

Minutes of a meeting of the **Environment, Property & Health Committee** of Buckingham Town Council held on **Monday 11th February 2013** in the Council Chamber, Cornwall's Meadow, Buckingham at 7:00pm.

Present: Cllr. T. Bloomfield
 Cllr. H. Cadd
 Cllr. P. Collins
 Cllr. J. Harvey
 Cllr. R. Lehmann
 Cllr. Ms. R. Newell - Mayor
 Cllr. M. Smith - Chairman
 Cllr. Mrs. C. Strain-Clark
 Cllr. R. Stuchbury

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

727/12 Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED to receive and accept apologies from Cllrs. P. Hirons, A. Mahi, Mrs. L. O'Donoghue and W. Whyte.

728/12 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

729/12 Minutes

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Environment, Property and Health Committee meeting held on 10th December 2012 amended and ratified at Full Council on the 21st January 2013. There were no matters arising.

730/12 Action Reports

730.1 (868/11) The GSM reported that the surveyor was preparing a report on the repairs to the East Chapel which should be with the assessors by the end of the week. There was a possibility that there were bats roosting in the Chapel which would require special measures.

730.2 (490.4) Bourton Park Play Area: the equipment was in but installation of safety rails and bins needed to be completed, and grassing the area would wait for suitable weather. The Opening would be performed by the Mayor on 14th February at 3.30pm.

730.3 (481/12) BMX track: The GSM had suggested to AVDC that their (expired) Play Provision Strategy should be reviewed and reissued and a BMX track should be included. A MUGA was still on the agenda and could be tied in with s106 funding.

731/12 Budgets

731.1 (476/12) In answer to a question, it would not be known until the year-end how much would be available to transfer into Earmarked Reserves.

731.2 In answer to a question, code 260 (CCTV) was over budget because reimbursement was expected from TfB for the structural testing of the lamp post.

732/12 (594) Chandos Park Footpath Tender

Four quotations had been sought, three were received. Members asked about the difference in life between tarmac and paved surfaces. The GSM said that tarmac would have a life of some 20 years and paving longer than that.

The need for the renewal of the path was debated, and especially the inlaid logo, with some Members feeling that the project had been discussed for some time, funding was in place and the work should now be carried out; and others that the expenditure was considerable in the current economic climate and should be delayed.

Proposed by Cllr. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Harvey, that the work not be done; an amendment by Cllr. Stuchbury that the proposal be revisited later in the year was accepted by Cllr. Collins, and Members agreed 5:3 that the renewal of the path be reconsidered later in the year.

ACTION GSM**733/12 (595) War Memorial Fee Proposals**

The GSM gave a verbal report on the two quotations (of four sought) received.

Company A had quoted £2600, plus £250 structural engineers' fee; Company B had quoted £2185 + an unstated quantity surveyors fee + 14% of the construction cost, for a feasibility study only. The build cost could not be estimated without the preparatory study.

It was possible to apply to the War Graves Commission for a grant of up to 50% of the cost.

The memorial would be the same footprint as the existing one. Members discussed various solutions to prevent vehicle damage, including moving the memorial into the grassed area opposite the church door, which is BTC land, but the Mayor felt that the sloping sides of the present site allowed young people a view of the Remembrance ceremony which was not possible at the side of the church, which was flat.

It was felt that clear instructions as to materials and upper cost limit should be given and the architects work within those parameters. The Conservation Area Officer and Highways would have to be consulted on the scheme.

Proposed by Cllr. Harvey, seconded by Cllr. Collins, and **AGREED** that the GSM cost 8 metal bollards to replace the stone ones, which would be well seated in the ground and less susceptible to vehicle damage.

Proposed by Cllr. Newell, seconded by Cllr. Harvey, and **AGREED** that the GSM obtain costs for York stone slabs to replace the existing paving at a slightly higher level (the top edge would be level with the ground to allow wheelchair access) on the same footprint as the existing. The memorial is of Mansfield stone which is too soft for paving.

ACTION GSM/APRIL MEETING AGENDA**734/12 (593) Land ownership issue on Bristle Hill**

The Land Registry had written confirming the title of the land according to their records. TfB had said the land was Highway land and the GSM was seeking further documentation from TfB to prove this.

ACTION GSM

735/12 Property check

The Chairman proposed that the members of the Committee visit the parks and other properties in its control from time to time to look at improvements needed, any problems, etc. Members agreed.

Cllr. Stuchbury disputed that the Otter sculpture was beyond repair; he felt that a good carpenter could splice in a suitable piece of wood. Various woodworkers were suggested, including the sculptor of the hare from a tree stump on Chetwode Close.

ACTION GSM**736/12 Buckingham Community Wildlife Project**

Minutes of the BCWP October 22nd meeting were circulated at the meeting.

The Mayor reported that the two Groups were doing well: the friends of Railway Walk had 8-10 regular members but would welcome more; perhaps the next Newsletter could feature their work. The Maids Moreton Avenue Conservation Group was also active. Monique van Assouw was working with the GSM planning a programme of activities for the summer funded by a grant from the British Ecological Society's Centenary Ecology Fund.

Otters had been sighted, and Matt Dodds was working with VAHT to allow hedgehogs passage from one side to Addington Road to the other through the new fences.

It was suggested that the Groups take a stall at the Spring Fair with bird and bat boxes, feeders, etc.

