

BTC/02/21

Minutes of a meeting of the Full Council of Buckingham Town Council held on Monday 17th May 2021 following the Annual Statutory Meeting of Buckingham Town Council at Lace Hill Sports and Community Centre, MK18 7RR.

Present:

- Cllr. R. Ahmed
- Cllr. M. Cole JP
- Cllr. G. Collins
- Cllr. M. Gateley
- Cllr. J. Harvey
- Cllr. S. Hetherington
- Cllr. P. Hirons
- Cllr. H. Mordue
- Cllr. L. O'Donoghue
- Cllr. A. Ralph
- Cllr. A. Schaefer
- Cllr. R. Stuchbury
- Cllr. M. Try
- Cllr. W. Whyte
- Cllr. R. Willet

In attendance: Mr. P. Hodson
Mrs. N. Stockill

Town Clerk
Committee Clerk

11/21 Apologies for Absence

Members received apologies from Buckinghamshire Councillors. P. Fealey and C. Cornell and **RESOLVED** to receive and accept apologies from Town Councillor A. Osibogun.

12/21 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

13/21 Minutes

RESOLVED to receive the minutes and confirm the recommendations therein of the Full Council Meetings held on:

15th March 2021

1142/20 – Members **AGREED** to remove the following erroneous section from the minutes:

Community Board (812/20) Cllr. Cole explained he would be taking a motion to the next meeting of the Transport, Environment and Communities Select Committee regarding the ongoing issue with representation at the Community Board.

With the above amendment the minutes were **AGREED**.

14/21 Interim Minutes

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Interim Council meetings held on:

Monday 22nd February 2021. **AGREED**

Monday 19th April 2021. **AGREED**

15/21 Planning Committee

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on: Monday 22nd March 2021.

Members considered the recommendation from the Planning Committee:

1166.3/20 Members **AGREED** that the revised Buckingham Design Guide be recommended to Full Council for adoption.

Cllr. Whyte stated that redrafting the Town's Design Guide had not been subject to formal consultation or assessment against the National Model Design Codes and should have entailed significant engagement with stakeholders.

An amendment to the motion was proposed by Cllr. Whyte and seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury to refer the Design Guide back to the Neighbourhood Design Plan Working Group to redraft in consultation with stakeholders and with consideration of the National Model Design Codes.

A vote was taken and the results were:

In favour: 11

Against: 3

Abstention: 1

The amended motion becomes the substantive motion and a further vote was taken.

In favour: 11

Against: 0

Abstentions: 4

ACTION TOWN CLERK/PLANNING CLERK

Members received the minutes from Planning Committee held on Monday 19th April 2021.

16/21 Town Centre and Events Committee

RESOLVED to receive the minutes and confirm the recommendations therein of the Town Centre and Events Committee meeting held on Monday 12th April 2021.

Members **AGREED** to recommend to Full Council to present the Council's awards that would normally be made at Mayor making during the Celebrate Buckingham event for 2021 because it will not be able to hold Mayor making in the usual way again this year.

AGREED

Cllr. Gateley commented that the Celebrate Buckingham event was the appropriate (public) event at which to observe the robing of the Mayor and celebrate the Town Council's Community Award recipients.

17/21 Environment Committee

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on Monday 29th March 2021. **AGREED**

18/21 Resources Committee

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on Monday 26th April 2021. **AGREED**

*Members **AGREED** to suspend Standing Orders to allow a Member of the public to speak.*

A member of the public attended the public session to speak to Councillors about public access at future Town Council meetings. It was explained that one of the unexpected benefits of the Covid restrictions was Town Council meetings had moved online and were broadcast live via YouTube. The move to a digital platform enabled a greater level of public participation and allowed residents to engage with Town Council and become involved in the business and priorities of their local authorities. Councillors were implored to consider the benefits of hybrid meetings as a permanent option. The Chair thanked the resident for attending the public session and explained that the matter would be discussed further during agenda item 18 (Future Meetings).

Members **AGREED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

19/21 To receive and question reports from Buckinghamshire Council Councillors

Councillor Mordue

Cllr. Mordue reassured Members that the town's Conservative Buckinghamshire Councillors would agree a system for reporting to future meetings Full Council meetings.

Councillor Stuchbury

Cllr. Stuchbury agreed with Cllr. Mordue's comments adding that it would be too time consuming to have all six Buckinghamshire Councillors reporting to every Full Council meeting.

20/21 Action List

20mph Speed limits – Cllr. Harvey expressed a wish for 20mph limits on all new housing estates and asked for an item to be added to the next agenda of the Planning Committee.

AGREED

ACTION PLANNING CLERK

Child Poverty Working Group – The Town Clerk said an email invitation to Councillors would be issued over the next few weeks.

Bank Closures – The Town Clerk **AGREED** to circulate a response from Greg Smith MP on the closure of High Street banks and informed Members that Barclays were liaising with the Market Manager over the possibility of a mobile banking unit at the Tuesday or Saturday Street Markets.

