

Minutes of a meeting of the **Environment Committee** of Buckingham Town Council held on **Monday 4th April 2016** in the Council Chamber, Cornwall's Meadow, Buckingham at 7.15pm.

Present:

Cllr. Ms. J. Bates	
Cllr. T. Bloomfield	
Cllr. P. Collins	
Cllr. Mrs. M. Gateley	
Cllr. J. Harvey	
Cllr. P. Hirons	
Cllr. D. Isham	Vice Chair
Cllr. A. Mahi	Mayor
Cllr. Ms. R. Newell	Chair
Cllr. Mrs. L. O'Donoghue	
Cllr. M. Smith	
Cllr. Mrs. C. Strain-Clark	
Cllr. R. Stuchbury	

In attendance:

Mr. C. Wayman	Town Clerk
Mr. D. Jones	Deputy Town Clerk
Mrs. C. Carter	Committee Clerk

894/15 Apologies for Absence

None

895/15 Declarations of Interest

Declarations of interest.

Cllr Hirons expressed a prejudicial interest in item 10, transferable land; as Chairman of the drainage board.

Cllr Stuchbury expressed a prejudicial interest in item 11, Lace Hill football pitches, and item 10 above as a District and County Councillor.

896/15 Minutes

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 15th February 2016, ratified at Full Council on the 14th March 2016.

Agreed

897/15 Motion from Cllr. P. Collins:

That Lace Hill Community Centre in future be known as "Lace Hill Sports and Community Centre".

Seconded by Cllr Newell and **AGREED** by all Members.

Proposed by Cllr Harvey, seconded by Cllr O'Donoghue to move items 11 and 12 up the agenda, for the benefit of guests, who had spoken during the Public Session.

898/15 Lace Hill football pitches

To receive and discuss a report from the Deputy Town Clerk on Hire Charges, and agree terms.

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Draft subject to ratification

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Initial

Cllr Collins commented that he thought the proposed charges were reasonable, and in the right ball park for pitches with first class facilities.

The Town Clerk explained the quoted £7,500 for annual maintenance of the pitches was the specification received from a consultant as follows:

The pitches would required 24mm on sand laying across the entire area, then an annual top up of 7/8mm.

Over seeding annually of 15g/metre

Top aeration by machine hire

In addition, thorough cleaning every week after games would incur an approximate cost of £3,000 per annum

Members considered that any lower hire charges would not cover the Town Council's costs above.

Members felt that although Mr Jack Stuchbury had referred to other local authority pitches in the surrounding area during the public session, those mentioned were of a considerably lower standard. Members also noted that a number of other sports clubs in the town were indeed looking for suitable pitches.

The Town Clerk reported that lower hire charges for junior teams appeared to be standard across other comparable pitches, to encourage youth sports.

Proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr P Collins and **AGREED** to run the pitches at the proposed costs for the first year, with a view to reviewing after a year. Members also agreed the casual booking costs to be separated as adults and juniors.

Fees **AGREED** as in the following tables:

Pitch Hire Rates

	Casual Booking	Half Permit (15 games)		Full Permit (30 games)	
		Pitch Only	Pitch & Dressing room & showers	Pitch Only	Pitch & Dressing room & showers
Adults	£90	£1250	£1500	£2500	£3000
Juniors	£60	£1000	£1250	£2000	£2500

Committee Room Hire Rates

	Summer		Weekend Day		Weekend Evening
	Pay per session	Block (10 weeks)*	Pay per session	Block (10 weeks)*	Pay per session
Adult Rate	£45	£350	£65	£450	£100
Local Community Group	£35	£250	£55	£400	
Junior Clubs	£25	£175	£45	£350	

Sports Hall Hire Rates

	Weekday		Weekend Day		Weekend Evening
	Pay per Session	Block (10 weeks)*	Pay per session	Block (10 weeks)*	Pay per session
Adult Rate	£55	£450	£75	£550	£150
Local Community Group	£45	£350	£65	£450	
Junior Clubs	£35	£250	£45	£350	

Sessions would be broken down in 3 hours duration, morning, afternoon or evening.

