



# BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

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Town Clerk: Mr C. P. Wayman

Tuesday, 29 September 2015

Councillors,

You are summoned to a meeting of the Full Council of Buckingham Town Council to be held on **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2015** at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Cornwalls Meadow, Buckingham.

Mr C. P. Wayman  
Town Clerk

## Honorary Freeman

To present retired Cllr Cadd with the scroll

Please note that the Full Council will be preceded by a Public Session in accordance with Standing Order 1.3, which will last for a maximum of 15 minutes.

## AGENDA

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Members are asked to receive apologies from members.

### 2. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of any personal or prejudicial interest under consideration on this agenda in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 Sections 26-34 & Schedule 4.

### 3. To receive reports from District and County Councillors

### 4. Minutes

To receive the minutes and confirm the recommendations therein of the Full Council Meeting held on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2015.

**Copy previously circulated BTC/06/15**

### 5. Planning Committee

To receive the minutes and confirm the recommendations therein of the Planning Committee meetings held on:

- Monday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2015
- Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2015

**Copy previously circulated PL/06/15**

**Copy previously circulated PL/07/15**

### 6. Town Centre and Events Committee

To receive the minutes and confirm the recommendations therein of the Town Centre and Events Committee meetings held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015.

**Copy previously circulated TCE/03/15**

### 7. Environment Committee

Buckingham



Twinned with Mouvaux, France



To receive the minutes and confirm the recommendations therein of the Environment Committee meeting held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

**Copy previously circulated E/03/15**

386/15 Proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Mahi and **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council that the Town Council purchase further CCTV equipment and fund from Contingencies as a matter of urgency

**8. Resources Committee**

To receive the minutes and confirm the recommendations therein of the Finance, Administration and Personnel Committee meeting held on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2015.

**Copy previously circulated R/03/15**

422/15 Proposed by Cllr Harvey, seconded and **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council that the Town Council prepare a New Homes Bonus funding application.

**9. Motion – Cllr Harvey, seconded by Cllr Stuchbury**

Europe and the Middle East is in the middle of a huge humanitarian crisis: millions of people are desperately seeking safety and sanctuary. This Council commits to work with all local people and public service partners to make refugees welcome in our town.

**10. Motion – Cllr Mahi, seconded by Cllr Mike Smith**

That this Council support giving priority to house the homeless, including Ex Service personnel, in Buckingham and Aylesbury Vale, before refugees.

**11. Planning Application 15/01218/AOP – Amended Plans**

**Appendix A**

Land north of A421 Tingewick Road [*actually land between Tingewick Road and A421 Buckingham bypass*]

Application for Outline Planning Permission with access to provide up to 400 Residential Dwellings (including Affordable Housing), Open Space including Play Areas and sports and related recreation facilities, Landscaping, New Vehicular and Pedestrian Accesses, Engineering (including Ground Modelling) Works, Infrastructure Works (including Drainage Works and Utilities Provision) and Demolition (including Site Reclamation), Car Parking and Lighting.

*Hallam Land Management*

*Minor Amendments: relocation of eastern access [1 on the drawing] 18m further east and related realignment of primary street and removal (and replacement elsewhere) of some hedgerow and redesign of the drainage basin; extension of visibility splays; a NEAP replacing one of the LEAPs; appendix to the Environmental Statement; correction of typos and other errors pointed out in BTC response*

**12. Action List**

**Appendix B**

To receive and review the updated list

**13. Purchase of the Community Centre**

To receive a verbal update on the current position from the Town Clerk and agree to employ a surveyor/commercial agent to give an estimate on the price.

**14. Industrial Unit**

To receive a verbal update regarding the purchase of a unit at Hillcrest Way. Agree to obtain a survey on the building and an asbestos report in line with Financial Regulations.

**15. Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan**

15.1 To receive a verbal update from the Town Clerk

15.2 To note John Bercow MP's letter to the Town Clerk

**Appendix C**

## 16. AVDC Response to NDPs

Following the SMDC decision to support a planning application outside Great Horwood's NDP settlement boundary, and concerns about the likely response to Moreton Road stage III when (and if) transport issues are resolved, to consider this council's response to AVDC planners who are apparently disregarding para 198 of the NPPF despite the Cabinet Member's stated support of NDPs by AVDC Members and Officers. (Cllr Mike Smith)

## 17. Aylesbury Magistrates' Court Closure Consultation

Members are requested to view the online consultation; to discuss and agree a reply if necessary. Cllr. Mark Cole's suggested response is attached.

**Appendix D**

[https://consult.justice.gov.uk/digital-communications/proposal-on-the-provision-of-court-and-tribunal-es/user\\_uploads/reform-estates-national-consultation\\_official-sensitive\\_final.pdf](https://consult.justice.gov.uk/digital-communications/proposal-on-the-provision-of-court-and-tribunal-es/user_uploads/reform-estates-national-consultation_official-sensitive_final.pdf)

## 18. NHS England – Controlled locality determination in relation to the area of Buckingham and surrounds

To receive the decision for information.

**Appendix E**

## 19. Allowances for Parish and Town Councillors

To receive the report recommendations.

**Appendix F**

## 20. NALC – Council of the week

To discuss and decide whether to enter a submission.

**Appendix G**

## 21. Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies

Members are asked to note the reports listed below:

21.1 The Buckingham Society Newsletter – September 2015

**Appendix H**

21.2 Buckingham Community Centre Management Committee Minutes – 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 26<sup>th</sup> March and 28<sup>th</sup> May

Buckingham Twinning Association Minutes 1<sup>st</sup> July

**Appendices I, J & K**

Destination Buckingham group 28<sup>th</sup> July and 1<sup>st</sup> September

**Appendix L  
Appendices M & N**

## 22. Mayoral Engagements

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

Functions the Mayor has attended:

30th August 2015 - Opening Bandjam

1st Sept. 2015 - DGB meeting

3rd Sept. 2015 - interview candidates for position of Deputy Town Clerk

3rd Sept. 2015 - CAB AGM meeting

4th Sept. 2015 - make a 'leaving' presentation to BCC staff

12th Sept. 2015 - at BDNP stall in the Market

15th Sept. 2015 - at BDNP stall in the Market

19th Sept. 2015 - MS Soc. opening and 'walking a mile' for the Charity

27th Sept. 2015 - The High Sheriff's Justice Service at Church in Milton Keynes

Functions the Deputy Mayor has attended:

## 23. News Releases

## 24. Chair's Announcements

## 25. Date of the next meeting:

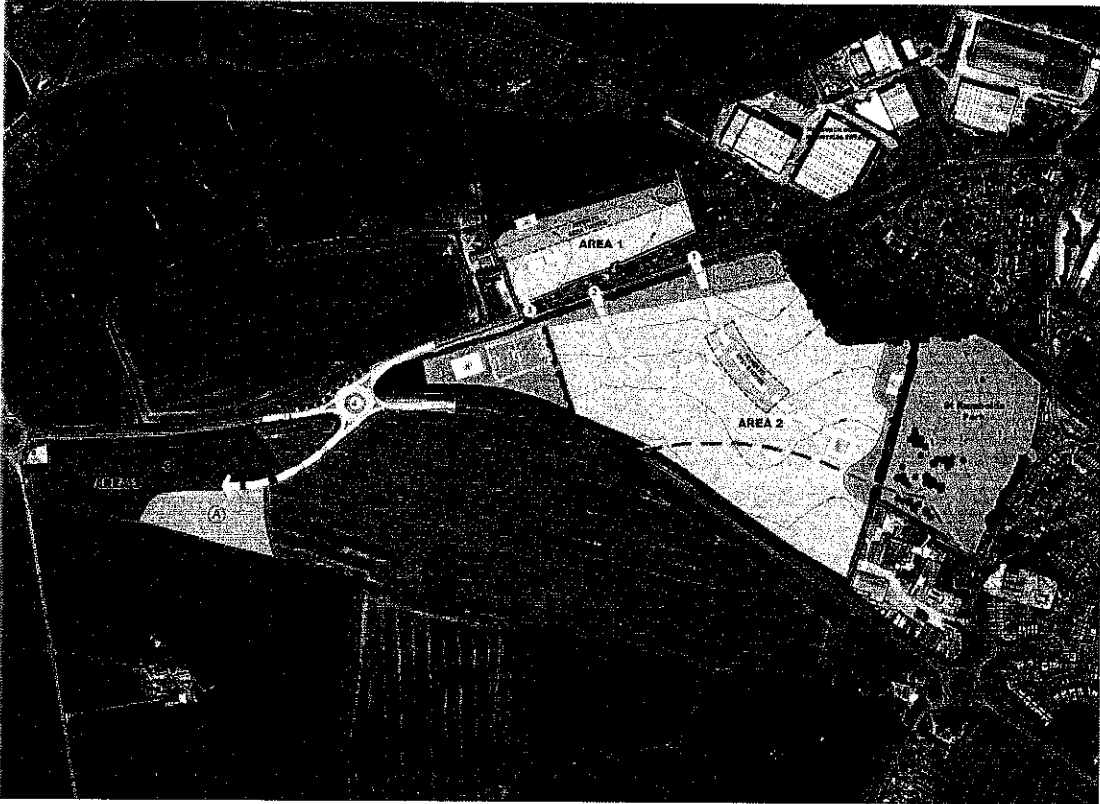
Interim Council – Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2015

Full Council - Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2015

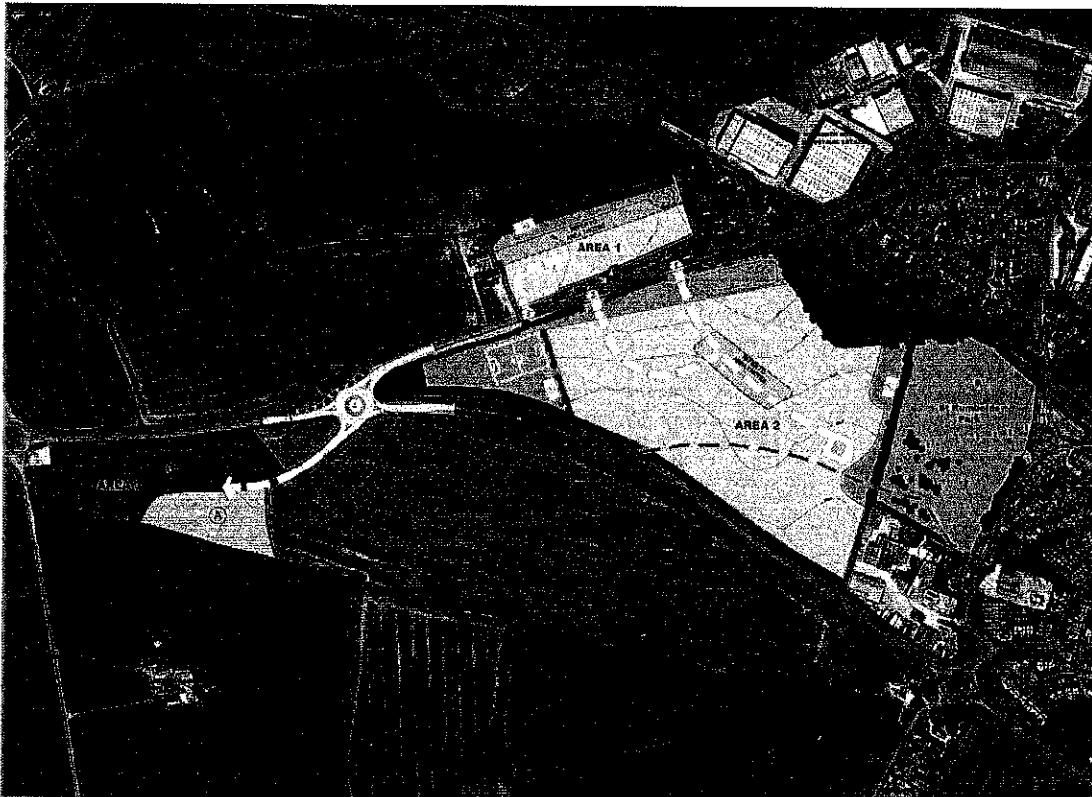
15/01218/APP Land north of A421 Tingewick Road

Application for Outline Planning Permission with access to provide up to 400 Residential Dwellings (including Affordable Housing), Open Space including Play Areas and sports and related recreation facilities, Landscaping, New Vehicular and Pedestrian Accesses, Engineering (including Ground Modelling) Works, Infrastructure Works (including Drainage Works and Utilities Provision) and Demolition (including Site Reclamation), Car Parking and Lighting.

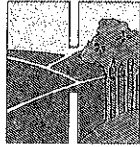
Amended Plan (revision O)



Original version (revision N)



Km.  
14.9.15



## Hallam Land Management

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t: 01454 625532 f: 01454 625534  
e: hallamlandsouthwest@henryboot.co.uk  
www.hallamland.co.uk

Our ref:

Your ref:

Date: 29 September 2015

Mr Chris Wayman  
Town Clerk  
Buckingham Town Council  
The Buckingham Centre  
Verney Close  
Buckingham  
MK18 1JP

Dear Chris

### **Application reference 15/01218/AOP – Land at Tingewick Road, Buckingham**

In response to your email of the 16<sup>th</sup> September 2015, I welcome the opportunity to provide further information responding to outstanding concerns of Town Council Members. Since the submission of the planning application we have provided a highways technical note on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2015 and a letter to you dated 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015, responding to issues raised in the application consultation response. It is this letter which forms the basis of your latest comments to us and to which the bullet point references below relate to.

You will now have seen that amended plans have been submitted to address the issues raised through the consultation process.

As you're aware we attended the Planning Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> August and felt that many issues were dealt with there, but the below hopefully clarifies matters. The 12<sup>th</sup> May bullet point is described first, followed by the Town Council's outstanding concern in red, followed by our response.

#### **Bullet point 5 - NEAPs are preferred to LEAPs**

In relation to NEAPs members were not satisfied with the response

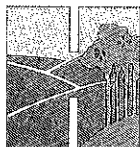
#### **Applicant response**

A Neighbourhood Area of Play (NEAP) has been included in the latest updated submission and there are two Local Equipped Areas of Play (LEAP) adjacent to St Rumbolds Park and to the north of Tingewick Road.

The two LEAPs will be designed in accordance with best practice guidance. They will provide play facilities for toddlers and younger children and would be set within a safe and secure location being well- overlooked by new housing and easily accessible for the local community. They will include a range of play items that will be selected to deliver a varied play experience.

The NEAP will be a larger play area that will be designed to provide play provision mainly for older children and teenagers. It would be designed to include space for active sport and play, which could include, for example, a hard court area for ball sports and opportunities for wheeled play, such as skateboarding.

Hallam Land Management Limited



## Hallam Land Management

**Bullet point 6 - in several places the Environmental Statement refers to conditions in Aylesbury which are not relevant to Buckingham, and the facilities data is not up to date or inaccurate (including bus services) which does not encourage confidence in the rest of the document**

Members felt that the documents did require updating with the correct information.

### Applicant response

The ES Addendum includes some minor factual updates in relation to Socio Economics and Water & Drainage. Facilities data updated – nurseries, dental practices, Plymouth Brethren, play areas – as per Councillor comments on the socio economic chapter. The updated submission also corrected the references to Aylesbury.

**Bullet point 7 – the Tingewick Road Allotments do not belong to the Town Council, and this might give rise to public speculation on the need for the allotments listed in application 15/01242**

It was felt that this required changing. It has led to AVDC Leisure Services making a wrong recommendation to the Planning Officer, based on the documents available.

### Applicant response

The reference to the allotments in the socio-economic chapter has been corrected in the updated submission and ES Addendum. Specifically the relevant passage has been amended to delete any reference to Buckingham Town Council being responsible for the Tingewick Road allotments. The AVDC Officer's comments make a suggestion but don't propose that the current proposals as defined in our application and the Neighbourhood Plan would be unacceptable. Therefore, other than to talk through with the Officer, the comments would not prevent the Town Council responding positively on the proposed allotment location.

**Bullet point 8 – only AVDC play areas are listed, the (more numerous) BTC ones are not mentioned; It is noted that there are other play area within the locality**

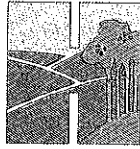
Members would like confirmation that this has been completed.

### Applicant response

This is addressed in the ES Addendum-minor factual updates section.

**Bullet point 9 - the River Ise (water quality "moderate") which flows into the Nene through Kettering, is referenced instead of the River Great Ouse (water quality A)**

Members were not convinced that the proper assessment had been made as it was felt the River Great Ouse had better water quality.



## **Hallam Land Management**

### Applicant response

We can confirm that the River Great Ouse in the vicinity of Buckingham is the river assessed in the assessment and that all references to or from data collected, relate to the River Great Ouse.

It should be noted that the assessment of the overall water quality in a river, be it ecological or chemical, is not something derived by the applicant, but purely a consideration of results provided by the Environment Agency (EA). The EA themselves follow strict guidance as laid out in the Water Framework Directive (WFD) when carryout these assessments. Therefore, it is a factual assessment by the EA and as such not something we can amend.

### **Bullet point 11 – Members would also like to have information on whether a Management Company is to be formed to look after the open spaces and verges; the fee charged on other estates is a form of double taxation, and a non-profit co-operative Residents' Association was preferred**

The original statement by the Town Council mentioned that a non-profit co-operative Residents Association was the preferred method of delivery but in the response there is no mention of this.