Public Meeting on Health – Cllr. Stuchbury asked for an update to be brought to the next meeting of Environment Committee.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

Co-option – The Town Clerk reported that the South Ward's vacancy was currently being advertised and several expressions of interest had already been received. Full Council would decide who to co-opt to the vacant seat during the meeting of Interim Council to be held on 7th June 2021.

21/21 Buckingham Dementia Action Alliance

Members received and noted a written report from the Town Clerk.

22/21 Standing Orders (Item 5)

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury and seconded by Cllr. Whyte to accept the following documents:

- Delegated arrangements (S.O. 5.k.iv)
- Committee Terms of Reference (S.O. 5.k.v)
 - Environment Committee
 - Resources Committee
 - Planning Committee
 - Town Centre & Events Committee (TC&E)
 - Economic Development Working Group

- Staffing (Confidential Matters) Committee
- Communications Strategy Group (CSG)
- Appeals Committee
- Standing Orders and Financial Regulations (S.O. 5.k.viii)

An amendment was proposed by Cllr. Harvey and seconded by Cllr O'Donoghue to accept the above documents, subject to all single sex references being replaced with 'they' or 'he/she' and 'Chairman' to be replaced by 'Chair/Chairman'.

Cllr. Stuchbury accepted the amendment and Members voted unanimously in favour of the motion.

ACTION COMMITTEE CLERK

23/21 Committee Choices (S.O. 5.k.vi)

Members received the latest table of Councillor Committee choices.

Cllrs. Harvey and Stuchbury appealed for additional Councillors to join TC&E and CSG.

Cllr. Ahmed confirmed she would join CSG and Cllr. Gateley reminded Members that she would, as Town Mayor, sit on all Committees. Cllr. Willett said he would also join CSG and encouraged Members to help reinvigorate the Youth Council.

24/21 Diversity and Inclusion Group

Cllr. O'Donoghue volunteered to continue her role on the Diversity and Inclusion Group.

Cllr. Stuchbury proposed sending an explanation of the D&I group's remit to all Town Councillors and allow nominations to be received at Interim Full Council on the 7th June 2021.

Cllr Ralph suggested broadening the group's remit, or creating an entirely separate Working Group to look at Community, Diversity and Inclusion, dealing with specific incidences within the town that fall outside of the terms of reference of the original group.

Members **AGREED** for a detailed proposal to be brought back to the next meeting of Full Council with a Terms of Reference on the Community, Diversity and Inclusion Group.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

25/21 Review of Arrangements with Other Local Authorities (S.O. 5.k.ix)

Members reviewed and approved arrangements with other Local Authorities.

26/21 Review of Representation (S.O. 5.k.x)

Members received a report on current arrangements for representing the Town Council at external bodies.

Access4All – Members **AGREED** for Cllr. G. Collins to continue as one of the Council's representatives.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury and seconded by Cllr. Try that the report is deferred until the Interim meeting of Full Council on the 7th June 2021 to allow newly elected Councillors sufficient time to consider joining external bodies as representatives from the Town Council.

Cllr. G. Collins said she would be submitting apologies for the meeting on the 7th June and would like to remain on the Buckingham Alms-house General Charities as one of the Town Council representatives. Cllr. Stuchbury accepted the amendment. A vote was taken and the results were unanimously in favour of the motion.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

The Mayor encouraged Councillors to consider how they could fulfil their role in the community.

27/21 Inventory of Land and Assets (S.O. 5.k.xii)

Members reviewed and **AGREED** the Council's inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment.

Proposed by Cllr. Gateley, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury and unanimously **AGREED** to agree the following:

- Insurances (S.O. 5.k.xiii)
- Subscriptions (S.O.5.xiv)
- Complaints & Compliments Policy (S.O.) 5.k.xv)
- FOI and Data Protection Policy (S.O. 5.k.xvi)

28/21 Financial Risk Assessment

Members received and **AGREED** the Financial Risk Assessment subject to minor amendments to the scoring colours.

29/21 Equal Opportunities Policy

Members received and **AGREED** the policy, noting that the Policy could be reviewed at a future meeting of the Diversity & Inclusion Group.

30/21 Code of Conduct

Proposed by Cllr. Harvey, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury and unanimously **AGREED** to accept the code of conduct subject to arranging a workshop to review the new LGA Code of Conduct and consider any changes following Buckinghamshire Council's adoption of the new LGA model.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

31/21 Annual Town Meeting 26th May 2021

Members noted an online Town Meeting has been arranged for 26th May 2021.

32/21 General Power of Competence

Members **RESOLVED** to continue to adopt the General Power of Competence. Buckingham Town Council is an eligible Council for the General Power of Competence as it meets the prescribed conditions. The Council therefore has greater than two thirds of its Members elected (88% currently) and the Town Clerk holds the Certificate in Local Council Administration and has completed the relevant training.

AGREED

33/21 Future Meetings

Members received and discussed a written report from the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk explained that Members needed to decide which of the following three options the Council wished to adopt for hosting meetings over the coming weeks.

- 1. Hold all meetings at Lace Hill;** Committee meetings involve less people, so meetings may be slightly easier to manage. This option would allow the Council to meet the current requirements, without changing any of the current committees' powers or amending delegated arrangements.