899/15 Bourton Park – Exercise class

To receive and discuss a request from Mr. A. Peacock to hold an exercise session in Bourton Park on Monday evenings.

Cllr O'Donoghue commented she was in favour of the request, and had knowledge of other group users of the park such as dog trainers, and felt that running the class may encourage dog walkers to keep their dogs on the lead in the park.

Members **AGREED** the request.

Following a query by Cllr Smith, Mr Peacock confirmed his public liability insurance had been increased to £5 million.

900/15 Action Reports

900.1 To receive the report and note the updated information.

Noted

(839/14 + 257/15) Table Tennis Table – Members expressed frustration that the table had not been ordered. The Town Clerk reminded Members a cost had not been fully agreed, though the Parks Development Budget could be used. Members were keen to get the table installed and requested a full costing to the next meeting.

ACTION: GREEN SPACES MANAGER/MAY AGENDA

(708/14 + 87/15) Church Bollards – Members **AGREED** shrubbery to be planted on the edges of the green to discourage parking.

ACTION: GREEN SPACES MANAGER

900.2 To discuss a suggestion from Cllr. Stuchbury that the Tanlaw Mill Race be reinstated on the Action List, in light of concerns about its silting up.

Cllr Stuchbury expressed deep concern that the University had done nothing about the issue, and commented on the potential risk should someone get into difficulty following a fall into the river.

Members held a discussion and **AGREED** Cllr Gateley's suggestion to write to the Vice Chancellor siting the 2 letters previously sent to the Estates Bursar, with no response.

ACTION: GREEN SPACES MANAGER

Members also **AGREED** the correct Committee for the follow up was Town Centre & Events.

ACTION: TCE COMMITTEE/MAY AGENDA

901/15 Budgets

901.1 To receive the latest figures

901.2.1 To discuss and agree that any outstanding budget in Bourton Park – Repairs and Maintenance (4601/252) be carried forward into next year's financial budget to be spent on outstanding tree work in Bourton Park;

901.2.2 To discuss and agree funding (and identify a budget heading) for edible woodland plants and materials of £130.

The Chair identified the budget 4120 that has £1563 remaining and this was agreed by the committee.

901.2.3 To discuss and agree that any money left from the Environment budget be put into Earmarked Reserves under Parks Development budget 9035/901;

901.2.4 To discuss and agree that any outstanding budget in Devolved Services (4124/204) be carried forward to the next year's budget to fund the future operation of the Devolved Services

All **AGREED**

902/15 Loss of trees in the town

To note the loss of mature trees from a number of sites within Buckingham and to agree possible action/protection for the future – Cllr. Stuchbury

Cllr Stuchbury reported his concerns at the regular complaints received from the public within the town at the ongoing loss of mature trees, whether it was by minor planning application approval, or large housing development clearances. Cllr Stuchbury hoped that agreeing a policy would encourage those responsible for enforcement in local authority positions to take more notice of the Town Council's responses.

Members discussed the paper and commented that several groups were working to protect trees in the town; the Town Council, the Buckingham Society, AVDC wildlife, the Conservation groups from Railway Walk and Maids Moreton Avenue, and the Canal Society, who already meet and work together under the Buckingham Community Wildlife Project; though it was also felt more tree wardens were needed.

Cllr Hirons commented that often tree felling would be passed by AVDC when developers put in various minor amendments to plans that often didn't come to the Town Council for comment.

Cllr Stuchbury said that the Town Council ought to be taking some affirmative action and that he had no confidence that AVDC would make any different decisions going forward.

The Town Clerk commented that both the land behind Station Terrace and development at Clarence Park were approved before the Buckingham Neighbourhood plan was passed and that going forward policies within the plan should mean protection for trees when considering new planning applications.

Cllr Harvey said that everyone wanted to have a town that was green, with many trees and habitats for wildlife.

Proposed by Cllr Harvey, seconded by Cllr Stuchbury and **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council that through the Town Action Commission, the Town Council bring together various groups within the town to have formal discussion on the subject.

To establish a Town Action Commission with a focus on maintain, enhancing and preserving trees and hedgerows within the town.

For 11
Abstentions 2

903/15 Annual Town Meeting – Environment matters arising.