### Applicant response

We understand that the main area of concern was that people buy a property with a particular estate rent charge and then that charge gets increased without control. Our response detailed how the charge could only be increased in line with a price index so that residents had security that the rent charge would not be increased unfairly. A non-profit organisation is what we intend to deliver.

### **Bullet point 13 – Regarding the placement of road junctions**

Members would like reassurances that other developments and existing residences in the area have been taken into account when determining access points.

### Applicant response

The resubmission has been amended to move the eastern access off Tingewick Road further away from residential properties, in particular Villa Cottage. The access location is constrained by the need to provide adequate visibility and thus whilst we await comments from the Highway Authority, we consider the access location accords with highway design guidance.



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**Bullet point 15 – sufficient planting and acoustic fencing should be included in the design to keep traffic noise at acceptable levels**

Members are aware that AVDC officers are under a lot of pressure and may therefore have not carried out as rigorous assessment as is required. Therefore they would like to see more evidence produced that there is no impact or to lessen the impact that there is.

Applicant response

The construction noise impacts will be mitigated through the introduction of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which will be a condition of any Outline application. The ES demonstrates the potential noise impacts and mitigation. It is difficult to know what other information Members require without a technical assessment by them. We would be happy to speak further with the Council's Officers to ensure they have all of the detail required to make an informed and professional decision. The Outline application has correctly assessed what it needs to, and detailed matters of fencing and planting will be agreed through the reserved matters process.

**Bullet point 16 – there is little connectivity with Railway Walk which is a convenient safe pedestrian and cycle route to the senior schools and Industrial Park; a joint use path of sufficient width must be assured to access the town as well, and a link to Gawcott Road**

Members wish for reassurances that discussions have been opened with AVDC and an agreement pursued.

Applicant response

We have made contact with the Estates Department at AVDC (Chris Mason) and will work with him and the Planning Officers to facilitate the connection. We will update the Town Council regularly on progress so that they can assured that everything is being done to improve links around the site. With the adjacent land being owned by AVDC, and with the land being designated for community use ('Scenic Walk'), it seems likely that there would be no objection to this connection being made but we would not wish to confirm it is going to happen until AVDC give the go ahead. Clearly the development will pay for facilitating the connection and erecting signage if deemed appropriate.

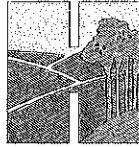
**Bullet point 17 – a more rigorous design strategy is needed for such a large site; the Design and Access document is generic, and an independent design review was called for. The design must be specific to Buckingham**

Members don't feel that enough information is provided within the Design & Access Statement for the main focal area. Members would also like more information on how the scheme fits in to the BNDP.

Applicant response

The Design & Access Statement (DAS) is a requisite document for planning applications of this nature. It has been prepared within the planning context of the National Planning Policy Framework, the





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adopted 'saved policies' of the Aylesbury Vale Local Plan and the Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan (BNDP).

The purpose of the DAS is to explain the analysis that has underpinned the design of the development proposals. The DAS, through its 'design vision' and its key design principles provides a level of information that will inform the detailed design stage of reserved matters applications. An integral part of the vision is the production of an Indicative Layout. The Indicative Layout, which is presented within the DAS, demonstrates how the layout of streets and buildings could come forward, and is prepared within the framework of land uses that are set out within the application proposals. Furthermore, the DAS is prepared within the context of best practice urban design approaches to deliver an attractive well-designed place, which is within the spirit of the BNDP's vision: "make Buckingham a better place to live, work, study and play". In addition to the sketches and illustrations within the DAS -and as requested -a more detailed plan is being prepared for the proposed feature space within the central part of the residential area as shown on the Indicative Layout. This will provide a further layer of design information with regard to the arrangement and interaction of streets, buildings and greenspace, which can be used as guiding template at the detailed design stage. We will provide this information to the Town Council when available.

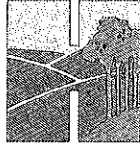
Councillors will appreciate that absolute certainty cannot be provided within the Outline Application but that the detail within the Design and Access Statement will be taken forward into the reserved matters stages. As committed to in our previous letter, the Town Council will be involved in the reserved matters process much more than they may have been so before. We do feel that the Design and Access Statement details a sound base of Design Principles. The design of reserved matters applications will have full regard to the D and A, and the BNDP, such that we believe the development will reflect the standards required by the Town Council and will be an asset to the Town.

**Bullet point 19 - telephone and broadband services are as important as other utility supplies; these must be installed ready for new residents to connect to, not added months later**

It is requested that you provide an update on the situation and the detailed time table.

Applicant response

As set out in the Environmental Statement we have assessed that the local exchange can offer a broadband connection and that there is a connection to that exchange immediately outside of the site, through BT. The report within the application also confirms that there are companies other than BT within the exchange who could offer competition for connection. Cable companies would also be routinely contacted and informed of the development in terms of potentially supply. In effect, from day one there is the ability to connect the dwelling to a communication and Internet connection for broadband. In essence there will be no delay to programme. Reserved Matters applications will include a delivery strategy in relation to how dwellings will be connected to the broadband network.



## **Hallam Land Management**

**Bullet point 20 all access routes must be disabled-friendly per BNDP policy 12; no steps**

It is felt that there must be a firm commitment to undertake this item

Applicant response

There is a firm commitment to provide pedestrian routes which are suitable for those with disabilities. The BNDP Examiner mentioned that 'must' should be replaced with 'should', and whilst it does not diminish our commitment we do agree with the wording change which was subsequently made to the 'Referendum' version. An example might arise for instance, such as improving the footpath connection to the north around St Rumbold's Well, where there are ground level issues that would make certain types of wheelchair access very difficult, not to mention implications on the Scheduled Ancient Monument.

**Bullet point 21 – there should be a real commitment to bungalows and other housing suitable for the disabled and elderly (BNDP Policy HP4) and it must have good access and not be sited in the remoter parts of the residential areas**

Members would like confirmation of the number of self-build and the number of bungalows which will be provided.

Applicant response

In the early stages of the BNDP discussions were held regarding 10 or 15 self-build plots being made available. No figure was included in the BNDP but we confirm that an acre of land will be available for self-build. Depending on how the land is laid out this would equate to up to 14 self-build plots).

The land north of Tingewick Road includes an area of 1 acre which would be solely for buildings lower than 6.6m ie 10/12 bungalows.

**Bullet point 22 - better detail of the marked out central area of Area 2 should be provided**

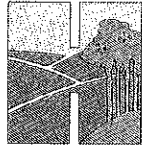
Members disagree that the Design & Access Statement provides enough detail and would like more provided.

Applicant response

See bullet point 17.

**Bullet point 23 – there is no indication of community assets other than open space/sports provision; no meeting room or clubhouse (existing estates have schools or local shops)**

Members would like confirmation of exactly what community assets would be provided



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### Applicant response

Sports Pitch with shelter

2 x Locally Equipped Play Areas (LEAPS) – see description at point 5 above

1 x Neighbourhood Equipped Play Area (NEAP) – see description at point 5 above

Extensive Green Infrastructure including St Rumbolds Park, a facility for use by residents of the new development and existing residents of Buckingham

Improved access and setting to St Rumbolds

Off-site sports contributions to existing facilities in the town

Allotments and Cemetery – whilst not part of this application, they are clearly related and would be facilitated by this development

After AVDC resolve to permit the application, discussions will continue regarding the S106 package and will include payments relating the education infrastructure; road and travel infrastructure; and improvements to footpath networks in the vicinity of the site.

### **Bullet point 24 – though the lack of capacity at Cannon Corner is mentioned, and the possibility of junction improvement by widening access points by 1m, no detail is supplied**

Members are not convinced of the benefits of this proposal and would like evidence of the difference it would make.

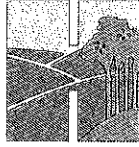
### Applicant response

The evidence is within the Transport Assessment (TA) and detailed modelling has been undertaken. We appreciate that TAs are not easily understandable, which is why County Highways are consultees and will spend time reviewing all of the information and results within the TA.

For reference, the junction has been assessed using a recognised traffic software assessment tool specifically for roundabouts known as 'Arcady'. The junction has been tested in all scenarios with and without the development and with and without the improvements. The results of this are in the main body of the TA with the outputs from the model in the Appendices

For those wishing to look at the detail, the TA Arcady outputs run from pages 147 to 170 in Appendix G (outputs are not normally numbered so in order to help count back the whole report has 179 pages). Reference to the improvements and tables starts on page 30 to 32 of the main TA report and tables/figures 9j to 9n.

In short, the TA models the baseline future year scenario 2019 and shows how improvements to the road alignments will result in better conditions for traffic with our development than if the improvements are not made, even without our development. Although the improvements appear minor in scope, they do improve performance without affecting the character of this important part of the town.



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I hope that the above provides what is needed for the Town Council to support the application in its current form. We appreciate that the Town Council would prefer as much detail signed and sealed at this point in time but we are unable to do this for every matter. We do hope though that our commitment to engage with the Town Council during Section 106 discussions will enable Members to feel more comfortable that matters within the Section 106 will be dealt with satisfactorily.

In this regard we would urge the Town Council to support the proposals in order that we can make progress on the next stage of this important scheme which is fundamental to the delivery of the objectives within the BNDP.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy Birch". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andy Birch

Regional Manager

## ACTION LIST

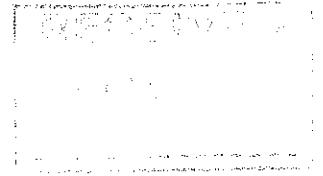
## FULL COUNCIL, INTERIM COUNCIL &amp; EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS

Subject	Meeting date/ Minute	Form	Response received
Festival of Health	133.1/14	<b>Town Clerk</b> to explore possibility	
Councillors Photographs	133.4/14	<b>Cllr. Newell</b> to arrange for invoicing	Done
Toilets	220/14	<b>DTC &amp; TC</b> to arrange for the construction	Planning Application in
Community Centre Lease	393/14	Draw up funding Plan for Community Centre	Having to affect roof repairs currently seeking quotes
Cycling Signage	643/14	Work with BCC and other parishes – discuss with Canal Society and BCC cycling route	Discussions with BCC have commenced
S106 discussions	643/14	Write to Secretary of State ref legal position; publicly express desire to negotiate with AVDC	Awaiting formal response however, AVDC now more engaging
University Access	22/15 & 311/15	Talk to the University about Evac Chairs and disabled access	Ongoing between Film Place and Uni
Red Cross Building	119/15	Explore possibility of temporary use of building	Ongoing
Public toilets	190/15	To look at extending the existing shop mobility site	To take on
Buckingham Partnership	191/15	To call a meeting	
AVDC Devolved	310/15	To write to AVDC to take on services	Holding letter received
LAF schemes	319/15	Submit schemes for funding	Email sent with schemes and information
HS2 Community Environment Fund	320/15	Submit schemes	Sent information for agreement
Mayor Making Ceremony	321/15	Respond to Buckingham Society	Done
Car parking charges	322/15	Support Destination Buckingham Group	AVDC turned down request
Speeding on Moreton Road	323/15	Submit LAF Bid	Information sent
New Home Bonus	324/15	Submit projects for NHB	Not suitable for funding
NALC Survey	325/15	Submit NALC survey	Submitted

**RT HON JOHN BERCOW MP**

HOUSE OF COMMONS, LONDON SW1A 0AA

020 7219 6346 | john.bercow.mp@parliament.uk



Mr C P Wayman  
Clerk to Buckingham Town Council  
Town Council Offices  
Buckingham Centre  
Verney Close  
Buckingham, MK18 1JP

22<sup>nd</sup> September 2015

Congratulations on the outcome of the Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan referendum. The turnout was certainly respectable and the conclusive outcome is testament to the hard work of both Buckingham Town Council and The Buckingham Society. I am convinced that a robust Neighbourhood Plan is the most effective way for communities to manage development from within and to protect against unsuitable development.

Needless to say, I am aware of the ongoing concern over AVDC's treatment of Neighbourhood Plans. I have written to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to request he call in for his consideration the planning application in Great Horwood which, should AVDC approve it, will sadly cast a shadow over the months and years of hard work that so many communities in Bucks have ploughed into Neighbourhood Plans.

Nonetheless, this unwelcome news should not detract from the substantive achievement of formulating and 'making' the Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan. Three cheers for Buckingham!

John Bercow

## AYLESBURY MAGISTRATES' COURT CLOSURE CONSULTATION

### Buckingham Town Council response

*Question 1. Do you agree with the proposals? What overall comments would you like to make on the proposals?*

Buckingham Town Council opposes the proposals on the grounds that Aylesbury is the county town of Buckinghamshire, and home to the Crown Court, the County Council and Aylesbury Vale District Council, the county police headquarters, a young offenders' prison and a probation office. There are also a number of law firms in North Bucks serving the Magistrates' and Crown Courts. It would be perverse for Aylesbury not to continue to be served also by a Magistrates' Court.

Aylesbury Vale (which includes Buckingham, Aylesbury and Winslow as well as 112 parishes) has a current population of 174,137, which is projected to grow by 23% to 213,000 by 2026. Both Bucks County Council and Aylesbury Vale District Council have now centralised their operations on Aylesbury, after closing local offices in Buckingham and Winslow, and Aylesbury itself is forecast to expand to 100,000 residents (from the current 72,000) by 2031, suggesting a continuing need for local court services.

Buckingham Magistrates' Court was closed in 2002 after magistrates had sat in the town for 640 years, and court business moved to Aylesbury Magistrates Court.

Buckingham Town Council has been made aware that Aylesbury Courthouse is currently underused, and questions why more use has not been made of its courts. However, we do recognise that the Crown Court needs to be relocated due to its lack of facilities and lack of general maintenance over the years.

We also believe that a better solution would be for the Magistrates Court to share courtrooms with the relocated Crown Court on an occasional basis, rather than full closure, the reasons for which we address in answer to Q3 below. There is a precedent for this; prior to the purpose-built Walton Street Magistrates' Court opening in 1980, Aylesbury magistrates sat one day a week in the Crown Court.

Over the years, six Aylesbury Vale courthouses have closed including our own in Buckingham, which along with Brill, Ivinghoe, Linslade, Winslow and Whitchurch were all centralised in Aylesbury as the Central Bucks Bench. Buckinghamshire is a long county, and the closure of Aylesbury Magistrates' Court would require Aylesbury Vale court users to travel either south to High Wycombe, or north to Milton Keynes, ending more than 650 years of local justice.

***Question 2. Will the proposals for the provision of court and tribunal services have a direct impact on you? If yes, please provide further details.***

Buckingham Town Council will be aware our local Magistrate's Bench is a unitary Buckinghamshire Bench - combining Central Bucks with the Milton Keynes and Wycombe & Beaconsfield Benches - since January 2012, the Magistrates and court staff are already listed to travel around the county, for which they receive travel remuneration.

But we concerned to hear of the potential impact on court proceedings (and trials in particular) if defendants, complainants, witnesses and other court users fail to attend or arrive late because of the cost, travel times and distances involved - particular for those who have to use public transport - delaying justice at a time when the Magistrates are being encouraged to make courts more efficient. Inevitably, such delays would not reflect well on court performance.

This is surely a waste of tax-payer's money and further work should be carried out to justify making financially vulnerable people travel further distances to court - this is clearly NOT LOCAL JUSTICE.

***Question 3. Are there other particular impacts of the proposals that HM Courts & Tribunal Service should take into account when making a decision? Please provide details.***

It is of concern to us that you have not taken into account the economic impact of the proposal on Aylesbury and North Bucks.

We note a number of local law firms carry out criminal work in the Magistrates' Court (as well as in the County Court) and we would be concerned for their future, as we would be for local court staff. We would also be concerned for the future of employees of Aylesbury Probation office if only the Crown Court remained.

We do not believe you have taken into account the substantial travel costs which some court users could face, and which would have a big impact on an Buckingham Aylesbury Vale defendant, particularly if on benefits.

The assessment of time and cost of parties travelling from Aylesbury Vale to High Wycombe or Milton Keynes assumes that the starting point for the journey is Aylesbury. This may be the case for some but not for all.

Those in the rural areas around Aylesbury may not be serviced by public transport. If they are, travel time and costs are increased in order to get into Aylesbury, Winslow or Buckingham. For those who are reliant on public transport but are not served by a local bus service, they will have to rely on family, friends or taxis to get them to a public transport route, further increasing time and costs.

We are told that for people who are involved in Family cases there are additional matters to consider other than those for the adult court. Firstly, it is likely in Public



Law cases that the numbers of people travelling will be more than in adult criminal cases. These are likely to be parents and their advocates, Local Authority solicitors and social workers, the Guardian and their solicitor. The cost of time and travel for these parties will substantially increase the overall costs and time of a family court appearance. It is also likely that family court cases will not be concluded within one sitting; therefore the increased costs are incurred at each appearance.

In Private Law, cases the numbers of people involved may not as great as for Public Law matters, however there will remain extra commitment of time and money.

Additionally child care arrangements often have to be put in place for Family cases and the additional travel time and need to cover child care costs will increase. We are of the opinion that this all adds to stress and anxiety for parents involved in family cases.