- 2. Resolve to re-designate some or all Council Committees and Sub-Committees as working groups until it is possible to safely use the Council Chamber, and**

to delegate authority to the Town Clerk to make decisions following advice provided by Working Groups held online via Zoom. This would enable meetings to be held on Zoom, and be recorded on YouTube, without delaying any Council business. This would reduce the risk of Covid infection to councillors, staff and members of the public. Any items that cannot be delegated – such as agreeing the Annual Governance Statement – would continue to take place during Full Council Meetings. This approach has been adopted by many town and parish councils in recent weeks. Others have found ways to continue with face to face meetings.

3. Postpone all committees and sub-groups until it is possible to safely use the Council Chamber, and allow Interim and Full Council to deal with all essential business in the meantime.

Cllr. G. Collins noted that the Staffing Confidential Matters Committee would need to be excluded from any of the above options. Members **AGREED** to leave the details of any Staffing (Confidential Matters) Committee agendas for the Town Clerk to arrange.

Cllr. Ahmed said option 2 was the only way forward and after June 21st 2021 the Council should focus on hybrid meetings to increase accessibility for both residents and Councillors. Members were in agreement that any decision should be reviewed at the earliest opportunity.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury and seconded by Cllr. Whyte that option 2 be adopted for all committees and sub-committees meeting over the next few weeks, but that Full Council review the arrangements at every meeting.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the office was investigating equipment for hybrid meetings in the Council Chamber and reassured Members that 'Future Meetings' would be a standing item on all Full Council agendas.

A vote was taken and the results were:

14 in favour

1 abstentions

Motion carried

ACTION TOWN CLERK

Cllr. Gateley remarked that moving to virtual meetings had increased the level of public engagement and it would be disappointing to lose that momentum.

34/21 Covid 19 Update

The Town Clerk reported the following updates:

- Shopmobility was open on Saturdays
- The Street and Flea Markets were thriving, despite the pandemic
- Staff had returned to the office, with a maximum of two people per room/office. The team were working with the current government guidance and updating risk assessments accordingly. Members recorded their thanks to the Market Manager who had managed to transform the Buckingham Markets.

35/21 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies

There were no reports received.

36/21 To receive a list of events attended by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Functions the Mayor has attended:

18th March - British Heart Foundation (video call)

18th March - Buckingham Hospital AGM

30th March, 7th April, 27th April and 29th April - Buckingham and Gawcott Alms houses meetings

19th April British Heart Foundation (Teams Call)

1st May Photo of Captain Tom

Functions the Deputy Mayor has attended:

37/21 Chair's Announcements

The Mayor thanked Councillors for their support during the first physical meeting after the covid-19 restrictions. Cllr. Gateley praised Cllr. Try for providing and operating the essential audio equipment and to the Office Apprentice for operating the boom microphone.

38/21 Dates of the next meetings:

- Online Annual Town Meeting – Wednesday 26th May @ 7pm
- Interim Council – 7th June 2021
- Interim Council – Monday 28th June 2021
- Full Council - Monday 12th July 2021

39/21 Committee in Private Session

Exclusion of Public and Press

RECOMMENDED 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 was, therefore, RECOMMENDED that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

AGREED

40/21 Town Council Awards 2021

Members reviewed the awards agreed during the informal meeting held on 22nd February 2021.

40.1/21 Friends of Buckingham

Proposed by Cllr. Harvey, seconded by Cllr. O'Donoghue and unanimously **AGREED** that Dr. Roger Harrington is presented a Friend of Buckingham award for his work on the Buckingham Alms-house charity and Buckingham Hospital League of Friends.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury and seconded by Cllr, O'Donoghue to nominate John Bercow for a Friend of Buckingham award in recognition of his time as an MP of Buckingham. Cllr. Stuchbury said Mr Bercow had helped many local families, supporting charities across the town and represented community issues in parliament. A vote was taken and the results were:

In favour: 12

Against: 0

Abstentions:2

Proposed by Cllr. O'Donoghue, seconded by Cllr. Mahi and unanimously **AGREED** to nominate Mrs Beverley Stockill for her exceptional and outstanding contribution to the local community through her work at the Buckingham Community Food Bank.

40.2/21 Sport & Art Award

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. O'Donoghue and unanimously **AGREED** to award the Lace Hill Residents Association with a Sport & Art Award for the creation of the Lace Hill Snake.

40.3/21 Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Organisation of the Year

Proposed by Cllr. Harvey, seconded by Cllr. Mahi and unanimously **AGREED** for the Swan Practice to have an honourable mention but for the award to be presented to the Rotary Club and all the volunteers that supported the Flu and Covid-19 Programmes.

40.4/21 Natural Environment & Climate Champion

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. O'Donoghue and unanimously **AGREED** for Stowe Sub Aqua Club to receive the Natural Environment & Climate Champion Award for their continued support of the annual River Rinses.

40.5/21 Mayor's Prize for Outstanding Young Person

Members noted the Mayor's award recipient for 2021.

Members **AGREED** to add Honorary Freeman Awards to the Interim Agenda for the 7th June 2021

Meeting closed at: 10.03

Signed Date

Town Mayor