The Groups needed very little funding; Town Council support paid for insurance for the Railway Walk Group (as it was working on TC land) and replacement tools. Members agreed that this support should continue, and encouragement for any other groups that might form.

Asked about the tree planting on the Heartlands, the GSM reported that this was confirmed for 13th March.

737/12 Green Buckingham Group

Minutes of the meetings held on 2nd November 2012, 14th December 2012 and 30th January 2013.

Noted.

738/12 Question from BTC Facebook Page

An indoor skate park had been requested as the correspondent felt intimidated by the older children at the outdoor one.

A reply would be sent, similar to the one sent in response to the BMX track request, and suggesting the young person discuss the bullying with an adult or Childline. If there were any particular days or times, a PSCO could be asked to patrol the area. The letter would be copied to AVDC as they should be informed that there was a bullying problem.

ACTION CHAIRMAN/CLERK**739/12 Requests for a salt bins**

Three requests had been received for additional grit bins on Primrose Way (Mount Pleasant), Lenborough Road and Burleigh Piece.

The GSM reported that the budget would cover all three if the bins were installed and (initially) filled by the Town Council. Members agreed to purchase three bins for these locations.

ACTION GSM

Members briefly discussed whether to advocate the purchase of bins by neighbourhood groups, but decided that it was better to control the siting by retaining the process of application to the Council.

740/12 Draft Police and Crime Plan

Members were aware that the response date had passed, but wished to convey their views nevertheless. Cllr. Harvey had drafted a response which laid emphasis on victims of violence, especially children. Members agreed the response, adding a specific remark about the targeting of certain ethnic groups known to accumulate quantities of gold jewellery. Cllr. Harvey's response (with the agreed addition) is attached.

ACTION THE CLERK

741/12 AVDC Dog Waste Service 2013

A new contractor had been appointed which allowed a 50% reduction in emptying costs. AVDC were also considering changing to a new bin pattern with a narrower opening. There had been problems of dog-owners bringing waste in from home in carrier bags, and with waste bags being removed and thrown about; hopefully the new design of bin would prevent both. The GSM was reviewing which areas needed more than one empty/week in winter by monitoring complaints received about over-full bins.

Members **AGREED** that the new pricing, provided it was a like-for-like service, was acceptable, and that frequency of empty should be upgraded as necessary.

ACTION GSM

742/12 Correspondence

None had been received.

743/12 News releases

None were agreed.

744/12 Chair's Announcements

744.1 The GSM was asked to find out why the river was running orange at present. It wasn't the usual brown of wash from the fields.

744.2 Staff were asked to regularly clear out-of-date posters and notices and delete old screen displays. Members could remove any they saw though a sharp tool was necessary for cable-ties.

ACTION GREEN SPACES STAFF AND ADMIN ASSISTANT

745/12 Date of Next Meeting.

Tuesday 2nd April 2013.

Meeting closed at: 8.10pm

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

Minute 740/12 - Draft Police and Crime Plan; agreed response

1. The Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCCs) proposed strategic objectives are set out in detail in Annex A of the draft Police and Crime Plan. What (if any) other objectives or key themes would you want to see included? If you think there are too many, what would you take out and why?
 - Focus on crime prevention
 - Focus on specifically domestic violence including action on child abuse
 - To focus on crimes that are of most HARM not of most concern
2. What, if any, other things do you think Thames Valley Police could do to reduce crime and the causes of crime?
 - Deploy resources to where there is most harm not based on historic figures which relate to numbers of police officers in post
 - Enable the public to know what action they can take that would reliably reduce crime and fear of crime
3. What, if any, other things do you think partner agencies (e.g. local authorities, community safety partnerships and criminal justice bodies) could do to reduce crime and the causes of crime?
 - Target hotspots of crime and work collaboratively on these particularly those ethnic groups who are the target of burglaries of their gold jewellery.
 - Use section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act to assess all decisions for their criminogenic properties
4. Draft strategic objective 4 focuses on communicating and engaging with the public in order to cut crime and the fear of crime. How would you like to see the PCC, Police and community safety partners do this?
 - Get out and about more!
 - Develop a coherent engagement strategy that means having big conversations with more ordinary members of the public (not just their reps)
5. What, if any, other things do you think could be done to prevent crime?
 - Use Ekblom's work to get under the skin of crime and asb
6. What, if any, other things could be done to deliver better services to victims of crime?
 - Keep funding Victim Support
 - Focus resources where there are most victims
7. Are there any other policing, crime and safety issues affecting you that have not been covered in the draft Police and Crime Plan? If so, what are they?
 - The need for more evidence based research to highlight policing (and related) practice that works
8. The ability to deliver the Police and Crime Plan will to a certain extent depend on the money available. In order to achieve the ambitions set out in the draft plan, and in addition to implementing planned cost savings of over £13.1m in 2013/14, the PCC is proposing a 2% increase in the council tax precept next year - the element of your council tax which pays for policing. For the average taxpayer in Thames Valley (Band D taxpayer) this would equate to an annual council tax level of £157.38 (an increase of £3.08 (or 6 pence per week) over the 2012/13 level) and would generate an additional £2.7m annual income to invest in services and/or offset service reductions.
 - a. Would you be happy to pay the 2% increase in order to invest in services and enable the strategic objectives in the draft plan to be achieved? **YES**
 - b. Taking into consideration the amount of council tax you pay towards policing, do you believe you are getting value for money? **Too broad a question.**