We also note that your calculations do not consider the time and costs to a court-user if their case is adjourned through lack of time - increasingly likely with fewer courts listed - or by lack of CPS or other documents, or non-attendance by witnesses or defendants, and they have to do it all over again on another day. This is an increasingly regular occurrence. A reliance on public transport could also cause adjournments if there are problems delaying court-users.

We can envisage, because of our understanding of the court system, more non-attenders as a result, and the refusal of witnesses to return. Some defendants might even reason it is better to be brought to court on a warrant than have to pay for their own journey, using police time and resources.

In the event of Aylesbury Probation office closing, there would be a further impact on local offenders, who would have to travel to Milton Keynes or High Wycombe for appointments, and the same problems regarding time and costs would apply.

*Question 4. Our assessment of the likely impacts and supporting analysis is set out in the Impact Assessment accompanying this consultation. Do you have any comments on the evidence used or conclusions reached? Please provide any additional evidence that you believe could be helpful.*

There are a number of points in the Impact Assessment document which we believe to be flawed. The Impact Assessment says that its objective is that "the proposal will reduce surplus capacity to ensure the estate is aligned to operational requirements." Yet nowhere does it address **local justice requirements**.

Under Impact of Magistrates (103) the document uses data which is now four years out of date, from 31 March 2011. There is more recent data from the Courts & Tribunals Judiciary dated 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015, prior to your consultation document's publication, which is significantly changed:

- \* 18% of serving magistrates aged 49 or under is now 14%
- \* 52% of those aged 60 or over is now 57%
- \* 8% of magistrates of BAME ethnicity is now 9.3%
- \* 5% of magistrates with disabilities is now 4%
- \* 51% of magistrates are female is now 53.04%

Under Location, you rightly say that the a key impact of the Estate Reform Programme will be an increased travel time to court for court users, but you then incorrectly calculate journeys on the assumption that "an individual goes to court to arrive at 10am". All defendants, complainants and witnesses are warned to be at court by 9.30am, which means that they will have to travel in the rush hour by car, taxi or public transport. Justices, advocates and agencies staff are expected to arrive earlier than that.

We would also question travel times. Due to the long, narrow nature of Buckinghamshire - which is 60 miles in length - there are neither north-south nor east-west rail links, and few direct bus services. For an non-driving Buckingham and district court user to be at Milton Keynes Court by 9.30am, for example, they would have to catch a bus from Buckingham at 07.50.

If a court user is attending High Wycombe Court instead of Aylesbury, then the journey from Buckingham or Winslow - which your Location calculation has not considered - will add at least 45 minutes and 25 minutes respectively to the 55-minute Aylesbury-High Wycombe journey time you quote, and longer when you factor in having to change to another bus or train at Aylesbury. That would require a Buckingham court-user to catch the 07.08 No 60 bus service to be at Wycombe on time.

None of the above takes into consideration any childcare, schoolchild or other issues which a court-user might have. It is possible that such long-distance court-users could be warned to attend for an afternoon hearing at 1.30, but that would then move the problem to their return journey.

*Question 5. Are there alternatives to travelling to a physical building that would be a benefit to some users? These could include using technology to engage remotely or the use of other, civic or public buildings for hearings as demand requires. Please explain your answer, with specific examples and evidence of the potential demand for the service where possible.*

We are aware that the attorney-general, Mr Gove, has suggested the use of public buildings other than courthouses for magistrates' hearings to keep justice local. Town halls, council offices and public halls are suggested, but their use would depend on a number of factors, not least their availability during normal business hours, and may not be available for multi-day or part-heard trials.

Neither Buckingham Community Centre nor the Buckingham Town Council offices are suitable for court use.

There is a need for security for both magistrates and other court users, and particularly for vulnerable witnesses. A secure area for defendants also needs to be considered; although a case may not start out as serious, contempt of court can quickly escalate into violence.

We are also told that areas are also needed for defendants, complainants and witnesses to meet with advocates in private, for witnesses to be isolated, and for magistrates to retire to deliberate.

Secure CJS WiFi for court lists and documents would also be required (which, it is noted, have recently been installed at Aylesbury Magistrates' Court), and the cost implication of hiring such buildings and making them suitable for judicial hearings would also need to be factored in.

There is no Buckingham building, as far as we are aware, that is capable of accommodating these requirements and offering the space/services needed to do so.

*Question 6: Please provide any additional comments that you have.*

Buckingham Town Council understands the difficulties faced by the current Crown Court remaining in the building in Market Square, and we accordingly support the proposal for the relocation of the Crown Court from the Market Square to Aylesbury Magistrates' Court in Walton Street.

But we do not wish to see Aylesbury Magistrates' Court closed, and recommend that hearings should be heard on a regular basis by arrangement with the Crown Court, and/or on an occasional basis when there is spare capacity.

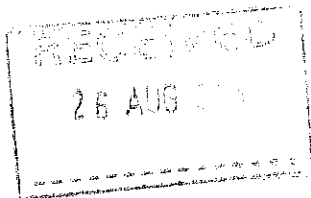
Alternatively, a multi-purpose magistrates' courtroom could be reserved at Walton Street, which could also be suitable for Youth and Family, and other non-criminal case such as the coroner's court and selected county court matters.

This would address the local justice needs of Buckingham and Aylesbury Vale court users by reducing the expense and time involved in making long journeys to either the north or south of the county, and the possibility of them failing to attend court either through the cost or due to public transport or traffic problems.

It would also acknowledge that the population of both Aylesbury and Aylesbury Vale is growing rapidly, whilst that of High Wycombe is forecast to fall. Government housing targets for North Bucks and the opening of the East-West rail link from Oxford to Bedford via Winslow in 2020 will contribute to the population expansion, and will increase the need for local justice.

Aylesbury, as the centrally-located county town, would continue to meet this need.

**Christopher Wayman MILCIM**  
Town Clerk  
Buckingham Town Council



**Thames Valley Primary Care Agency**  
 7-9 Cremyll Road  
 Reading  
 Berkshire  
 RG1 8NQ

Email : [typca.pharmacyapplications@nhs.net](mailto:typca.pharmacyapplications@nhs.net)  
 Telephone Number: 0118 918 3333

25<sup>th</sup> August 2015

**TO ALL ON THE ATTACHED LIST**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Controlled locality determination in relation to the area of Buckingham and surrounds, Buckinghamshire**

NHS England has now considered whether or not the area of Buckingham and surrounds is a controlled locality, and has determined that it is with the exception of the area of Buckingham that falls within the boundary depicted in the 'Buckingham Urban Boundary Map'.

**"BACKGROUND**

*Due to the merger of North End Surgery and Masonic House Surgery in Buckinghamshire, at the Pharmaceutical Services Regulations Committee ("PSRC") meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> June 2014, NHS England decided to undertake a determination of rurality of the North Buckinghamshire area. The area to be considered would be within the following boundaries:*

- North – County boundary*
- East – County boundary southwards to the A418*
- West – County boundary southwards to the A41*
- South – The A41 from the western county boundary, through the A4157 Weedon Road, then northeast along the A418 Aylesbury Road to the eastern county boundary*

*The Committee agreed that the area to be determined should be divided into three smaller areas for logistical ease during the site visits. The three smaller areas agreed are as follows:*

*a. Buckingham and surrounds*

- North – County boundary*

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- GP surgeries within the boundary
- Information from a site visit of the area (that had been undertaken by TVPCA)
- Representations received
- Bus services and frequencies
- Demographic and population statistics
- Members of the Committee confirmed that the Area Team had also undertaken its own site visit
- Current service provision was noted
- There were no LPS in Buckinghamshire
- It was noted that most of the areas within the defined boundaries were like small rural communities, with perhaps a primary school, a village hall, public house or church, but little else by way of facilities or amenities. Most areas are completely surrounded by fields and farmland which must be traversed to arrive at the next town or village
- The group felt that residents would have to travel out of the villages to access basic services and they would not therefore be considered to be self-sufficient
- Maids Moreton lay to the north of Buckingham. The area is more built up than the outlying villages and the group noted that there was no clear boundary between the village and Buckingham.
- The population statistics were noted and compared.

#### **DETERMINATION**

Having considered all the factors and statutory requirements within the National Health Service (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013, as amended, the Committee determined that all areas within the above defined boundaries, with the exception of Buckingham, are rural in character, and are determined to be controlled localities. There was much debate regarding delineating the urban area of Buckingham and the Committee deferred the determination of the boundary of the urban area of Buckingham, until a map could be produced.

At the PSRC meeting of 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2015, the Committee determined that the urban area of Buckingham is described in reference to the highlighted area on the Buckingham Urban Boundary Map.

The Committee agreed that the area outlined by the green line in the Map of Buckingham and surrounds are all rural in character, and are to be controlled localities, with the exception of the area of Buckingham that falls within that boundary (the urban area of Buckingham is as depicted in the 'Buckingham Urban Boundary Map').

#### **REASONS FOR DECISION**

The reasons for this decision were as follows:

- All areas within the defined boundaries, except Buckingham, had very few, if any, amenities or facilities
- The group felt that residents would have to travel out of the villages to access basic services and they would not therefore be considered to be self-sufficient
- There was an extensive number of amenities and services within Buckingham, including 4 pharmacies, 2 GP dispensing practices and other health and leisure facilities."

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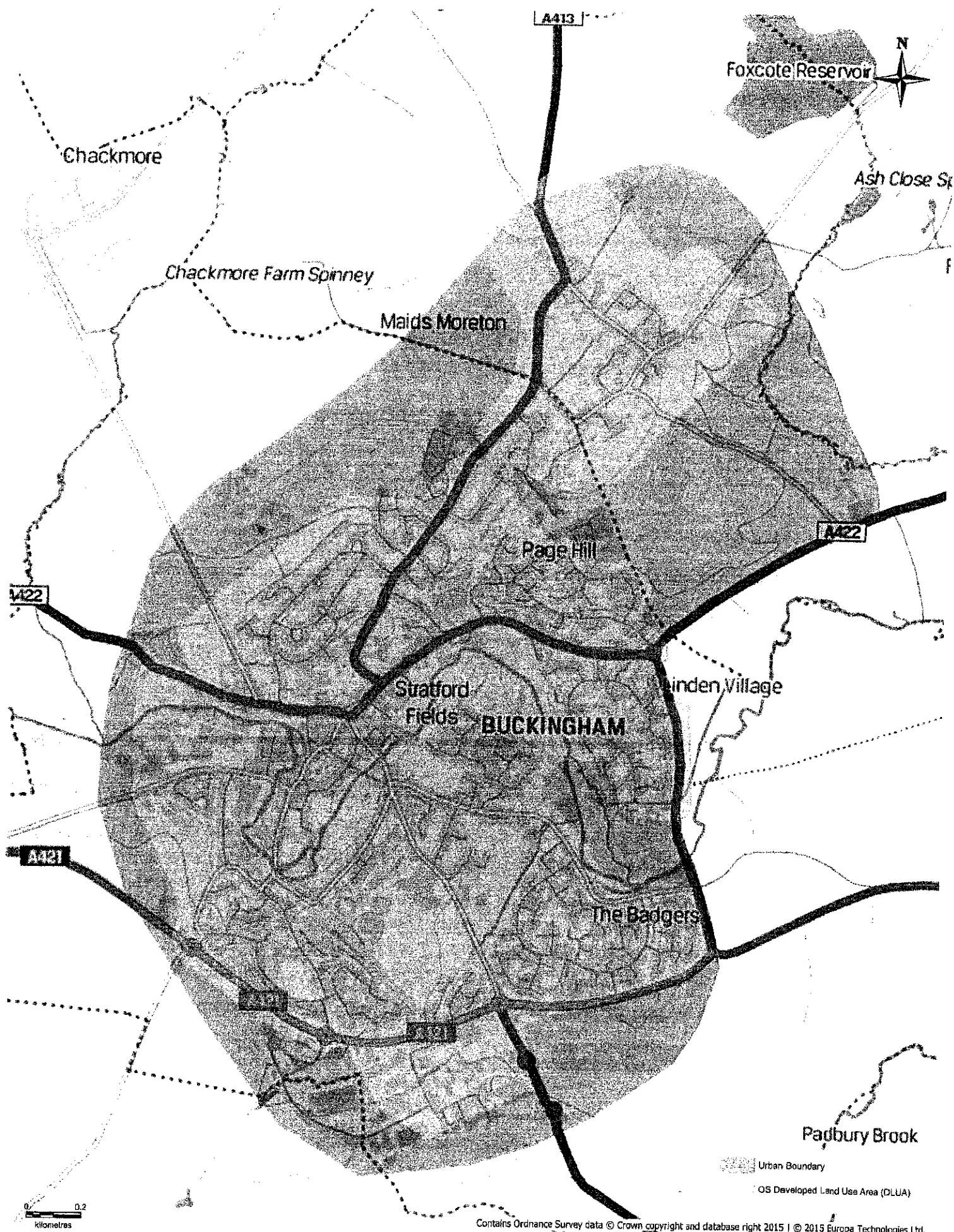
**Re: Controlled locality determination in relation to the area of Buckingham and surrounds, Buckinghamshire**

Healthwatch Bucks Centre Parade, Place Farm Way Monks Risborough Princes Risborough HP27 9JS	Mrs E Saye Akeley Village Hall off Church Hill Akeley MK18 5HB
Mrs R Corlett Beachampton Parish Council Mirius House Main Street Beachampton MK19 6DX	Mr P G Miller Biddlesden Parish Council 1 The Terrace Biddlesden Brackley NN13 5TR
Christopher Wayman Buckingham Town Council Room 32, The Buckingham Centre Verney Close Buckingham MK18 1JP	Karen Francis Great Horwood 2 Spring Close Great Horwood Buckingham MK17 0QU
N Burgess Leckhampstead Parish Council The Annexe Wicken Road Farm Leckhampstead MK18 5PA	Mr D R Newman Lillingstone Dayrell with Luffield Abbey Parish Meeting The Village School Lillingstone Dayrell Buckingham MK18 5AP
Mrs S P Butler Maids Moreton Parish Council Sandon House 20 Moreton Road Buckingham MK18 1LA	John Hamilton Nash Parish Council 29 High Street Nash Bucks MK17 0EP
Mrs J Beckett Radclive cum Chackmore Parish Council Gorran Main Street Chackmore MK18 5JF	Mr G P Purefoy Shalstone Parish Meeting Shalstone Manor Buckingham MK18 5LT
Ivy Cakebread Stowe Parish Council Meadow View Dadford Buckingham MK18 5JY	Maggie Beach Thornborough Parish Council The Old Cottage Chapel Lane Thornborough MK18 2DJ
Alex Matthews Thornton Parish Meeting Westbrook Lodge The Coach Houses Thornton	Dawn Rogers Tingewick Parish Council Honeysuckle Cottage Water Stratford Buckingham

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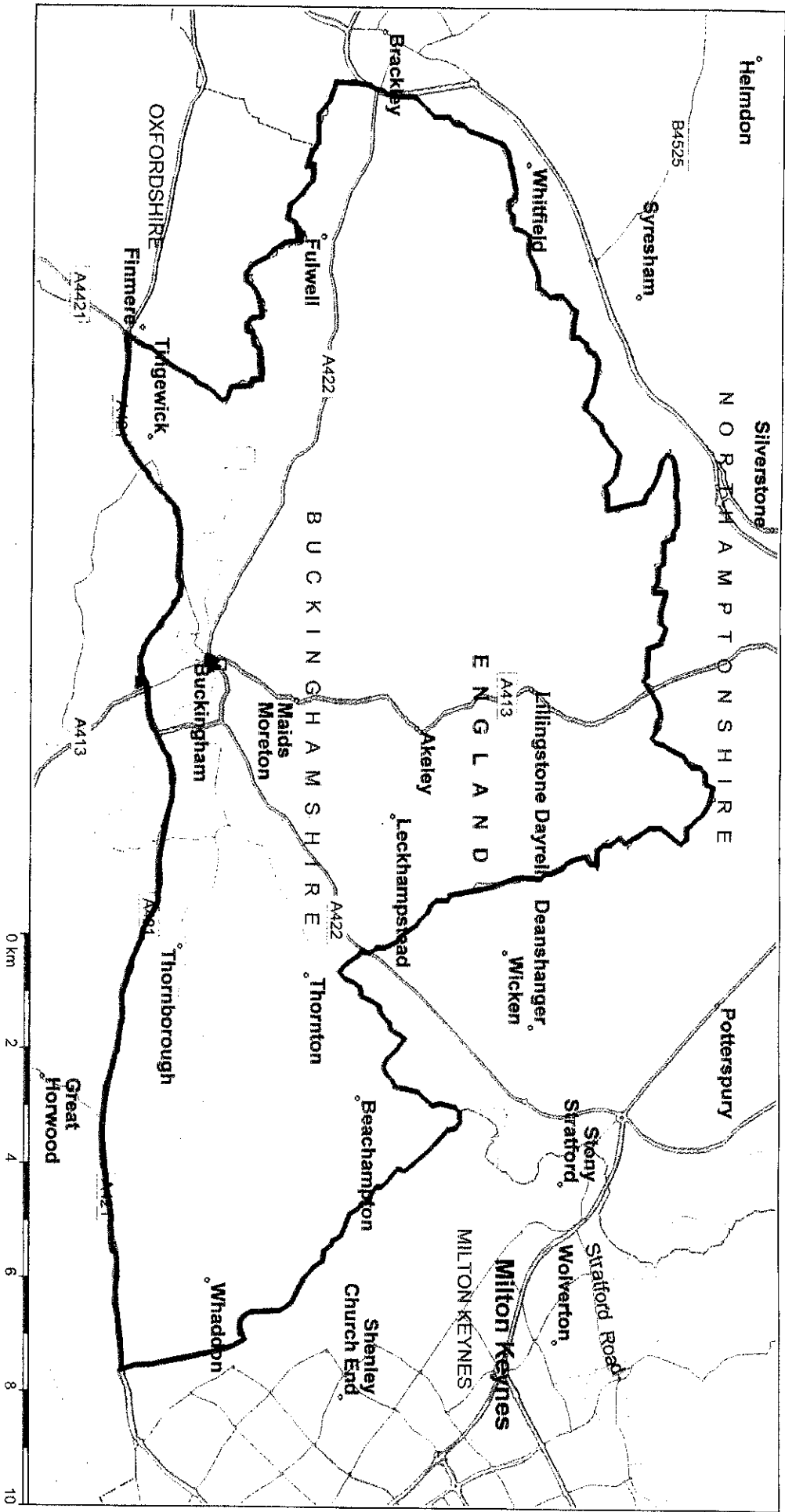
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NHS England South (South Central) - Primary Care Commissioning Support

Buckingham Urban Boundary

South, Central and West  
 Commissioning Support Unit **NHS**  
 James Norris - 14 July 2015  
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 Ordnance Survey 100050537.  
 Contains Royal Mail data © Royal Mail  
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 X:NHS England/Thames Valley/Controlled Localities

# Buckingham and surrounds



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AYLESBURY VALE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
**Democratic Services**

Please ask for: Craig Saunders  
 Direct Line: (01296) 585043  
 Switchboard: (01296) 585858  
 Email: [csaunders@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk](mailto:csaunders@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk)  
 Text Relay: prefix telephone number with 18001  
 Our Ref: DEM 10  
 Your Ref:



12 August 2015

Clerks to Parish and Town Councils

Dear Clerk

**Allowances for Parish and Town Councillors**

I advised on 19 May 2015 that the Independent Remuneration Panel was reviewing Members' allowances and that it also had responsibility for reporting on allowances for Town and Parish councillors. Attached is a copy of the report of the Panel setting out recommendations in respect of basic allowances and travel and subsistence.

