

Minutes of an Extraordinary meeting of the Full Council of Buckingham Town Council held on **Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2014** in the Council Chamber, Cornwalls Meadow, Buckingham at 7:25pm.

**Present:** Cllr. T. Bloomfield  
 Cllr. H. Cadd  
 Cllr. G. Collins  
 Cllr. P. Collins  
 Cllr. J. Harvey  
 Cllr. P. Hirons  
 Cllr. D. Isham  
 Cllr. A. Mahi  
 Cllr. R. Newell  
 Cllr. Mrs. L. O'Donoghue  
 Cllr. M. Smith  
 Cllr. C. Strain-Clark  
 Cllr. R. Stuchbury  
 Cllr. M. Try  
 Cllr. W. Whyte

Mayor  
 Deputy Mayor

**In attendance:** Mr. C. P. Wayman  
 Mrs. C. Bolton  
 Ms. S. McMurtrie

Town Clerk  
 Committee Clerk  
 Town Plan Officer

#### **757/13 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Mordue.

#### **758/13 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **759/13 Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan**

In light of the difficulties arising from the decision of Radclive-cum-Chackmore Parish Council to rescind consent for the inclusion of part of the parish within the BNDP area, to discuss and agree a reconfirmation with Gawcott-with-Lenborough Parish Council of their permission to include part of its parish within the Plan boundary followed by an approach to AVDC with a request that they organise a new consultation on the revised boundary with a view to making the appropriate Order.

The letter from Radclive-cum-Chackmore Parish Council is attached for information.

The Town Clerk informed Members of the recent events that had led to Radclive-cum-Chackmore Parish Council rescinding their consent to include 3 fields in site M of the Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan.

The Radclive-cum-Chackmore Parish Council had stated there had not been any communication by Buckingham Town Council on the plan area. There had in fact been numerous communications, press releases, and representatives had been invited to all appropriate stakeholder meetings.

*Cllr P Collins left the meeting*

The Town Clerk advised Members that although this issue had not yet occurred elsewhere in the country with neighbourhood plans, advice from both

AVDC and the Department for Communities and Local Government was to re-draw the plan, removing the disputed area. This would add approximately six months to the process before being in a position to re-submit the plan. Members discussed the possible outcomes of proceeding without re-drawing and agreed that rather than be in dispute with an adjoining Parish Council that a re-draw should be made. Members also felt that the additional cost incurred should be made public in a press release.

Cllr Whyte commented that a rigorous rebuttal of the letter from Radclive-cum-Chackmore should be made immediately, clearly citing all the information that had been given to them, along with details of public consultations and press releases.

Members **AGREED** to re-draw the boundaries in accordance with removing Radclive-cum-Chackmore's land and reply to the Parish Council by means of an open letter.

*The Town Plan Officer left the meeting*

### **760/13 AVDC Customer Services**

To receive the minutes of a meeting and further information and to agree a proposal to the District Council.

The Town Clerk reported to Members he had attended a meeting with representatives from AVDC and the County Council, representatives were pressed several times on why there had not been any public consultation before moving forward with the decision to close the AVDC service; there was no response. There was also confusion over the planning consultation service provided by AVDC on a Friday at the Customer Service Centre in Buckingham – the service was still in place; Members from AVDC thought it had closed in December 2013.

County representatives confirmed they were about to enter a review period of their service at Buckingham, but confirmed the service was in place until 2016. Neither County nor District had comprehensive statistics showing historical or present use of the centre. District Councillors were due to meet on 11<sup>th</sup> February for a Cabinet meeting to discuss the issue further.

The Town Clerk had sent a proposition to Buckingham Town Councillors via email reworking the District Council's figures of £81,700 to run the centre. The Town Clerk had found a number of immediate savings and had proposed an amount to keep the same levels of service and staff of £34,300.

It was not however, Buckingham Town Council's intention to run or fund the Customer Service Centre.

Members discussed the issues raised at length; pointing out that the focus appeared to have shifted from supplying services to the entire Vale, including outlying towns and villages to serving Aylesbury only. Councillors were extremely disappointed over the way in which District had gone about the decision, with no consultation and very poor information. Members felt strongly that AVDC should at least consider an alternative, and be willing to consider the Town Clerk's figures.

District Members Cllrs Isham and Stuchbury had not been involved or invited to the District Council meetings where this matter had been discussed, finding out only when the decision had been taken through minutes and agendas of a Cabinet meeting.

