraying would be needed (Members recommended two members of staff should undertake this) and a scaffold-type frame for working on high hedges. A longer contract duration could give rise to a lower tender because the costs would be spread over several years. It might also be of advantage for AVDC's contractors to tender for the BTC contract(s) because they could work for both Councils on the same day with a related cost saving.

The vacant maintenance post had been filled; the new man would be starting the following Monday.

The following suggestions were made:

- Tenders should be requested for both 3- and 5-year duration;
- An in-house tender for the contract items should be drawn up (though this would involve additional equipment such as mowers and extra staff);
- Tenders should include a method statement for dispute resolution;
- There must be break clauses in the contract to deal with consistent underperformance with a formal procedure and time to comply;
- Companies should undertake to offer an apprenticeship post;
- If in-house work for the whole grounds maintenance spectrum was considered, discussion should be held with the District and County Councils about additional devolved services to take up the slack.
- If doing the work in-house was not yet feasible, the exercise of preparing the document would be useful.

ACTION GREENSPACES MANAGER

333/12 Cemetery: New Garden of Rest

Mr. Phillips reported that construction was nearly complete on the new Garden of Rest. Members discussed whether a separate name was necessary for the new part, and decided not, as it would be confusing. Should a new cemetery area be acquired, it could be given a name. The Mayor would be invited to conduct a formal opening in early winter after the hedge has been planted. **AGREED** on a vote, 7:1.

ACTION GSM/MAYOR

334/12 AVDC Tree Planting

334.1 Proposed tree planting scheme for Western Avenue [*felled tree was a dead horse chestnut*] and Partridge Close.

Cllr. Mordue had sent his views, which were read out to the meeting. A letter from residents of Partridge Close had been circulated with the agenda.

Members agreed the Western Avenue replacement, but felt that the Partridge Close trees should be further from the houses. It was pointed out that there were other areas which would benefit from more trees.

334.2 Replacement for the fallen lime in the Cattle Pens: Mr. Phillips reported that AVDC would be planting a lime in the same place in 2013.

335/12 (214.2) Bridge Street Play Area: move to Heartlands

Answers to questions raised at the last meeting were circulated with the agenda.

After a detailed exposition of the legal situation regarding the Bridge Street play space, Members decided they would like sight of the Conveyance referred to in the circulated document; furthermore the existing play space was conveniently situated for the new flats and should be retained; it was also socially advantageous to have young children playing adjacent to an area for older children. The proposed area of the Heartlands was a natural amphitheatre and could be used in other ways; there were alternative sites near the Heartland houses where a play area could be installed in addition to the Bridge Street one. Members asked how the proposal fitted in with the Management Plan for the Heartlands open space.

If bollards are to be installed on the emergency access road, consideration should be given to a proper management of cycle and pedestrian traffic past the play area and skate park.

Proposed by Cllr. Cadd, seconded by Cllr. Bloomfield, and **AGREED** unanimously that the existing play area should be maintained and improved, that this Council be sent a copy of the Conveyance for information; and that properly planned pedestrian and cycle access be installed.

ACTION GSM

Cllr. Isham declared an interest in the following item as a member of Gawcott-with-Lenborough Parish Council.

336/12 Gawcott Village Green

Proposed by Councillor Whyte, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **RECOMMENDED** that the transfer documents be signed, providing there is no cost to this Council.

337/12 Chandos Park/Parks Policy

337.1 Site Visit to Chandos Park prior to the writing of the Park's Management Plan.

Members agreed to meet at 6pm on Monday 24th September 2012 at Chandos Park entrance gate.

337.2 To discuss any modifications to the Parks Policy.

Members felt this was best discussed on the site visit. Cllr. Whyte that elements of the Parks Policy were relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan and

either these could be brought to Committee, or Members of E&P attend Neighbourhood Plan meetings.

338/12 **Budgets**

The GSM was asked about CCTV; the order was about to be placed and there was a six week lead time.

Members would like a budget summary for the next meeting as this would be halfway through the year, to be able to see if budgets were under or over 50% spend, to provide information for pre-precept discussion. Also the Committed Expenditure amount for the next month did not look right.

The GSM was looking into sign-writing for the new van as one of the magnetic town crests used on the previous vehicle had gone missing. He was also considering a flashing lamp to be fixed to the cab, for warning purposes.

Remainder budgets could be used for provision of toilets, or a MUGA on land at Stratford Fields between the Athletic's pitch and AVDC's new play area. Use of s106 funds was important or they would be lost.

ACTION GSM

339/12 **Solar Panels**

Members felt that the information supplied by the Town Clerk was not full enough; there are three types of photo-voltaic cells and so three schedules of costs should be supplied. More clarity on feed-in tariffs was required. The life of the panels was also a consideration, and it may be that a higher initial investment would be worth it long-term. AVE should be involved in the discussions, as the Town Council should not do the installation without agreement that it should reap the benefits. The problem asbestos roof could be replaced with p-v tiles which would be an additional expense to be taken into consideration.

Members looked to the Town Clerk to provide additional information as above and

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Harvey, and **RECOMMENDED** by all present that this Council proceed with the installation of solar panels subject to the additional information being supplied and the Committee agreeing the terms of the tender.

340/12 **Green Buckingham Group - minutes of the meeting held on 24th July 2012.**

Noted.

341/12 **Correspondence**

341.1 Email from the AVDC Biodiversity Officer on tree-planting on the Heartlands.

Noted.

341.2 SAVE Awards: to discuss and agree any nominees for the 2012 Award. Members suggested Stowe Aqua Club, as a mark of appreciation for all their help with the River Rinses over the years.

341.3 To note the adoption of two areas on Mount Pleasant by AVDC

Noted.

342/12 News releases
None were agreed.

343/12 Chair's Announcements
None.

344/12 Date of Next Meeting.
Chandos Park Monday 24th September 2012 at 6pm
Committee Monday 22nd October 2012 at 7pm.

Meeting closed at: 8.20pm

Chairman..... Date.....