I would remind you that there is no requirement for Town or Parish Councils to draw up a scheme and pay allowances. However, if your Council wishes to pay any such allowances it must approve a scheme having regard to the recommendations of the Panel.

I would draw your attention in particular to the following:-

**Panel Membership:** In accordance with the regulations, the Panel comprised of those people who were also members of the District Council's Independent Remuneration Panel. These were:-

Sir John Sparrow, local resident and retired businessman (Chairman)  
 John Cotton, local resident and retired banker  
 Colin Howe, local resident and chartered accountant

**Basic Allowance:** The amounts given in paragraph 3 are maximum allowances covering broad bands of electorate. The Panel feels that individual Town/Parish Councils should set their allowances at a level that does not exceed an overall cost of £1.10 per elector.

**Expenses of Office:** Any payment of expenses of office to the Chairman of the Council under Section 15(5) of the Local Government Act, 1972, can continue quite separately from the scheme of allowances.

**Travel and Subsistence:** The maximum limits as referred to in paragraph 4 of the report are:-

**Meals**

Breakfast - £6.06 when duties or travel time commence before 7.30am  
 Lunch - £8.37 when duties or travel time take place over the period from noon to 2pm  
 Evening Meal - £10.36 when duties or travel time extend after 8pm

**Bus/Train Fares and Car Parking Fees**

Reimbursement of actual costs incurred.

**Approved Duties** – Attached is a list of the District Council's approved duties which may help in producing your own list.

**Regulations and Requirements** – Attached is an extract from the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 dealing with allowances for Parish Council and related requirements. Please have regard in particular to:-


Regulation 30 – Publicity in respect of the report.

Regulation 25(6) – Publicity in respect of basic allowances set by the Town / Parish Council.

Regulation 31 – Keeping of records.

Tax and National Insurance – Attached is an extract from guidance on tax and national insurance issues.

Yours sincerely



Craig Saunders  
Senior Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer

## AYLESBURY VALE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### The Recommendations of the Aylesbury Vale District Council's Independent Remuneration Panel of Allowances for Parish Councillors – July-August 2015

#### Introduction

1. The Panel has met to consider the District Council's Member Allowances scheme to be effective from 2015/16 in the light of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. The Regulations provide that the Panel should also act as the Parish Remuneration Panel and that Parish and Town Councils who wish to pay allowances must have regard to the Panel's recommendations in relation to:
  - The amount of Parish basic allowance payable to members. This must be expressed as a cash figure and as a % of the basic allowance for district councillors.
  - Whether the Parish basic allowance should be payable to the Chairman or to all parish councillors.
  - Whether, where all members receive an allowance, the amount payable to the Chairman should be set at a higher level.
  - The amount of travelling and subsistence allowance.
  - The duties for which members should receive travelling and subsistence allowances.
2. The Panel recognised that many Parish Councils in Aylesbury Vale are small and run with small precepts. The Panel emphasised that it is not suggesting that it is appropriate for all Parish Councils to pay allowances and that it is for each Council to determine its own scheme if this is felt to be justified. The Panel understood that an overwhelming number of Councils have chosen not to implement a scheme of allowances. However for those that have implemented or may wish to introduce a scheme the Panel felt that as a general guide a scheme should not exceed an overall cost of £1.10 per member of the electorate.
3. The Panel set out the following as its guide to Parish Councils should they determine to introduce a scheme of allowances: -

<b>Electorate</b>	<b>% of District Basic*</b>	<b>Amount per Councillor £ (up to)</b>
0 – 2500	2.5%	137
2501 – 5000	5.0%	274
5001 – 10000	7.5%	411
10001 – 15000	10.0%	548
15001 – 20000	12.5%	684
20001 – 25000	15.0%	822
25001 and above	20.0%	1,096

\* Calculated on a District Basic allowance of £5,472. (The District Council is being recommended by the Panel to increase its Basic Allowance by 1.5% from £5,388 to £5,472).

4. The Panel recommended that any scheme of travel allowances that is introduced should be based on HM Revenue and Customs mileage rates of 45p per mile for cars and 24p per mile for motor cycles. The Panel felt however that Parishes should be free to pay a bicycle allowance of 14.9p per mile. (This would mirror the scheme being recommended for adoption by the District Council). Subsistence should be

based on reimbursement of receipted expenditure within the maximum limits as set out in the AVDC scheme for officers. The Panel suggested a list of approved duties similar to that of the District Council, should be maintained and kept under regular review.

5. The Panel recommended that in view of the number and differences in both size and scale of activity each Parish and Town Council should determine the actual allowances within these overall parameters, being in the Panel's opinion, in the best position to make a judgement based on individual circumstances whether it is appropriate to pay:-
  - All or part of the basic allowance to reflect any incidental costs and possibly time commitment.
  - A basic allowance to all members or just the Chairman or Mayor.
  - A higher amount to the Chairman or Mayor if all Members are entitled to an allowance. The Panel recommended however that in these circumstances a maximum of twice the basic allowance should be payable.
6. The Panel's recommendations apply for the four year term until the next local elections in 2019. The Panel accepted that allowances may be updated annually on 1 April each year in accordance with the indices set out in the report on the AVDC allowances.
7. The Panel recognised that the 2003 Regulations defined a member as being an "elected member" of a Parish Council and that co-opted members cannot receive allowances through a scheme made under these Regulations. This fact was particularly relevant as one Town Council had specifically raised the issue. Parish and Town Councils that are reimbursing member expenses in any other manner need to ensure that the arrangements are permissible and acceptable to both HM Revenue and Customs and the auditors.

## APPROVED DUTIES

Attendance at the following meetings has been prescribed as an "Approved Duty", thus entitling Members to claim travelling and subsistence allowances as appropriate:-

- (1) Meetings of the Council.
- (2) Meetings of the Council's Committees and Sub-Committees of which they are Members.
- (3) Meetings of the Cabinet and any Committees it may establish.
- (4) Attendance by non Members at meetings of the Cabinet or any Committees or Sub-Committees at the specific invitation of the Leader or Chairman.
- (5) Attendance by non members in pursuance of their common law "right to know" at meetings of the Cabinet or any Committee or Sub-Committee. (A non member attending an informal meeting with the consent of the Leader or Chairman cannot claim any allowances.)
- (6) Informal meetings of Committees and Sub-Committees, Seminars and visits arranged for a particular purpose.
- (7) Attendance of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees at agenda briefing sessions subject to a limit of one session per meeting and only where the particular Member does not receive a special responsibility allowance for any position.
- (8) Meetings of informal panels/groups as determined by the Democratic Services Manager.
- (9) Meetings of Cabinet Members and their policy advisors as a group.
- (10) Members appointed by the Cabinet or any Committee or Sub-Committee to meet and consider specific matters referred to them or to make inspections.
- (11) Meetings called by the Chairman of the Council, the Leader or the Chief Executive for a particular purpose where the Council representation includes members from two or more political group.
- (12) Delegations of Members to Government Departments.
- (13) Conferences and Courses.
- (14) Attendance by District Council representatives at meetings of Buckinghamshire County Council Select Committees.
- (15) Attendance by District Council representatives at meetings of Local Area Forums.
- (16) Attendance at meetings of an outside body or partnership to which the Council or Cabinet makes appointments or nominations and where the Member has been formally appointed as a representative of the Council.
- (17) Attendance as a nominated representative at a meeting of Local Authority Associations of which the Council is a member or has an interest.

## Extract from the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003

### PART 5 PARISH COUNCILS

#### Application of this Part

24. Any reference in this Part—

- (a) to an authority is, unless otherwise specified, a reference to a parish council;
- (b) to a member is, unless otherwise specified, a reference to an elected member of a parish council;
- (c) to a responsible authority is, in relation to a parish council, a reference to the district council or unitary county council—
  - (i) where the parish council is the council for one parish, in whose area the parish council is situated; or
  - (ii) where the parish council is the council for a group of parishes<sup>1</sup>, in whose area all the parishes in the group are situated or, where that is not the case, in whose area the greatest number of local government electors for the parishes in the group is situated; and
- (d) to an establishing authority is, in relation to a parish remuneration panel, a reference to the responsible authority that established that parish remuneration panel.

#### Parish basic allowance

25.—(1) An authority may pay an allowance for each year ("parish basic allowance")—

- (a) to its chairman<sup>2</sup> only; or
- (b) to each of its members,

and the amount of that allowance payable to its chairman may differ from that payable to each other member of the authority, but otherwise that amount shall be the same for each such member.

(2) Where an authority proposes to pay parish basic allowance, whether to its chairman only or to each of its members, it must have regard, in setting the level or levels of such allowances, to the recommendations which have been made in respect of it by a parish remuneration panel in accordance with regulation 28.

(3) Subject to paragraph (4), where an authority proposes to pay parish basic allowance in any year to its members and the term of office of any member begins or ends otherwise than at the beginning or end of a year, that member's entitlement shall be to payment of such part of the parish basic allowance as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of days during which his term of office subsists bears to the number of days in that year.

(4) Where an authority proposes to pay parish basic allowance in any year—

- (a) to its chairman only; or
  - (b) to all its members but at a higher level to the chairman,
- and the term of office of the chairman as chairman begins or ends otherwise than at the beginning or end of a year, his entitlement for the period during which he holds the office of chairman shall be to payment of such part of

<sup>1</sup> see section 11 of the Local Government Act 1972 for the procedure by which parish councils may be grouped.

<sup>2</sup> See section 15(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 for the duty to elect a chairman from among the councillors of a parish council.

the parish basic allowance to which he is entitled as chairman as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of days during which his term of office as chairman subsists bears to the number of days in that year.

(5) Where a member is suspended or partially suspended from his responsibilities or duties as a member of an authority in accordance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 or regulations made under that Part, the part of the parish basic allowance payable to him in respect of the period for which he is suspended or partially suspended may be withheld by the authority.

(6) An authority shall, as soon as reasonably practical after setting the levels at which any parish basic allowance is to be paid and to whom, arrange for the publication in a conspicuous place or places in the area of the authority, for a period of at least 14 days, of a notice or notices containing the following information—

(a) any recommendation in respect of parish basic allowance made by the parish remuneration panel;

(b) the level or levels at which the authority has decided to pay parish basic allowance and to which members it is to be paid; and

(c) a statement that in reaching the decision on the matters referred to in sub-paragraph (b) the authority has had regard to the recommendation of the parish remuneration panel.

(7) An authority shall ensure that it keeps a copy of the information referred to in paragraph (6) available for inspection by members of the public on reasonable notice.

(8) An authority may require that where payment of parish basic allowance has already been made in respect of any period during which the member concerned is—

(a) suspended or partially suspended from his responsibilities or duties as a member of the authority in accordance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 or regulations made under that Part;

(b) ceases to be a member of the authority; or

(c) is in any other way not entitled to receive the allowance in respect of that period,

such part of the allowance as relates to any such period shall be repaid to the authority.

(9) An authority may not make any payment, and a member is not entitled to receive any payment, under the provisions of this regulation in respect of any period prior to 30th September 2003 if payment is made, in respect of any duties carried out by the member during that same period, under any of the provisions referred to in regulation 34(1).

#### **Parish travelling and subsistence allowance**

**26.—**(1) An authority may pay to its members allowances in respect of travelling and subsistence ("parish travelling and subsistence allowance"), including an allowance in respect of travel by bicycle or by any other non-motorised form of transport, undertaken or incurred in connection with the performance of any duty within one or more of the following categories—

(a) the attendance at a meeting of the authority or of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or of any other body to which the authority makes appointments or nominations, or of any committee or sub-committee of such a body;

(b) the attendance at a meeting of any association of authorities of which the authority is a member;

- (c) the performance of any duty in pursuance of any standing order made under section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972 requiring a member or members to be present while tender documents are opened;
- (d) the performance of any duty in connection with the discharge of any function of the authority conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises; and
- (e) the carrying out of any other duty approved by the authority, or any duty of a class so approved, for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the authority or of any of its committees or sub-committees.

(2) Where a member is suspended or partially suspended from his responsibilities or duties as a member of an authority in accordance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 or regulations made under that Part, any parish travelling and subsistence allowance payable to him in respect of the responsibilities or duties from which he is suspended or partially suspended may be withheld by the authority.

(3) An authority may require that where payment of travelling and subsistence allowance has already been made in respect of any period during which the member concerned is—

- (a) suspended or partially suspended from his responsibilities or duties as a member of the authority in accordance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 or regulations made under that Part;
- (b) ceases to be a member of the authority; or
- (c) is in any other way not entitled to receive the allowance in respect of that period,

such part of the allowance as relates to any such period shall be repaid to the authority.

(4) An authority may not make any payment, and a member is not entitled to receive any payment, under the provisions of this regulation in respect of any period prior to 30th September 2003 if payment is made, in respect of any travelling and subsistence expenses incurred by the member during that same period, under any of the provisions referred to in regulation 34(1).

#### **Parish remuneration panels**

**27.—**(1) A parish remuneration panel may be established—

- (a) by a responsible authority and shall make recommendations in respect of the authorities for which the establishing authority is the responsible authority; or
- (b) jointly by any responsible authorities and shall make recommendations in respect of the authorities for which the establishing authorities are the responsible authorities.

(2) Subject to paragraph (3), a parish remuneration panel shall consist of those persons who are also members of the independent remuneration panel which exercises functions in respect of the establishing authority or authorities.

(3) A parish remuneration panel shall not include any member who is also a member of an authority in respect of which it makes recommendations or is a member of a committee or sub-committee of such an authority.



(4) The authorities in respect of which a parish remuneration panel established under paragraph (1) makes recommendations shall each pay to the parish remuneration panel an equal share of the amount of the expenses incurred by that panel in carrying out that panel's functions.

#### **Recommendations of parish remuneration panels**

**28.—**(1) A parish remuneration panel shall produce a report in relation to the members of the authorities in respect of which it was established, making recommendations, in accordance with the provisions of regulation 29, as to—

- (a) the amount of parish basic allowance payable to members of such authorities;
- (b) the amount of travelling and subsistence allowance payable to members of such authorities;
- (c) whether parish basic allowance should be payable only to the chairman of any such authority or to all of its members;
- (d) whether, if parish basic allowance should be payable to both the chairman and the other members of any such authority, the allowance payable to the chairman should be set at a level higher than that payable to the other members and, if so, the higher amount so payable; and
- (e) the responsibilities or duties in respect of which members should receive parish travelling and subsistence allowance.

(2) A copy of a report made under paragraph (1) shall be sent to each authority in respect of which recommendations have been made.

#### **Levels of allowances**

**29.—**(1) A parish remuneration panel may, in making its recommendations in accordance with regulations 27 and 28, either—

- (a) apply the same recommended levels of parish basic allowance and parish travelling and subsistence allowance to all the authorities in respect of which it was established; or
- (b) make different recommendations for different authorities.