Cllr Harvey had made the following Freedom of Information requests to AVDC, highlighting areas in which costs for services were very high, and not substantiated.

## REQUEST

## RESPONSE

- |    |   |  |
|----|---|--|
| 1  | What capital investment did AVDC make to the construction of the Waterside Theatre?   | £49 million  |
| 2. | How much revenue contribution has been made so far to the running of the theatre?   | 2010-11 £375,000<br>2011-12 £355,366<br>2012-13 £365,907   |
| 3. | What amount is budgeted for the forthcoming year in subsidy to the theatre?   | 2013-14 £377,000   |
| 4. | What information does the theatre supply To AVDC as part of the 'return' on this ongoing Subsidy?   | The management of Theatre meet with AVDC officers each month to liaise regarding operational issues. The contract is formally reviewed every quarter and annually.<br>Information that is supplied and reviewed includes, general overview, throughput and attendances, operations, financial performance, programming review, marketing, sales and press, development, events and hires, staffing, creative learning and access, building issues and health and safety. From time to time, the contract has been reviewed by the relevant scrutiny committee, the most recent occasion being July 2012. |
| 5. | What budget has AVDC set aside for the coming financial year to support the Tourism Information Centre in Aylesbury Town?   | 2013-14 £62,000  |
| 6. | What budget has AVDC set aside for the coming financial year to support public events in Aylesbury Town?  | 2013 - 14 - £94,100.   |
| 7. | What report was written to examine the full The full costs and benefits of closing down The customer services functions in Buckingham And in Winslow? (And please may I have a Copy)  | Please see <a href="http://committees.aylesburydc.gov.uk/committees/committees.aspx?commid=74&amp;mmitid=1585">http://committees.aylesburydc.gov.uk/committees/committees.aspx?commid=74&amp;mmitid=1585</a> . Appendix F  |
| 8. | What loans were taken out by AVDC which were used to invest in the capital build of the theatre and what interest is payable on those loans (to date, monthly and overall eventually) | No loans were taken out. It was financed from capital receipts.  |
| 9. | What report was written to examine the full costs and benefits of supporting Tourism Information services in the town of Aylesbury? (And please may I have a copy)                    | Please see the Visitor Economy Action Plan 2012/13 13 June 2012 at: <a href="http://committees.ylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/committees/committees.aspx?commid=79&amp;meetid=1371">http://committees.ylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/committees/committees.aspx?commid=79&amp;meetid=1371</a>  |

And the report to Cabinet of 17 Sept 2013:  
<http://committees.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/Committees/committees.aspx?commid=74>  
(Appendix F)

10) What report was written to examine the Full costs and benefits of supporting events in the town of Aylesbury? (And please may I Have a copy)

The increase to the events budget for Aylesbury town centre (managed by the Town Centre Manager) was agreed by the Cabinet as part of the 2007/2008 budget. A copy of the report is attached. As noted in Appendix C, the reason for the increase was to support the town through a period of disruption as the redevelopment programme began. It was recognised that the demolition of the civic centre in particular and the gap between the demolition and the new theatre opening could have an impact on footfall. The budget has been continued in line with the ongoing redevelopment programme but in addition to help support the town through the recession.

As explained at the Economy and Business Development Scrutiny Committee on 11 December, each event is evaluated from a visitor and trade perspective to ensure that the event is achieving its original objective ie to help attract and retail footfall.

Proposed by Cllr G Collins, seconded by Cllr Smith and **AGREED** to record a vote of 'no confidence' in Aylesbury Vale District Council.

Proposed by Cllr Harvey, seconded by Cllr Newell and **AGREED** that the Town Council ask Aylesbury Vale District Council to reflect deeply on their plans for the AVDC front desk in Buckingham, taking into account

- 1 They are the Aylesbury Vale District Council.
- 2 Their exact contractual obligations to Buckinghamshire County Council
- 3 The taxpayer money they spend subsidising Tourism Information Services and events in Aylesbury own (and not in Buckingham and elsewhere)
- 4 The need for a proper equality impact assessment on the impact of closing the AVDC front desk in Buckingham.

Proposed by Cllr Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr Newell and **AGREED** that the Town Clerk take forward the budget proposals, along with Cllr Harvey's motion and Freedom of Information requests above and respond to AVDC before the Cabinet meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2014.

**ACTION: TOWN CLERK**

Meeting closed at 8.40pm

Signed ..... Date .....  
Town Mayor