To receive a verbal report from the Chair.

The Chair had previously circulated the list of items raised at the Environment table at the Annual Town Meeting and summarised them. The report was noted and where appropriate, items would be passed on to the relevant offices/authority.

ACTION: CLLR NEWELL

904/15 Sports Pitches

To receive a report from the Town Clerk on Sports Pitch Provision

Members discussed the report and thanked the Town Clerk and officers for the work so far. Cllr Stuchbury stated that the town Council should be talking about a strategy for now and the future and that every proposal should be kept on the table for discussion for the time being.

Proposed by Cllr Strain-Clark, seconded by Cllr Hirons and **AGREED** the recommendation to pursue the areas at Verney Park ‘triangle’ and along Gawcott Road were taken forward and that funding be sought for the surveys required. With more detailed plans to come back to the Town Council.

Cllr Collins recorded his objection.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

905/15 Devolved/Transferable Land

To receive a report from the Town Clerk on Devolved or Transferable Land

Members received the report.

The Town Clerk stated that the aim was initially to try and progress Chris Nicholls Walk and other potential sites identified.

Cllr Collins commented that Members should be clear about what and why they wanted to take any areas over; the listed sites were currently costing approximately £77,000 to maintain. Cllr Collins felt this should be considered when considering the burden to the Buckingham Council tax payer.

Cllr Stuchbury said that Councillors should think beyond the life of the current and next Council and consider that more control over the town’s land would mean more influence and control for the community to have their say.

Members held a brief discussion, highlighting those areas which they felt important to the town, Members also commented on the possibility of putting in a ‘right to buy’ on each individual area.

Proposed by Cllr Harvey, seconded by Cllr O’Donoghue and **AGREED** that the Town Clerk revisit the potential sites and provide further analysis based on cost, liability per year and social value to the town – a potential list of 3-5 sites.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

For 9
Against 1
Abstention 3

906/15 Litter in the town

To receive and activate the Recommendation from the Planning Committee agreed at Full Council on 14th March 2016; the full minute (829/15) is included for information:

696/45: Members **RECOMMENDED** that the Environment Committee take on the issue in the first instance; to identify and further involve AVDC to address problem areas of rubbish accumulation around the town, educate householders, and investigate how to resolve frequently reported left waste.

Cllr Smith accepted the item to go to Town Centre and Events committee as progress had already been made through Community steps and AVDC.

ACTION: TCE MAY AGENDA

907/15 Dog bins

To receive and discuss a request from the Canal Society for a dog bin at the bypass end of the towpath.

Agreed

For 12

Against 1

908/15 (776/15) Festival of Health

To receive and discuss information from Cllr. Harvey on this event proposed for September 2017.

Cllr Harvey drew Members attention to the unenthusiastic response from Bucks County; and questioned whether Members felt it worthwhile to highlight Buckingham's role in the history of the movement of community nursing.

Members felt it worth pursuing and celebrating and **AGREED** that Cllr Harvey should progress the matter.

ACTION: CLLR HARVEY

909/15 Dementia Friends

To discuss and agree whether the Council should join the Dementia Friends scheme. The next training session (45mins, free of charge) is on 17th May 2016, or if more than 6 people wish to attend a special session can be arranged.

Members **AGREED** that Buckingham Town Council should join Dementia friends and should encourage Staff and Councillors to attend the training. It was noted that on line training was also available.

910/15 MK Clinical Commissioning Group – consultation

To receive information on the consultation and a drop-in event in Milton Keynes on 13th April 2016. Further information and the survey response form is at

www.miltonkeynesccg.nhs.uk/improving-urgent-care-services-in-milton-keynes

Noted

911/15 Access Awareness

To receive and discuss any new concerns

None reported

912/15 Fairtrade

912.1 To note that the Town has retained its Fairtrade status (certificate presented to the Mayor at Full Council and displayed in the Chamber window).

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912.2 To note that a weekend of events to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Town gaining Fairtrade status is planned for 16th/17th September 2017.
Noted.

913/15 News Releases
Robust action on tree protection

914/15 Chair's Announcements
None

915/15 Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 31st May 2016

Meeting closed at: 9pm

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