(2) A parish remuneration panel shall express its recommendation as to the level of parish basic allowance, in respect of a parish or parishes, as a percentage of the sum that an independent remuneration panel has recommended as the level of basic allowance for the establishing authority which is the responsible authority for that parish or parishes.

(3) The percentage referred to in paragraph (2) may be one hundred per cent.

(4) A parish remuneration panel shall also express its recommendation as to the level of parish basic allowance as a monetary sum being a monetary sum equivalent to the percentage expressed in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3).

### **Publicity in respect of reports of parish remuneration panels**

**30.**—(1) Once an authority receives a copy of a report made to it by a parish remuneration panel in accordance with regulation 28, it shall, as soon as reasonably practicable—

(a) ensure that copies of that report are available for inspection by members of the public on reasonable notice; and

(b) arrange for the publication in a conspicuous place or places in the area of the authority, for a period of at least 14 days, of a notice which—

(i) states that it has received recommendations from a parish remuneration panel in respect of allowances;

(ii) describes the main features of that panel's recommendations and specifies the recommended amounts of each allowance mentioned in the report in respect of that authority; and

(iii) states that copies of the panel's report are available for inspection on reasonable notice and gives details of the manner in which notice should be given of an intention to inspect the report.

(2) An authority shall supply a copy of a report made by a parish remuneration panel in accordance with regulation 28 to any person who requests a copy and who pays to the authority such reasonable fee as the authority may determine.

### **Records of parish allowances**

**31.**—(1) An authority shall keep a record of the payments made by it in respect of—

(a) parish basic allowance; and

(b) parish travelling and subsistence allowance.

(2) Such a record shall—

(a) specify the name of the recipient and the amount and nature of each payment;

(b) be available for inspection on reasonable notice and at no charge, by any local government elector for the area of that authority; and

(c) be supplied in copy to any person who is entitled to inspect a record under paragraph (b) and who requests a copy and pays to the authority such reasonable fee as it may determine.

(3) As soon as reasonably practicable after the end of a year, an authority shall arrange for the publication, for a period of at least 14 days, of a notice in a conspicuous place or places in the area of the authority stating the total sum paid by it in the year to each member in respect of each of the following—

(a) parish basic allowance; and

(b) parish travelling and subsistence allowance.

### **Elections to forgo parish allowances**

**32.** A member may, by notice in writing given to the proper officer of the authority, elect to forgo his entitlement or any part of his entitlement to allowances.

## **EIM65970 - Local Government Councillors and civic dignitaries in England: ODPM guidance: Part two: taxation of members' allowances and expenses**

[**Note:** for councils in England this guidance supplements and amplifies the basic guidance at [EIM65920](#) to EIM65950. See also:

Part one - members' allowances (see [EIM65960](#))

Part three - members' allowances and National Insurance Contributions (see NIM05640 onwards).]

### **“Taxation of Members' Allowances and Expenses**

#### **Introduction**

106. This part provides general guidance on the tax treatment of members' allowances. It covers:

- the relevant tax rules
- which allowances are taxable
- the treatment of expenses incurred by a member carrying out approved duties which are reimbursed by the authority
- what tax relief is available for expenses that the authority does not reimburse.

There is also a short section covering civic dignitaries.

For information covering National Insurance liability on members' allowances and expenses see paragraph 146 onwards. [See NIM05640 onwards]

This guidance is not binding and does not affect any member's right of appeal. Nor is it a full statement of the law as it applies to members' allowances and expenses. Members should refer to the relevant legislation where appropriate. Alternatively they can contact their tax office, who will be able to help.

#### **The tax charge**

107. For tax purposes council members and civic dignitaries are treated in the same way as any other individual who holds an office or is an employee. Earnings received from an office or employment are chargeable to income tax as employment income. PAYE arrangements apply to these earnings as they do to any other employment. 'Earnings' has a wide meaning - it includes salaries, fees, wages and any other profits received from an office or employment. It also includes allowances paid to cover expenses incurred in carrying out the duties of an office or employment, unless these allowances do no more than reimburse expenses actually incurred and which are deductible for tax purposes.

#### **Relief for expenses**

108. Under the employment income expenses rules (Section 336 - 339 Income Tax (Earnings and Pensions) Act 2003, (ITEPA 2003)), local government councillors and civic dignitaries can get a tax deduction for:

- travelling expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of the duties of their office

- other travelling expenses which relate to their necessary attendance at a temporary workplace
- any other expenses which are incurred wholly, exclusively and necessarily in the performance of their official duties

but note that expenses for travel in a person's own vehicle are dealt with under separate rules and that actual mileage expenses are not deductible. See paragraph 126(viii) below.

109. These rules include a series of conditions that vary for each type of expenditure. The conditions are:

- in all cases the expenditure must actually be incurred. So, for example, if a councillor or civic dignitary is away overnight on council business but finds it more convenient to stay with friends rather than incur hotel bills, there may be no expenditure to set against any allowance received so no deduction would be due
- travelling expenses necessarily incurred in performing the duties of the office are limited to expenses during necessary travel on members' business, for example travelling between the local authority offices and a place the member needs to visit on local government business
- a temporary workplace is a place the member only attends occasionally to carry out duties, or attends for a limited duration (defined as not more than 40% of working time over a period not exceeding 24 months) or a temporary purpose. The travel expenses to be deducted under this heading are the expenses of travelling between the members' home and the temporary workplace
- for expenses other than expenses of travel to a temporary workplace the expenditure must be incurred in the performance of the individual's duties. This means that, to be deductible, the expense must be incurred in actually carrying out the duties of the office. It is not sufficient that an expense is simply relevant to, or incurred in connection with, the duties of the office. In particular, no expense will be allowable which merely puts the office holder in a position to perform the duties of that office
- also for expenses other than those of travel to a temporary workplace the expenditure must be such that any holder of the office would be necessarily obliged to incur it. The fact that an office holder is encouraged, expected or required to incur a particular expense is not conclusive evidence that it is 'necessarily' incurred. Also, the expense must stem from the requirements of the job itself, not from the personal circumstances of the office holder. Strictly, the 'necessity test' will be satisfied if (and only if) each and every person holding the office would have to incur the expenditure
- expenditure on anything other than travel must also be incurred wholly and exclusively in the performance of the office holder's duties. For example, it may be necessary for a councillor to use a home telephone in the performance of his or her duties - but where the same facility is available to be used also for personal calls, the rental costs are not incurred exclusively in the performance of duties so no deduction is due (see paragraph 126(iii) below).

In addition, a deduction may only be given to the extent that the expense incurred does not exceed the earnings of the relevant office. If, for a particular year of assessment, there are insufficient earnings from the office to cover the expense claimed, no deduction can be given against any other income, including income from other offices or employments.

Similarly, where a councillor has renounced allowances to which he or she would otherwise be entitled, no expenses may be claimed as a deduction.

### **Members' Allowances which provide Remuneration**

#### **Councillors on main and 'secondary' authorities**

110. Allowances taxable as employment income include the following:

- o Basic allowance
- o Special responsibility allowance
- o Dependants' Carers' Allowance
- o Co-Optees' Allowance

#### **Parish, town and community councillors**

111. The Parish Basic Allowance is taxable as employment income.

#### **Non-councillors**

112. The tax rules for Co-Optees' Allowance and Parish Basic Allowance to non-councillors are the same as for parish, town and community councillors set out in paragraphs 110 & 111 above.

#### **Renunciation**

113. Renunciation of allowances which provide remuneration will mean that there will be no liability to income tax, but it will also mean that no expenses can be claimed as a deduction (see paragraph 125) and may affect entitlement to social security benefits.

#### **Travel and subsistence allowances**

114. As elected representatives, councillors are accepted as normally having two places of work - at the council offices and in their electoral area. Often councillors need to use their own homes to see constituents. Where a councillor does use his or her own home to undertake representative duties on behalf of the council, an allowance paid for travel between home and the council offices or some other place on council business is included in the calculation under the rules described at paragraph 126(viii) below.

115. If it is not necessary for a councillor routinely to see constituents at home, any allowance paid for travel between home and the council offices will be taxable in the normal way. The fact that a councillor chooses to do some work at home - for example reading council papers or completing correspondence - does not make that home a distinct place of work for the purpose of claiming tax relief on travel expenses. However, an allowance paid for travel between home and any place that is a temporary workplace will also be included in the calculation at paragraph 126(viii) below.

116. For non-councillors, any allowance paid for travel between home and the council offices will be taxable unless he or she can show that home is itself a place of work in the real sense for that office - that is to say any holder of that office is necessarily obliged to perform substantive duties there.

117. For the treatment of mileage allowances paid for travel on council business generally, see paragraph 126(viii) below.

118. Day subsistence allowances are taxable unless they are paid in respect of the extra expense of subsistence incurred as a consequence of travel on council business away from the council offices.
119. Overnight subsistence allowances are not taxable provided there is no element of profit. A profit could arise, for example, if someone travelling on council business stays overnight with friends or relatives rather than in a hotel.

### **Dispensations**

120. A 'dispensation' is a notice given by an Officer of HMRC to an employer if the Officer is satisfied that expense allowances paid or benefits provided by the employer would be fully matched by an expenses deduction, with the result that no tax liability arises. A dispensation relieves the employer of the need to report details of the particular expenses payments or benefits provided to HMRC or to the employee or office-holder. And the employee or office-holder need not show them in his or her tax return if they get one.
121. The dispensation does not exempt from tax items upon which the taxpayer would otherwise be taxed. The aim is to eliminate unnecessary administrative burdens where no tax will be due, not to reduce the tax paid. Dispensations are reviewed from time to time and can be revoked. More advice on dispensations and an application form can be obtained from any Tax Office.
122. Dispensations are not appropriate for 'round sum' expenses allowances. But where an allowance is clearly intended to do no more than reimburse expenses actually incurred in carrying out the employee's or office-holder's duties, and the expense was incurred only because of the office or employment, the Officer may be prepared to authorise payment of the allowance without deducting PAYE. Before doing this, the Officer will need to be satisfied, however, that the allowance is at a reasonable scale and is clearly intended to do no more than reimburse expenses actually incurred.
123. Mileage expenses payments cannot be included in a dispensation.
124. Whenever there is no dispensation in operation authorities should consider whether or not PAYE should be applied to the allowances they pay. The Officer will give guidance on this point.

### **Relief for expenses**

125. Where an authority does not reimburse all expenditure incurred, members may claim the excess as a deduction from the earnings that they receive from the authority, provided the expenses satisfy the rules in paragraphs 108 and 109 above. No deduction can be claimed:
- where entitlement to all allowances has been renounced (see paragraph 113) [because there are no earnings from which to make a deduction - see [EIM31655](#)]
  - where a member could use services provided by the authority, for example, postage or stationery but incurs expenses because he or she chooses not to do so
  - for expenses incurred for political purposes, for example electioneering
  - for expenses incurred on the cost of newspapers, books and periodicals of general interest. (Where however a magazine or journal is obtained by a member because he or she subscribes to a professional body or learned society which is approved under Section 344 ITEPA 2003 and the activities of

this body are relevant to his or her work as a member a deduction may be given for the subscription)

- o for donations to charity (unless these are made under a payroll giving scheme or by way of gift aid).

126. Typical deductible expenses which may be claimed include:

**(i) Travelling expenses**

(a) By public transport - Where the expenditure incurred is not covered by an allowance for which the authority has a dispensation.

(b) By car - Members who use their own cars in the performance of their duties are normally paid an allowance to cover their costs. There are special rules covering these at paragraph (vii) below.

**(ii) Postage and stationery**

The actual costs wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred in the performance of the duties as a councillor for which no allowance can be obtained from the authority.

**(iii) Telephone**

The cost of calls made wholly, exclusively and necessarily in the performance of duties as a member. No deduction can be given for any part of the rental of the telephone unless no private use is made of it. Any claim should be reduced by any non-taxable reimbursement made by the authority. Where that reimbursement covers the cost of the official calls no claim should be made.

**(iv) Secretarial assistance**

The costs of secretarial assistance incurred wholly, exclusively and necessarily in the performance of council duties, where such assistance is not provided by the authority. Any amounts claimed must be reasonable in relation to the member's allowances and to the assistance given. The Inspector may want to see supporting evidence for the claim.

**(v) Hire of rooms**

Where money is spent on the hire of rooms for 'surgeries' or public meetings, e.g. objections to planning applications. A claim cannot be allowed in respect of the hire of rooms for party political purposes.

**(vi) Household expenses**

Where additional household expenses are incurred (light, fuel etc.) relating to those parts of members' homes that are set aside solely for use for duties as members, HMRC will accept a standard deduction of £135 per year (an amount agreed between the Association of Councillors and HMRC Head Office) to cover this. Members claiming more than this amount will have to show the additional amount is fully justified by reference to the expenses deduction rules explained in paragraphs 108 and 109.

From 6 April 2003 members working at home under homeworking arrangements with the local authority can be paid a tax-free allowance to reimburse the additional household expenses incurred while working at home. Up to £2 per week can be paid without any evidence of the actual amount of additional expense. Larger amounts can be paid if evidence can be provided to show that the amounts paid are a reasonable estimate of additional costs.

Members who do not receive an allowance are not entitled to deduct an equivalent amount except for those who are entitled to the standard deduction of £135. In these cases members should restrict the deduction by any amount received from the local authority, so that a member receiving £2 per week is entitled to deduct a further £31 from earnings.

**(vii) Mileage expenses for members using their own vehicles for business travel**

The following rules apply from 6 April 2002 and cater for all kinds of mileage expenses. The previous rules, including the Fixed Profit Car Scheme, no longer apply.

Actual expenses (including loan interest and capital allowances) can no longer be claimed. 'Business travel' is travel of the type described in paragraph 108 (fuller details can be found in HMRC booklet 490, Employee Travel).

Members who use their own vehicles for business travel are normally paid an allowance to cover their costs. Normally, these payments are based on an amount per mile for the mileage travelled on council business but they can also be in the form of a lump sum or periodic payment. However they are paid, all Mileage

Allowance Payments (amounts paid to an employee or office holder for expenses related to the use by that person for business travel of their own vehicle) are treated in the same way. Members can receive up to a tax-free "approved amount" when using their own vehicles for business travel. These payments are known as Approved Mileage Allowance Payments, or AMAPs.

The AMAPs amount is calculated by multiplying the number of business miles in each kind of vehicle by a statutory rate in pence per mile. The rates are:

Kind of vehicle Rate per mile to 2010-11

Car or van	40p for the first 10,000 miles 25p after that
Motor cycle	24p (all miles)
Cycle	20p (all miles)

Kind of vehicle Rate per mile from 2011-12

Car or van	45p for the first 10,000 miles 25p after that
Motor cycle	24p (all miles)
Cycle	20p (all miles)

These rates apply until changed by law as part of the Budget process. Any changes will also be announced on the HMRC web site [www.hmrc.gov.uk](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk).

Employers do not need to send HMRC details of tax-free AMAPs, though they need to keep sufficient records to show that the payments qualified for exemption. Any amount in excess of the AMAPs amount is taxable and should be reported on form P9D or P11D; if members receive less than that amount, they are entitled to Mileage Allowance Relief.

Further details about AMAPs and the taxation of motor mileage allowances generally can be found in CWG2 'Employer's Further Guide to PAYE and NICs'.

For NICs, a new statutory scheme for dealing with NICs liability on motoring expenses was also introduced on 6 April 2002. See paragraph 152 for more information. [See NIM05640 onwards.]

(viii) Other expenses

Members with other expenses not covered by the above should itemise them on their Tax Return. HMRC may require evidence and details of the expenditure.

### **Other points concerning a member's tax affairs**

#### **Provision of benefits in kind**

127. If a member receives payments (including all allowances whether or not tax is paid on them) and benefits together totalling £8,500 a year or more (before any deduction for expenses) details must be reported to the Inspector on Form P11D. A copy of the details should be given to the member. (Any member who is in this position and who receives facilities from the council other than in cash should contact the local Inspector for advice.)



128. No tax charge arises on the provision of office accommodation, secretarial assistance, stationery or other facilities of a similar nature at an authority's premises. If the authority provides supplies or services for use at the member's home, no tax charge arises if the sole reason for providing them is to enable a member to perform their duties and any use for private purposes is not significant. If these conditions are not met, full details need to be provided to HMRC on forms P11D, with a copy provided to members, because a tax liability may arise.
129. Where an authority provides computer equipment for the member to perform his duties at home, before 6 April 2006 the first £500 of the benefit charge was exempt from tax. See [EIM21699](#) for further information regarding the abolition of this exemption and transitional arrangements for computers provided before abolition.
130. If an authority paid for a member to have a telephone installed at home any cash reimbursement for installation or any subsequent rental payments should be subjected to PAYE. If it is impossible to apply PAYE, for example because the authority pays British Telecom directly, the authority must give details to HMRC after the end of each tax year. The member will then have to pay tax on the amount paid by the authority. Where an authority pays for broadband Internet connection to a member's home solely for work purposes, under a package where there is no separate billing or record of access calls, and
- o no breakdown is possible between authority and private calls, and
  - o where private use is not significant
- the connection costs are exempt from tax.

### **Operation of PAYE**

131. Tax is collected under the PAYE system. The amount of tax deducted by the authority depends on the code number issued by each member's own tax office. It is open to any councillor to ask to have the PAYE code number adjusted to take into account expenses which are deductible for tax purposes. If the Inspector is satisfied with the estimate provided, the code number for the year will be revised and the matter finalised after the end of the tax year when the accurate information will be available. How this works depends on whether or not the member receives a tax return (see paragraphs 127 and 128).

These arrangements apply, for example to:

- - o the basic allowance
  - o special responsibility allowance
  - o dependants' Carers' Allowance
  - o Co-Optees' Allowance
  - o any allowances payable to councillors in their capacity as civic dignitaries.

### **Procedure at the end of the tax year**

132. Members who receive tax returns should include figures for all their income on their Self-Assessment tax return. They will also include all claims they wish to make.
133. They should send their completed tax return back to their tax office by 30 September after the end of the tax year if:

- they want HMRC to calculate their tax bill for them and/or
  - they wish tax (below £2000) to be collected through next year's PAYE code where practicable.
134. The deadline for sending back their tax return is 31 January after the end of the tax year.
135. HMRC will make any repayment due. If there is tax to pay, the member should pay it by 31 January after the end of the tax year.
136. Members who do not receive tax returns will have their tax checked by HMRC in the traditional way. They should send any claims to their tax office after the end of the tax year as now.

### **Further information**

137. If members have any questions about the taxation treatment of their allowances they should contact their Tax Office. Council Treasurers' Departments are usually in a position to answer routine questions and to seek advice on a member's behalf.

### **Civic dignitaries**

138. Like councillors, civic dignitaries are office-holders and the same tax principles apply to their allowances and expenses. In particular, to qualify for relief expenditure must meet the conditions of Sections 336 to 339 ITEPA 2003 - explained in paragraphs 108 and 109 above. The following paragraphs set out how the rules apply to particular circumstances affecting civic dignitaries.

### **Clothing**

139. Expenditure on ordinary clothing worn at work is not incurred wholly and exclusively in the performance of the duties. Consequently no deduction can be given for expenditure by civic dignitaries on ordinary clothing.
140. Exceptionally, a deduction can be given for expenditure on clothing which is recognisably a uniform or part of a uniform and the office holder is required, as part of the duties of that office to wear it. A useful test is whether someone wearing the clothing would be recognisable in the street as wearing the uniform of that particular office - just as a uniform identifies, say, nurses or policemen. Expenditure on, for example, maintenance of a mayor's regalia would normally, therefore, qualify for a deduction.

### **Donations**

141. If a civic dignitary is given an allowance and the freedom to spend that allowance largely as he or she sees fit, it is extremely unlikely that any such expenditure would be deductible.

There would be an element of personal choice - and so expenditure would not be 'necessarily' incurred. This would apply to charitable donations as much as to any other use to which the money was put.

142. The tax position may, however, be different if there is a special fund set on one side, out of which agreed charitable donations are made. In these circumstances, when the funds are dealt with by the civic dignitary in a fiduciary capacity, there may be no tax consequences.

Each case will, however, depend on the precise arrangements in force.

## **Entertainment**

143. If a civic dignitary is given an entertainment allowance which he or she has freedom to spend in any way he or she sees fit, the allowance is assessable to tax as part of the earnings of the office - except to the extent that the expenditure met out of the allowance qualifies for a deduction. Only entertaining expenses which are incurred wholly, exclusively and necessarily in the performance of the office holder's civic duties will qualify. No deduction is due for the cost of entertaining which is incurred primarily for personal or political reasons even if some civic business happens to be discussed.
144. As with donations, the tax position may be different if there is a special fund set on one side out of which entertainment is paid for in accordance with the council's wishes as to the amounts spent and persons to be entertained.

## **Conclusion**

145. Local authorities sometimes ask how their systems can be structured so that no tax liability arises for their civic dignitaries in respect of expenses payments made to them. The paragraphs above should indicate that a system which in practice pays within the AMAPs amount for travelling expenses and provides for reimbursement only of those expenses deductible under the rules described in paragraphs 108 and 109 is unlikely to give rise to tax consequences. In addition, it is likely that a dispensation (see paragraphs 120-124 above) could be agreed with respect to such a system - eliminating reporting requirements."

## **Members' Allowances and National Insurance Contributions (NICs)**

### **INTRODUCTION**

146. As they are for tax purposes, members (councillors and non-councillors) are treated as employees. They are liable to pay National Insurance contributions as employed earners when they receive remuneration allowances at or above the threshold for contributions.
147. Where allowances are paid at different intervals, the earnings period for the assessment of National Insurance contributions is the shortest interval at which any allowance is paid. For example, if the agreement between the local authority and the member is:
- that a Basic allowance will be paid monthly.
  - that a special responsibility allowance will be paid quarterly.
  - that dependants' carers' allowance will be paid annually.
- the earnings period is monthly. Class 1 National Insurance contributions would be due if the total earnings in any tax month reached the monthly threshold for contributions.
148. Members above statutory pensions age (65 for men and 60 for women) are not liable for contributions on their allowances. But the authority for whoever pays the allowances is liable to pay the employers' contribution. For further details, the leaflet CA01 "National Insurance for employees" will be helpful.

### **IF YOU HAVE MORE THAN ONE JOB**

149. Member with other employment can apply to defer payment of contributions if they expect to pay the annual maximum in that employment. This does not affect the employer's liability to pay contributions as the appropriate time. For further details see leaflet CA01.

### **GENERAL EXPENSES**

150. In some circumstances expenses which are paid or reimbursed by an employer can be disregarded when calculating National Insurance contributions. If an employer makes a payment in respect of specific and identifiable expenses which are actually incurred by a member in carrying out his duties they can be disregarded. Members may have to produce receipts or other evidence of their expenses to confirm the amount which can be disregarded. But if the expense payment is covered for tax by a dispensation notice then it will automatically be accepted that the amount can also be disregarded when calculating National Insurance contributions. Unlike the tax position, no relief is available in respect of National Insurance contributions if the employee has borne the cost themselves without reimbursement by the employer.
151. The sort of expenses which may be able to be disregarded include the following:
- Travelling expenses
    - by public transport. The reimbursement of travel costs incurred in connection with business journeys can be disregarded for National Insurance contributions purposes.
    - by car. See the guidance at paragraphs 152 -154 below.
  - Postage and stationery: The actual costs incurred in carrying out the duties can be disregarded if reimbursed by the employer.

- Telephone costs. Reimbursement of the cost of calls made in carrying out the duties can be disregarded but any reimbursement of rental costs will attract a liability for National Insurance contributions unless the telephone is available exclusively for business use. Any payment towards the cost of private calls cannot be disregarded.
- Secretarial assistance. The cost of secretarial assistance incurred in respect of carrying out the duties of the employment which is reimbursed by the employer where such assistance is not provided directly, can be disregarded for National Insurance contribution purposes.
- Hire of rooms. The reimbursement of the cost of hiring rooms to hold 'surgeries' or public meetings in connection with their duties can be disregarded.
- Household expenses. Where a councillor is reimbursed for additional household expenses (heating, lighting, etc.) incurred in relation to parts of the home set aside for use solely in carrying out the duties of the employment, the amounts can be disregarded when calculating National Insurance contributions. In line with the tax treatment of such additional costs, from 6 April 2003, £2 per week can be disregarded without evidence being produced. Higher amounts can only be disregarded if there is evidence that the higher figure has actually been incurred.

## **MOTORING EXPENSES**

152. Since 6 April 2002, there has been a new statutory scheme for dealing with NICs liability on motoring expenses incurred by employees who use their own vehicles for business travel. There is a maximum amount that may be paid to employees, in respect of all business motoring expenses they incur for the use of their privately owned car, without incurring NICs liability.
153. The NICs scheme is aligned as far as possible with the Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAPs) scheme for tax, but there are some differences between the two schemes. For example, the mileage rate used for cars and vans to calculate the maximum amount employers can pay free from NICs liability is the higher of the two rates at paragraph 126(viii) above, irrespective of the number of business miles travelled by the employee.
154. Further guidance about the NICs motoring expenses can be found in the Revenue leaflet IR124 'Using your own vehicle for work' and CWG2, 'Employer's Further Guidance to PAYE and NICs'.

## **BENEFITS**

155. Where a member receives payments (including all allowances whether or not tax is paid on them) and benefits together totalling £8,500 a year or more the authority may have to pay Class 1A NICs on any benefit they provide. Further guidance can be found in the Inland Revenue booklet CWG5.
156. Members requiring further advice on which expenses or payments in kind may be disregarded should contact their local tax office.

## **ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES PAID TO CIVIC DIGNITARIES**

157. Civic dignitaries are elected office holders, and, like councillors, they are therefore employees for National Insurance contributions purposes. There will be a liability to pay class 1 National Insurance contributions if they receive earnings above the level of the earnings threshold. The following paragraphs explain how certain types of expense payments made to civic dignitaries are treated for National Insurance contributions purposes.

## CLOTHING

158. If a civic dignitary receives an expense payment for ordinary clothing the amount involved is not a business expense, as it is not incurred in carrying out the employment. It cannot be disregarded when calculating National Insurance contributions.
159. If the payment relates to a uniform or part of a uniform which is required for the purposes of the employment, the amount involved can be disregarded because it will be an expense incurred in carrying out the employment. This would apply, for example, in respect of payment for a mayoral gown or similar regalia – and the cost of its upkeep (repairs and laundering).

## DONATIONS

160. If a civic dignitary receives an expenses/allowance for a series of itemised charitable donations or gifts, the amount can be disregarded when calculating National Insurance contributions if the donations or gifts are made on the employer's behalf and details are kept of the donations and gifts.

## ENTERTAINMENT

161. If a civic dignitary receives an expenses payment/allowance for private entertainment, the amount involved cannot be disregarded when calculating National Insurance contributions.

**If the payment is for a business function where the costs are supported by itemised bills, the amount can be disregarded as a business expense because it will be incurred in carrying out the duties of the employment. This will apply, for example, where the mayor has receipts for the amount spend on a business lunch hosted for visiting officials.**

### Could you be NALC Council of the Week?

NALC has been celebrating the work of member councils through its 'Council of the Week' feature since November 2014.

Each week, the exemplary work of a council in England is shared on the NALC website and in its Monday e-newsletter, with the aim of showcasing achievements to a national audience, whilst inspiring good practice amongst others.

We would love to see your hard work recognised!

To be considered for Council of the Week, all you have to do is send us:

- 1. Up to 400 words outlining recent successful projects that demonstrate best practice in areas such as:** service delivery, communications, asset management, working with other organisations, local authorities and local residents.
- 2. A photograph that is representative of your town / village** (e.g. your council premises, town hall or an iconic location)

**We will share these nominations with the Communications Team at NALC who prepare the stories at the end of each week.**

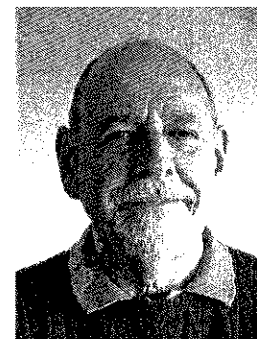


**The Buckingham Society**  
 Campaigning for a Better Buckingham

## Newsletter September 2015

### A Word from our Chair – Roger Edwards

By now you should all have received your polling cards for the Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan referendum on September 17<sup>th</sup>. The referendum will give us all the chance to show our pride in Buckingham and take a great step towards preserving our lovely market town. Buckingham remains at risk from predatory and unplanned building development; but by voting in favour of the Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan we can all help to ensure that we get the development we want and not whatever some developer wants to throw at us.



The Buckingham Society has never objected to carefully thought out building development. We all recognise that there is a clear need for more housing and Buckingham will be better for it provided that it is properly planned, well designed, provides more access to public open spaces and encourages more people into the town to the benefit of local shops and businesses.

However, none of us would want to see a repeat of the problems that have occurred with some of the recent major projects in and around Buckingham. For example; the nightmare roundabout, delayed school building, the health centre that never was and the non-existent new supermarket at Lace Hill. And of course, the Candleford Court car park that flooded because it was built next to a river – who could possibly have foreseen that? And what about the “lagoon” that looks more like a swamp and a footpath that nobody is allowed to use – to say nothing of the mouldy looking concrete that clads the aforementioned car park? And we should not forget the Moreton Road housing developments, opposed by local people living in the area but still built with little infrastructure improvement beyond a small playground for young children.

However, on a more positive note; look at the Heartland area where, admittedly with much prompting from the Buckingham Society, green spaces were opened up for all to enjoy. We also have some good looking new buildings with the new Sainsbury's Local building and the Duke's Court/Royal Court apartments in Chandos Road as well as the older buildings lovingly cared for by the University. And speaking of older buildings, there was the excellent news that the developers working at the rear of Moreton Road are to restore the Victorian summer house “Cobham Cottage”. Good things can happen!



It is because we all wish to see such positive developments and not the repeat of past mistakes that your Executive Committee is urging all Buckingham Society members to vote positively in the forthcoming referendum and to say YES to the Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Getting the plan in place would be a major step towards ensuring that new houses will be built only where the people of Buckingham want them; that provision is made for new businesses to be developed thus ensuring that at least some of the people living in the new houses will also be able to work here and that, alongside the new homes, new leisure spaces would be opened up where people can walk and play.

So, please help to make Buckingham an even better place to live. Please vote YES on September 17<sup>th</sup>. And please influence your friends to vote also: if we miss this opportunity, we will be at the mercy of unscrupulous developers for a long time to come.

## **The Transport Group – David Child**

### **Railway walk**

A meeting took place with Buckingham University to clarify their land ownership and pathway at the old station on Station Road. The University sold some of its land to a developer and the University was very helpful in providing detail plans of their remaining land ownership and assisting in identifying the old platform in the undergrowth. This is still an on-going project to get the rail walk from the A421 to the Tingewick Road registered on the BCC definitive map.

### **Road safety /crossings**

It is clear as reported in the previous newsletter that only by obtaining “Section 106” funds (or other similar sources) from developers will road improvements be gained. In the case of road and pathway improvements this will be via Buckinghamshire County Council Section 106 funding. To that end it is planned to progressively prepare proposals for each possible Section106 project so that from a list of proposals BCC, working with Buckingham Town Council, could ensure these are included in any new developments.

### **Town Bus Stand**

Here is another project needing some serious S106 money. For those of you who use this bus stop I am sure you are aware of the parking problems - the turning circle on the exit from the bus stand and the severe lean to the left when the bus is parked. I had heard that on one occasion the bus door jammed on the pavement! The picture to the right illustrates the problem.



## **Planning – Ian Orton**

Planning-related matters continue to be dominated by the upcoming referendum on the Buckingham Local Neighbourhood Development Plan "the Plan", which is scheduled to take place on 17 September. See the Chairman's introduction to this newsletter.

It is essential that this plan, which has taken four years to prepare, is approved by the Buckingham electorate. For the past two and a half years Buckingham, along with the rest of Aylesbury Vale, has not been covered by a statutory land-use plan. As such it has been open season for opportunistic developers. So please vote (and preferably vote "Yes").

No-one, especially those involved with its preparation, which includes the Buckingham Society, will claim that the Plan is perfect. As usual it encapsulated a number of compromises. In an ideal world it could have included much more, such as reserving land for a future southern by-pass and a link road between the A421 and A422. But this is probably the best we will get. More significantly it represents the best efforts of the local community rather than those of the anonymous planners at AVDC.

Of course just because a plan is passed does not guarantee its implementation. As readers of the Buckingham Advertiser will be aware AVDC is already attempting to dilute its status even before it is voted on. The good news, however, is that both the courts and the government have tended to take a different view.

One other piece of news. After a protracted period of argument and debate it appears - for once - that common sense will prevail as far as the new public toilets and upgraded Shop Mobility facility are concerned. These will be located in sites selected by Buckingham Town Council, and which reflect local preferences, rather than those by AVDC, which most certainly didn't.

## **The Summerhouse at Cobham Cottage, West Street**

One of our members, Barbara Edmondson, has very kindly given the society access to photographs, a map and other information about the Summerhouse. I hope that this will enable the developers to better and more accurately renovate the building. It is encouraging that they have asked for access to this information.

## **The Buckingham Society Garden party**



The garden party was held on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2015 starting with a fascinating talk by David Foster, Chief Executive of Milton Keynes Parks Trust. He described the challenges and excitement of managing such a huge and varied estate.

After the talk we moved to the garden at Prebend House for Prosecco and canapés. We were very lucky to have good weather and the event was

enjoyed by 60 members and guests.

## Dates for Your Diary

### 12-13 September Heritage Open Days:

Guided walk by Ed Grimsdale – The 3 Avenues of Buckingham. More information is available at The Tourist Information Office, The Old Gaol.

**Free entrance for the Old Gaol, Stowe Gardens and Stowe House on 12th.**

Radclive Manor and Church - Jeremy and Sally Howarth, the owners of Radclive Manor, have kindly agreed to lead a tour of the church and the gardens of the 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> century Manor House. Jeremy Howarth will talk about the history of the Manor and its associations with the Parish Church. Tea and Cake will be served in the gardens (inside barn if wet). If arrangements permit, there may be a chance to view the interior of the Great Hall.

*Cars can be parked in the Manor grounds, near the house.*

This is a free event but you must book a place at the Tourist Information Office at The Old Gaol Museum, Buckingham;  
Tel: 01280 823020; Email: [buckinghamtic@tourismse.com](mailto:buckinghamtic@tourismse.com).  
Places are limited to 15 persons.



17 September            Referendum Buckingham  
Neighbourhood Development Plan  
23 September            Buckingham Society Executive Meeting  
5.00pm Villiers Hotel  
24<sup>th</sup> November            Buckingham Society AGM

### Executive Committee:

Roger Edwards	Chair
Alistair Alcock	University representative
David Child	Transport and Planning
Carolyn Cumming	Planning
Paul Fello	Transport and Planning
Ed Grimsdale	Planning and society historian
Gill Jones	Membership Secretary
Tony Mayston	Treasurer
Belinda Morley-Fletcher	Secretary
Nigel Morrison	Destination Buckingham
Ian Orton	Planning
Vacant	Green Spaces
Kathy Robins	Newsletter Editor, planning and transport

### We would like to hear from you

Please give us some feedback - tell us what activities you would like The Buckingham Society to prioritise. Comments to [kathyrobins@walnutyard.co.uk](mailto:kathyrobins@walnutyard.co.uk) Tel: 07834484762  
If you would like to become involved in any of our activities or attend a meeting of the executive committee, then contact us or just come along.

[www.buckinghamssociety.org.uk](http://www.buckinghamssociety.org.uk)

## Buckingham Community Centre

### Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held on 22 January 2015

**Committee Members Present:** Geraldine Collins, Paddy Collins, Roger Tear, Anne Liverseidge, Peter Burke, Derrick Isham, Andy Mahi, Mike Hall and Building / Booking Manager Terry Bloomfield.

**1. Apologies:** Martin Try

**2. Minutes of 27 November 2014:** Agreed as a true record.

**3. Matters arising from said Minutes:** A push bar exit catch as been fitted to the Main entrance door.

**4. Correspondence:** A letter of thanks received from the Air Ambulance, Berks/ Oxon /Bucks for the donation of £63.21, being the proceeds from the December Arts & Craft Fair catering.

**5. Chairman's Report:** The Chairman informed Members that Tony Bryant Centre caretaker is off sick at present. Members wished him a speedy recovery.

**6. Request From Bucks NHS Trust:** Members discussed a request from Bucks Healthcare Trust to use Buckingham Community Centre as a temporary place of refuge in the event that Stoke Mandeville hospital has to be evacuated due to Fire or any other emergency. Members agreed relevant points of the request with minor alterations. It was agreed the 24 hour telephone numbers would be that of the Treasurer and the Building Manager. Also agreed that Staff and committee members would be in attendance and that the understanding between both parties would be reviewed annually and run from January to December. All other points were agreed. *Paddy Collins to respond*

**7. Proposed Ceroc Project:** Regular Community Centre hirers the Ceroc Dance Club have requested permission to install speakers and spotlights in areas of the Community Centre. Members concluded that 2 or 3 members meet with their organisers to discuss their proposals. *Terry to arrange a meeting*

**8. Booking Manager's Report:** Hiring's for 2015 are looking favourable with HMRC in the process of booking a further 12 month period. Problems with the Centre roof may now be resolved. Roofers recently replace some broken slates and the valley of the roof off of the well area has been sealed.

**9. Treasurers Report:** The Treasurer gave out the following report to members.

- 1) As from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015 the building is being operated by the new CIO (Buckingham Community Hall Association registered charity 1155556 ) and our insurers informed
- 2) The lease was transferred to the new CIO with an effective date of 7<sup>th</sup> October 2014 but I have still not received the invoice for this work from Chandler Ray
- 3) The staff have been TUPE'd to the new charity from 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2015
- 4) The AGM in March 2015 will be that of the new charity under its constitution. Trustees have in the past received copies of the new constitution. If anyone wants another copy (electronic or paper) then please let the chairman know.
- 5) Provisional Year End figures show a surplus of £3,635.03 with bookings of £62,066.32 – which is slightly down on last year of £63,156.73. The draft accounts and supporting documents have been emailed to our auditor.
- 6) The Town Council has agreed to up to £5,000 underwriting for their years 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18.

7) The upstairs boiler that heats the hallway, toilets and chamber broke beyond repair towards the end of last year. This was replaced by a condensing boiler. The other 3 boilers are also ancient and I think should be replaced in a non-emergency fashion in due course

**10. Items for Future Agenda:** Boiler quotations. Spot light and speaker quotations. *Terry to action*

**11. Any Other Business:** AGM is scheduled for the 26 March 2015 at 7pm. There is a Arts & Craft Fair scheduled for the 21 February.

**12. Date of next Meeting: 26 March 2015 following the AGM. Anything cropping up before the next meeting will be dealt with by the Chairman or a meeting will be called.**

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## Buckingham Community Centre

### Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held on 26 March 2015

**Committee Members Present:** Geraldine Collins, Paddy Collins, Roger Tear, Anne Liverseidge, Derrick Isham, Andy Mahi, Mike Hall, Martin Try, Tim Scudamore and Building / Booking Manager Terry Bloomfield.

**1. Election of Officers.** Proposed Derrick Isham, Seconded Anne Liverseidge and Carried that Geraldine Collins serve as Chairman and Patrick Collins serve as Treasurer for the ensuing year. The Chairman welcomed Tim Scudamore to the meeting having been elected to the Committee at the AGM.

**2. Apologies:** Peter Burke

**3. Minutes of 22 January 2015:** Agreed as a true record.

**4. Matters arising from said Minutes:** No matters arising.

**5. Correspondence:** A letter from Claire Ball working with North Bucks carers requesting a hearing loop installation for the small hall. After committee discussion it was agreed that Martin Try looking into the possibility of acquiring a portable hearing loop.

Letter from David Grainge with varying issues concerning a recent event he had organised. All of his issues were noted. Members agreed to his requested booking for 2016.

The Treasurer reported on a recent meeting with Ceroc Dance group concerning proposed installation of lights and speakers in the main hall. Marc Forster of Ceroc offered to gift the speakers to the Centre. Electrical installation for extra plug sockets and the acquisition of the lights to be paid for by the Community Centre (Proposal from the Treasurer). All Hirers to be offered the use of the equipment. Proposed Paddy Collins, Seconded Derrick Isham and carried to accept the Treasurers proposal. Derrick to look at the Electrical specifications. Martin to look into the lighting.

**6. Chairman's Report:** Taken under the AGM.

**7. Booking Manager's Report:** Hiring's for 2015 are looking very favourable. HMRC have confirmed their booking through until end of March 2016. The booking is worth £4,342.80.

**8. Treasurers Report:** Bookings are looking good. The recently installed boiler in area above ladies toilets cost £6,500, the previous boiler having a serious crack in the casing. There is £43k to transfer to a new Charity account. The old savings account with CAF has been closed under the old Charity.

**9. Report of meeting with Ceroc.** Taken under Correspondence.

**10. Items for Future Agenda:** Electrical quotation for the installation of extra sockets and cabling. Treasurer to contact Gilberts of Brackley.

**11. Any Other Business:** Letter from Jane Heywood of AVDC Properties and services concerning a consultation on the AVDC proposed site for the new toilet block in Buckingham. Members discussed the matter and concluded that a strongly worded response would be forwarded to AVDC. Inspection of the building to take place before any Committee meeting. Derrick informed members that fireproof coated woodwork mainly in the large hall needs remedial work using intumescent paint.

**12. Date of next Meeting: 28 May 2015 at 7.30pm. Anything cropping up before the next meeting will be dealt with by the Chairman or a meeting will be called..**

**Buckingham Community Hall Association**  
**Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held on 28 May 2015**

**Committee Members Present:** Geraldine Collins, Paddy Collins, Roger Tear, Anne Liverseidge, Derrick Isham, Peter Burke, Martin Try, Tim Scudamore and Building / Booking Manager Terry Bloomfield.

**1. Apologies:** Mike Hall and Andy Mahi.

**2. Minutes of 26 March 2015:** Agreed as a true record.

**3. Matters arising from said Minutes:** M/T informed members that there are many variations of portable hearing loops. After discussion members agreed to leave the hearing loop request in abeyance. The speakers above the corner cupboards stage end of the building need securing to the cupboard. No quotations at this point have been received for the installation of extra wall plug sockets. A ball park sum of £800 has been suggested for the wiring in of the proposed lighting (Ceroq request)

**4. Correspondence:** A letter from Jacqui North thanking the Centre for the donation of £40 towards the Hospital Car Service. The money was from donations received at the recent Arts and Craft fair catering.

**5. Chairman's Report:** Taken under Agenda item 8.

**6. Booking Manager's Report:** Hiring's for 2015 are looking very favourable. We have recently taken long term bookings from the Redeemed Church of God and from Smart the addiction recovery organisation.

**7. Treasurers Report:** Bookings are looking good . The boilers ordered for the Large hall have been paid for and are scheduled for installation week commencing the 1 June. We hve received a quotation for the repair of the roof area above the well in the foyer. The cost £3,700 plus vat. The invoice has been passed onto the Town Clerk. The roof has been temporarily repaired. The Treasurer informed members that there maybe a short financial loss this year. Workplace pension comes into force at the Centre in August 2017.

**8. Placing of public toilets in the cattle trough area opposite the Small hall:** The Chairman was concerned with AVDC latest proposal of siting public toilets in the cattle trough area. This would impede some hirers from carrying out their activities and could result in loss of revenue. Members agreed that the Treasurer request Chandler Ray, Solicitors, inform or remind AVDC that the Community Centre does have a right of way in this area.

**9. Items for Future Agenda:** Further news on the siting of public toilets. Discuss electrical quotations.

**10. Any Other Business:** Taken under Treasurers report (Work Place Pensions). Tim Scudamore signed is Management Committee paperwork.

**11. Date of next Meeting:** 23 July 2015 at 7.30pm. Anything cropping up before the next meeting will be dealt with by the Chairman or a meeting will be called.

**BUCKINGHAM TWIN TOWN ASSOCIATION**  
Minutes of meeting, Wednesday 1 July 2015

Present: Stéphanie Scrase (Chairman), Cllr Paul Hiron, Sue Watkins, Cllr Howard Mordue, Jane Mordue, John Murray, Janet May, Cllr Christine Strain Clark

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Ruth Newell, Cllr Terry Bloomfield
2. **Minutes** of the meeting held Wednesday 6 May 2015 were agreed and signed.
3. **Matters arising** - none
4. **Young people**
  - 4.1 **Visit by Collège in Mouvaux to Royal Latin School and Akeley Wood, Tues 19 May 2015**  
(Linda Emary/Nora Amirat)  
Stéphanie reported on the visit of 52 youngsters. They had met with students from The Royal Latin School and Akeley Wood. Lunch was in the Parish Church as the weather was wet. Andy Mahi, the new Mayor met them and spoke a few words in French which they appreciated.
  - 4.2 **BTA Prize for Most Improved in a Modern Foreign Language, The Royal Latin School**  
Stéphanie confirmed that she would be attending and Howard would also go to present the Mordue prize. Action: Howard, Stéphanie
  - 4.3 A young French man, Sacha Credigne, is coming to Buckingham for a week staying with Stephanie. Arrangements had been made by Stephanie for him to attend the Royal Latin School while he was here.
5. **Review of Events**
  - 5.1 **Small group visit from Neukirchen Vluyn 14 to 17 May** – Sue reported that Dorothe and Thomas had thoroughly enjoyed their visit here.
  - 6.2 **Future Events**
    - 6.2.1 **Bastille Day Boules competition, Buckingham, Tuesday 14 July 2015**  
Howard reported that AVDC had agreed to provide sand and the PA system would be available. Stéphanie would be organising the BBQ which Jane and Howard would bring. Stephanie and Jane will supply the meat and soft drinks.  
Ron Gleeson has the gazebo which he would bring along with the wine  
Sue would speak to her contact about the straw. (Sue had contacted Chris James who would be away. However another couple of people were being asked) Action: Sue  
Stéphanie reported that a boules competition for children would be organised by Stéphanie Lepelletier late afternoon.  
Ron Gleeson had previously kindly agreed to act as MC for the main event and Stéphanie would liaise with him. Scorers would be needed too. John agreed to umpire. Geoff Shaw would also be asked. Lionel Weston also to be approached by Jane Action: Stéphanie, Ron Gleeson, Jane, Howard  
Jane would circulate the action list that Valerie used to use, for updating. Action: Jane  
Publicity should be sought through the Advertiser – Jane to ask Ruth. Action: Jane, Ruth  
Membership forms would be available on the evening
    - 6.2.2 **Party for BTA members** – possibly October or November - Stéphanie will decide on suitable date Action: Stéphanie
    - 6.2.3 **'Castles and Gardens of the Rhine' Fri 11 to Sun 13 September 2015**  
Several members had expressed an interest. Sue had promised to send final numbers to Gunter by 3<sup>rd</sup> July as a couple of interested parties were away until then. Action: Sue  
Sue would investigate flying as a means of getting there Action: Sue
    - 6.2.5 **Harvest Festival in Neukirchen, 19- 20 September** – no Buckingham representation at this event.  
Sue would advise Christian nobody would be coming Action: Sue
    - 6.2.6 **Inter Twin Town Tennis Tournament, Neukirchen Vluyn August 2015**



Sue had been in contact with Buckingham Tennis Club but there were no takers for this event this year.

6.2.7 **Vluyn's St Martins Market** 7,8 November 2015

Interest was expressed in attending this market and members would be canvassed. It would be like an early Christmas market and should be great fun. Sue advised that English products were required and there was a possibility of having a combined stall with Ustron and Mouvaux.

Jane, Howard and Stephanie expressed an interest in going

6.2.8 **AGM and film** 24 November 2015

Stéphanie to find a suitable film

Action: Stéphanie

6.2.9 **Mouvaux Christmas market** date not yet confirmed, possibly 4-6 December 2015

Sheila and Julian Handley could possibly be approached to help.

6.2.10 **Buckingham Christmas Parade and Community Fair** Saturday 12 December 2015 – a stall would be booked at the fair.

Howard reported that the theme for the parade this year was children's stories

6.2.11 **Lions Club Neukirchen Vluyn**

Howard reported that he had not heard any more from Franjo Terhart about a possible visit to Winslow later in July. He would chase this up.

Action: Howard

6.2.12 **Rotary in Mouvaux**

Jane reported that she had spoken to the Rotary Club in Mouvaux and a link between them and Buckingham might also be explored.

Action: Jane

6.2.13 **Short visit to Flanders, September 2015:** this would not happen this year. A suggestion was made to do this trip in 2016 as it was the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of the Somme. Stephanie asked for any ideas about the trip to be emailed to her.

6.2.14 **Cycling**

A suggestion was made that the cyclists came to Buckingham for the Boules in 2016. A new cycling club had recently been started in Buckingham and Chris Wayman, the Town Clerk, was a member. Stéphanie would contact him

Action: Stéphanie

6.2.15 **Civic Visit 2016:** October was suggested as a possible date. Various events were suggested including tours of Silverstone, Bletchley Park, Blenheim Palace, Buckingham University, Golf. Jane to speak to Mike Gartin

Action: Jane

7. **Finance Report**

Howard reported that there is currently £3299.09 in the account

8. **Membership report**

No report was available in Terry's absence.

9. **Communications**

**Newsletter:** The latest newsletter had been published recently. Copies would be available at the Boules Tournament.

**Club Voice:** Jane would ask Ruth Newell to prepare a piece for the newspaper advertising the Boules Competition and future events.

Action: Jane, Ruth

**Website:** Geoffrey Shaw continued to keep the website up to date.

10. **Any Other Business:** none

11. **Date of next meeting** Wednesday 2 September 2015 at 7.30 p.m.

# DESTINATION BUCKINGHAM GROUP



## NOTE OF MEETING HELD ON 28 JULY 2015

**Attendees:** Henry Cooper (HC)                      Roger Edwards (RE)                      Stephen Harding (SH)  
 Jonathon Judkins (JJ)                      Andy Mahi (AM)                      Jane Mordue (JM)  
 Nigel Morrison (NM)                      John Riches (JR)                      Mike Smith (MS)  
 Elliot Wallis (EW)                      Chris Wayman (CW)

**Apologies:** Warren Whyte (WW)

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION BY
1	<b>Apologies and Introductions</b>	
1.1	MS introduced NM, and all introduced themselves. The Apology for Absence noted above was accepted.	
2	<b>Car Parking Charges ("Free from Three")</b>	
2.1	This item was dealt with first for the convenience of guests JJ (Manager of Waitrose) and SH (AVDC Parking Manager).	
2.2	EW outlined the problem – evidence from many local traders had indicated that the changes to car parking charges, re-vamped Tesco and new Aldi on the by-pass, and long-term work on the new roundabout had led to changed shopping habits which had impacted heavily on town centre trade, with many reporting a heavy decline in footfall and customers. Although Buckingham car park charges were cheap by comparison with other towns, they still amounted to another cash transaction which, together with the problems caused by the atrocious roundabout, were causing many from the outlying villages to shop elsewhere instead of coming into the town centre. They needed attracting back. Some traders were now finding things critical (up to seven were looking not to renew their leases) and could not survive unless remedial action was taken. The current down-turn might even jeopardise long-term survival of the town's signature grocers.	
2.3	The traders had taken some steps in an attempt to ameliorate matters, including publicity of <i>The Hidden Quarter</i> (Bridge Street and Well Street) – but more needed to be done. Given clear evidence of a gap in trade between 3.00pm and the onset of free car parking at 5.00pm (in particular, Waitrose had noted this), they suggested that removal of car parking charges during these times would stimulate the post-school trade.	
2.4	MS asked JJ whether he had considered re-funding parking charges, as other stores had done, but JJ said that this was the domain of larger stores and, given the proximity of Waitrose stores in Towcester and other nearby locations, could not be offered.	

2.5	NM referred to the responsibility of AVDC to contribute to town centre vitality, and MS mentioned that in a recent Prime Minister's Questions response, the Prime Minister had said that car parking in market towns should ideally be free.	
2.6	SH reminded the meeting that the traders had supported the current car parking charge regime, suggested that current problems were a combination of a number of issues, and wondered if the proposal might adversely affect the morning trade. He produced figures that evidenced a decline in car park use after 3.00pm to nearly half that (7.9%) of the peak-time use (14.5%) between 10.00am and 11.00am, and noted that market days (Tuesday and Saturday) produced the highest usage (closely followed by Friday).	
2.7	SH added that these were nevertheless all sensible points and he was happy to take the <i>Free from Three</i> suggestion back to his manager and Cabinet Member. He outlined the steps necessary to affect such changes (should they be agreed), and acknowledged the urgency to have matters resolved in time for Christmas. He anticipated being able to respond to MS (who would cascade to DBG members) by the end of September.	SH
2.8	JJ and SH were thanked for attending, and left the meeting.	
3	<b>Note of 12 May meeting</b>	
2.1	The draft Note was approved.	
3	<b>Financial Position</b>	
3.1	MS confirmed that current DBG funds stood at £11,544.60 of which £9,782.45 was allocated to specific projects. The disposable balance was therefore £3,289.91.	
3.2	CW confirmed that no funding for 2015/16 had been received from AVDC. MS would therefore write to Teresa Lane to enquire if (and/or when) it might be anticipated, as clearly DBG could not plan long-term (or even survive) without it.	MS
4	<b>Residents &amp; Business Leaflet</b>	
4.1	MS regretted that he had yet to complete analysis of completed survey leaflets, responses via <a href="http://www.buckinghamuk.info">www.buckinghamuk.info</a> , and via email, but anticipated that he and JR would have an analysis for consideration at the next meeting.	MS & JR
5	<b>Enhancing entry to the town</b>	
5.1	<b>Shopping area from Cornwalls Meadow car park</b> – NM had been in touch with Heron Signs, who had produced some mock-up designs. These would require extensive steel-work, and were not particularly attractive, and thoughts turned to increasing the number of benches and introducing more planters, to make the area more attractive.	
5.2	Ideas would be worked-up by NM and RE, for consideration at the next meeting.	NM & RE

6	<b>Town centre enhancement</b>	
6.1	<b>Signage reduction and pavement repairs</b> – MS had met with Freya Morris (AVDC Historical Buildings Officer) on 10 July, and was awaiting a list of proposals and costs. He understood that the English Heritage grant was available until the end of the year, and AVDC commissioning of the works from TfB was awaited.	
6.2	MS added that the English Heritage funding would not cover the full cost of all proposed works, and the earmarked DBG funding would not cover all of the shortfall. Depending on the scale of work to fully complete the project (which could not be ascertained until the list was received from AVDC, which he would expedite) it may be necessary to seek additional funding – perhaps from BTC.	MS
6.2	<b>Lamp post banners</b> - CW had yet to receive a response to his enquiry to BCC about consent to install these, and would further expedite matters.	CW
6.3	<b>Totem/monolith signs</b> – MS said that, as previously reported, <i>Greenbarnes</i> had been unable to assist. He was currently awaiting a further response from <i>Shelley Signs</i> , and would also contact <i>All Points West</i> who were producing similar signs in Aylesbury at a cost of between £3,500.00 and £5,000.00 each.	MS
7	<b>Heritage Weekend (12/13 September)</b>	
7.1	RE said that Ed Grimsdale would be leading his Heritage Walk “the Three Avenues of Buckingham” on the Saturday, and Radclive Gardens would be open on the Sunday, with owner Jeremy Howarth giving a talk. Caroline Cumming was exploring access to the Masonic Lodge, and he had spoken to Alistair Alcock at the University and was awaiting a response.	
7.2	He had yet to contact The Mitre and/or Mitre Cottage, or Stowe School.	RE
7.3	HC had also been in touch with the University, and was also awaiting a response.	HC
7.4	NM had been in contact with Silverstone, and mentioned their recent grant towards a Heritage Centre that could attract up to 400,000 visitors per annum. This might be worth further exploration, as might looking into conference facilities via the University. He would explore further.	NM
7.5	JR had been in touch with Kellie Scott at The National Trust, Stowe; and he and MS would be meeting her on 10 August.	
7.6	JM suggested co-ordinating Buckingham Society, Old Gaol and other events into a single page article (or even a cover wrap) in <i>The Buckingham &amp; Winslow Advertiser</i> , and it was agreed that DBG might fund a quarter page advertisement if necessary. She and EW would enquire further.	JM & EW
8	<b>Tourism Data</b>	
8.1	Following a meeting with Lyndsey Purdie, AVDC Senior Communications & Marketing Manager) on 21 July, some interesting information had come to light. Clivedon House was the most visited National Trust attraction in England during 2013/14 out of all those charging an entry fee, and Hughendon Manor, Waddeston Manor and Stowe Landscape gardens regularly drew large crowds. Day-trip numbers in Buckinghamshire totalled 10.1m, each spending an average of £25.80; and there were 1.1m overnight trips, each spending an average of £129.00.	
8.2	In response to a subsequent enquiry by Cllr Robin Stuchbury, Lyndsey advised that for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes in 2011 there were 1.38m staying visitor trips realising a total spend of £238m; day visitor trips totalled 14.43m (total spend £724m); and tourism accounted to a gross value addition of £450m to the economy.	

8.3	AVDC invested £63,200.00 per year in tourism, all of which was spent on the Aylesbury Visitor Information Centre; and staff commitment for tourism was 1 staff member on one day per week.	
9	<b>Civic Day feedback</b>	
9.1	RE reported a successful day, despite inclement weather. There had been a good turn-out of people, including our MP; and everyone joined in with the singing of "Pride", led by <i>The Glee Club</i> .	
9.2	He suggested making the event bigger in 2016, and suggested that perhaps the Mayor-making ceremony could be performed on the day, rather than during the Mayor's reception in May. He would explore this further with CW.	RE & CW
10	<b>Other Ideas (including from previous meeting)</b>	
10.1	<b>Handheld Tours</b> – CW had been in discussion with a multi-media company, HH Tours, about a mobile app for historic town walks. Existing walks were available to view, and they were seeking to add Buckingham to their collection.	
10.2	MS said that despite locally available maps being available at The Old gaol, he would try and find costs in readiness for the next meeting.	MS
10.3	<b>Teddy Bear Hunt</b> – due to time constraints, it was agreed to defer this until the next meeting.	JM
10.4	<b>Poetry Festival</b> – RE had suggested this at a previous meeting and agreed to work up a few ideas for the next meeting.	RE
10.5	<b>Trader of the Year</b> – Buckingham Society was considering sponsorship of such an event. More information would be provided in due course.	RE
10.6	<b>Buckingham Big Day Out</b> – perhaps combining several events.	
10.7	<b>Use Silverstone!</b> – NM suggested selling the town's services and facilities to them.	NM
10.8	<b>Town Centre Manager</b> – EW said that a fellow trader had suggested employing a part-time Town Centre Manager, at a cost of between £3,000.00 and £5,000.00 per annum, to work-up and progress ideas (including those from DBG).	EW
11	<b>Next Meeting</b>	
11.1	It was agreed to meet again in the Town Council Chamber on Tuesday 1 September 2015, from 1200 hrs.	ALL

# DESTINATION BUCKINGHAM GROUP



## NOTE OF MEETING HELD ON 1 SEPTEMBER 2015

**Attendees:** Henry Cooper (HC)                      Roger Edwards (RE)                      Andy Mahi (AM)  
Jane Mordue (JM)                                      Ruth Newell (RN)                      John Riches (JR)  
Mike Smith (MS)                                      Chris Wayman (CW)

**Apologies:** Nigel Morrison (NM)                      Warren Whyte (WW)

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION BY
1	<b>Apologies and Introductions</b>	
1.1	Introductions were unnecessary on this occasion. The Apologies for Absence noted above was accepted.	
2	<b>Note of 28 July meeting</b>	
2.1	The draft Note was approved.	
3	<b>Financial Position</b>	
3.1	MS confirmed that current DBG funds stood at £11,412.15 of which £9,500.00 was allocated to specific projects. The disposable balance was therefore £3,422.36.	
3.2	MS had expedited news of 2015/16 funding from Teresa Lane (AVDC) and provided the requested "Annual Report" (also circulated to DBG members) on 20 August. Nothing further had been heard, although an auto-reply from Ms Lane's email address had indicated that she would be absent from the office until 1 September. MS would continue to monitor the situation.	MS
4	<b>Car Parking Charges ("Free from Three")</b>	
4.1	Stephen Harding had written to MS indicating that AVDC were seeking data on items such as comparative footfall to inform their decision, and that he would write again once that data had been received.	
4.2	MS had asked Elliot Wallis to keep Jonathon Judkins (Waitrose) and the other traders updated.	
5	<b>Residents &amp; Business Leaflet</b>	
5.1	MS and JR had had collated the leaflet, website and email responses, which indicated the following top four outcomes in each category:	
5.2	<b>Reasons why Buckingham was worth visiting</b> – history (market town, including Old gaol and Chantry Chapel) (23); interesting independent shops and markets (18); Circular Walk, Riverside Walks and parks (including wildlife) (17); and local countryside and Stowe (6).	

5.3	<b>Needed to make Buckingham more attractive</b> – free (including improved and additional) car parking, including Park & Ride scheme (14); more “signature” (eg M&S) and variety of independent shops (12); good standard toilets (including an improved cleaning regime to existing) (9); and no more development (in order to preserve character of town and due to insufficient infrastructure) (6).	
5.4	JR observed that it was apparent from many of the survey responses that there was a lack of understanding about the economics of business life, or the respective roles of the three local authority tiers – matters that were beyond the remit of DBG. He also noted that the responses captured no new ideas that might be taken forward.	
6	<b>Enhancing entry to the town</b>	
5.1	<b>Shopping area from Cornwall's Meadow car park</b> – no further action about increasing the number of benches and introducing more planters had been taken.	NM & RE
7	<b>Town centre enhancement</b>	
7.1	<b>Signage reduction and pavement repairs</b> – MS understood that AVDC had now placed the order with BCC (TfB) for the work to be undertaken. It was noted that AVDC and BCC had refreshed the paintwork on bollards, railings, waste bins and the electricity feeder pillars.	
7.2	<b>Lamp post banners</b> - CW had received confirmation that BCC saw no reason why banner flags could not be affixed to some Market Hill and High Street lamp posts.	
7.3	It was therefore agreed to consider the generic design for (say) ten banner flags, including whether to seek sponsorship from individual traders or groups of traders (eg <i>The Hidden Quarter</i> ), for discussion at the next meeting.	ALL
7.3	<b>Totem/monolith signs</b> – MS said that <i>Shelley Signs</i> had not come back to him despite him chasing them. The most likely supplier therefore seemed to be <i>All Points West</i> , who was producing similar signs for Aylesbury at a cost of between £3,500.00 and £5,000.00 each. This would clearly be dependent on funding (see 3 above).	
8	<b>Heritage Weekend (12/13 September)</b>	
8.1	JR and MS had met with Kellie Scott, Visitor Experience Manager at Stowe Landscape Gardens on 10 August, and she had offered the reverse of an A5 flyer for Stowe for Buckingham events. MS had provided this, based on the information provided to him in respect of Buckingham Old Gaol, the Chantry Chapel, shops and markets, parks and riverside walks, the RIBA Pub Trail, Ed Grimdsdale's <i>Three Avenues of Buckingham</i> walk, and Radclive Gardens. This had been copied it to members.	
8.2	The suggestion to explore a combined (Buckingham Society/Old Gaol etc) advertisement or wrap in the Buckingham & Winslow Advertiser had been ruled out for this year on grounds of cost – from £239.00 for an A6 size advertisement to £1,300.00 for a wrap (both prices exclusive of VAT).	
8.2	It was agreed that for next year, more effort be made to get Buckingham University on board (HC to lead), and see if more could also be done via Silverstone UTC (NM to lead). The Mitre and/or Mitre Cottage, and the Masonic Lodge were also options.	HC & NM

9	<b>Other Ideas</b>	
9.1	<b>Teddy Bear Hunt</b> – JM suggested teddy bears hidden in (say) ten shops, which children would be invited to find and have a card stamped in order to win a small prize. It was suggested that knitted swans may be more appropriate for Buckingham, but the idea would need to be further explored further with the traders, on whom its success would depend, via EW.	JM & EW
9.2	<b>Handheld Tours</b> – MS had obtained a global price from <a href="http://www.handheldtours.co.uk">www.handheldtours.co.uk</a> of between £2,000.00 and £3,000.00 for the suggested mobile app for historic town walks etc. Existing walks were available to view, and they were seeking to add Buckingham to their collection. Given that a QR code pointing to <a href="http://www.buckinghamuk.info">www.buckinghamuk.info</a> on the proposed totems (see 7.3 above) and elsewhere would undoubtedly be more appropriate and cost-effective, it was agreed not to proceed.	
9.3	<b>Poetry Festival</b> – RE said that plans for this were proceeding. A Gala Evening could be linked to Buckingham Fringe week (BCC had agreed), with run-up events in the library and other suitable venues. It was suggested that the schools also be involved, perhaps via a competition.	RE
9.4	<b>Trader of the Year</b> – RE confirmed that Buckingham Society was working-up a proposal, linking the award to Civic Day.	RE
9.5	<b>Town Centre Manager</b> – In EW's absence, no further thoughts were given to the proposal for a part-time Town Centre Manager.	EW
10	<b>Representation on DBG – Buckingham Fair Trade</b>	
10.1	RN had said that Buckingham Fair Trade was interested in participating in DBG activities, and that either Margaret Gately or Ann King were able to attend meetings. It was agreed that she advise MS of their contact details.	RN
10.2	She also reminded the meeting that Buckingham Fair Trade would be holding a Coffee Morning at Buckingham Old Gaol on Saturday 3 October.	
11	<b>Next Meeting</b>	
11.1	It was agreed to meet again in the Town Council Chamber on Tuesday 6 October 2015, from 1200 hrs.	ALL





# BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, THE BUCKINGHAM CENTRE,  
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Town Clerk: Mr C. P. Wayman

Tuesday, 29 September 2015

## SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

Full Council  
5<sup>th</sup> October 2015

26. **Red Cross Centre, Verney Close**  
To receive a letter from BCC (attached) and discuss a response.

To: All Councillors

Buckingham



*Twinned with Mouvaux, France*



Headquarters

**Director of HQ Assurance:**  
Richard Ambrose

**Buckinghamshire County Council**  
**HQ Assurance**  
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Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP20 1UD  
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29th September 2015

Mr. C P Wayman  
Clerk to the Council  
Buckingham Town Council  
The Buckingham Centre  
Verney Close  
Buckingham  
MK18 1JP

Dear Chris

**Re: Former Day Centre Premises, Verney Close, Buckingham**

Following receipt of your e-mail dated 28<sup>th</sup> August, I confirmed to you that I would make Cllr. Chilver aware of the issues raised in your e-mail and, following Brian Dean's return from leave, would meet with Cllr. Chilver to further discuss with him the future use of the premises.

There does appear to have been some misunderstanding as to the degree of usage envisaged by the Church – in your e-mail you commented that it would be much less than reported to you during an earlier meeting. However, the Church has confirmed that, when its representatives looked around the building with your Council's members, they were discussing what the Church could offer in the event the lease were to be held by the Town Council with the Church having more limited access. In that event, the provision of the foodbank would have been the priority whereas, if the Church held the lease, it has been confirmed to me that it would be intending to deliver a much wider range of community focused activities.

In relation to the mezzanine room, I have confirmed previously that the accommodation is DDA compliant and that the lift is capable of accommodating wheelchair users. It is available if you would like to book it for meetings. However I appreciate a ground floor meeting room would be preferable to you hence the suggestion that, if the lease were to be granted to the Church there could be provision within the lease to allow for Town Council meetings to be catered for.

In the circumstances, Cllr. Chilver has confirmed his view that a lease to the Church (with obligations to deliver community focused activities) would still fit best with the aims and objectives of the County Council and deliver the best outcome for the local community. However, if the Town Council would wish to take up the offer of holding its scheduled council



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



meetings within the former day centre building, I will ensure the lease to the Church makes provision in this regard.

Whilst not a matter raised in your e-mail, I am aware that the Town Council is anxious to secure suitable parking provision for its 4x4 vehicle and if it would be of assistance, am happy to ensure the lease also obliges the Church to make a dedicated car parking space available for this purpose.

Yours sincerely

Joe Nethercoat  
**Head of Strategic Assets**