

Minutes of a meeting of the **Environment Committee** of Buckingham Town Council held on **Monday 30th March 2015** in the Council Chamber, Cornwall's Meadow, Buckingham at 7pm.

Present: Cllr. T. Bloomfield
 Cllr. H. Cadd
 Cllr. J. Harvey
 Cllr. P. Hirons
 Cllr. D. Isham (Vice Chairman)
 Cllr. Ms. R. Newell
 Cllr. Mrs. L. O'Donoghue - Mayor
 Cllr. M. Smith (Chairman)
 Cllr. Mrs. C. Strain-Clark
 Cllr. R. Stuchbury
 Cllr. W. Whyte

In attendance: Mr. L. Phillips Green Spaces Manager
 Mrs. C. Bolton Committee Clerk

Invited Guests: Cllr Mary Taylor Thornborough Parish Council
 Tania Pepin Adstock Resident

824/14 Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED to receive and accept apologies from Cllr Mahi and Cllrs G & P Collins.

825/14 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Whyte declared an interest in item 5.2 budgets at that point in the agenda.

826/14 Minutes

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 9th February 2015, ratified at Full Council on the 9th March 2015.
 Agreed.

Members agreed to suspend Standing Orders to allow the invited guests to speak

827/14 Thornborough Parish Council

To receive Members from Thornborough Parish Council for a presentation on Thornborough and Coombs Community Woodland
 Cllr Mary Taylor introduced herself and Tania Pepin to Members. Cllr Taylor gave a background on the acquisition of the Thornborough and Coombs Community Woodland area, stretching over 163 acres with a large number of permissive paths over a wide area. Thornborough Parish Council had been approached by Bucks County Council in 2013 to take over the area, which has been estimated to cost £12,000 per year to upkeep. The hope is to care for the woods, maintain them as a community led project and one day be able to use as an educational asset to surrounding communities; perhaps by way of a forest school or educational visits from schools/colleges/community

groups. The plan was to set up a charity under a sub-lease from Bucks County Council. Cllr Taylor also commented that the woodland also encompassed one of the largest granite quarries in the country and an orchard with many rare breed fruiting trees.

Ms Pepin introduced herself to Members and said that ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the woodlands would be essential to turn the area in a community resource. The parish council were working closely with Community Impact Bucks on setting up a charitable incorporated organisation, once achieved the parish council could get on with promoting and developing the woodland.

Members asked questions as follows:

You talked about educational use, is that happening now, or is it an initiative for the future?

We will be setting this up as soon as possible and develop the initiative in the future

Given that S106 monies and New Homes Bonus funds are available throughout the Vale are you tapping into those?

Once Bucks County Council allow the parish to sub-let the woodland then we will be able to apply for funds.

Although the woodland is known as Thornborough and Coombs it is very accessible from Buckingham, we are very close to Lace Hill for example, Padbury and the town. We don't see the woodland as just in our parish, but for all local communities to use.

Who owns the freehold and why is the area not farmed?

Bucks County Council developed the land as part of the millennium woodland initiative, the land was originally refuse land so is unsuitable for development; Bucks County Council own the land in its entirety. A number of the permissive paths go through farm land.

Are the woods accessible for people with disabilities?

We are not allowed to have wheeled vehicles, there are a number of conditions on us from Bucks County Council – we cannot have fires for example.

We would like to invite everyone to a walk through the woods on Easter Monday at 2pm.

You intend to create a new charity, why is it so important to set up yourselves rather than piggy bag on an existing organisation?

Thornborough Parish Council felt it was something they wanted to do for the parish.

Community Impact Bucks have been hugely helpful with contacts at various organisations such as the national trust, the community woodland trust and we are hoping to engage with similar minded organisations.

All the gates have been changed, they are all now kissing gates or opening gates rather than stiles.

The guests were thanked for their attendance, the Chairman said that the Town Council wished Thornborough Parish Council the best for the development of the area, and would continue to support their initiative.

The invited guests left the Chamber and Standing Orders were re-instated

Environment 30th March 2015

page 2 of 5

08/06/2015

RATIFIED 30TH MARCH 2015

Initial

828/14 Budgets

- 5.1 To receive the budget report for information
The document was missing from the appendices.
- 5.2 To agree to carry forward £5,000 from Buckingham LAF income for the Community Enterprise to the next financial Year
Cllr Whyte declared an interest.
Members **AGREED** the amount.

829/14 Action Reports

To receive the report and note the updated information.
Cllr Bloomfield requested an update on the Ken Tagg play area.
The GSM reported he had been in conversation with a couple of contractors, and was exploring whether to use timber or metal structures, and whether or not to use the existing bases. He would be applying for funding shortly.
Cllr Harvey asked about the solar panels on the Community Centre roof.
The GSM explained that when the community centre extension had been considered in the past, a report that had been done on the risk of asbestos; the report could not currently be found. It was suggested that Cllr Mordeue be asked if he had retained a copy.
Cllr Whyte asked about the purchase/rental of new storage premises and commented that he had been making enquiries about the lock up adjacent to the library building. Members agreed it was worth investigating.
Members briefly discussed the recent town centre audit and how the resulting issues could/had been reported to AVDC or Bucks County Council.
Cllr Whyte reminded Members that often a reported item is about an individual's perception; if dangerous or worsening it should be reported. It was generally felt that the audit had been a worthwhile exercise and would certainly be put forward should external funding for such a project become available.

830/14 Chandos Park

To receive an email and verbal update from the Green Spaces Manager
The GSM reported that following a quarterly inspection with the Town Clerk the riverbank had been temporarily repaired and landscaped, but a permanent solution would take considerable work, advice would need to be sought from an engineer. It was likely that further boarding and gabion baskets at a minimum would be needed; there was also an unstable area noted at the weir.
The GSM said he was talking to the Environment Agency about the penstock in Bourton Park to help the fish migration up to the Chandos weir area.
Cllr Hirons recommended a chief engineer at the drainage board for advice.

ACTION: GREEN SPACES MANAGER

831/14 Chris Nicholls Walk

To receive and discuss the attached correspondence from AVDC
The Green Spaces Manager reported an approach from AVDC for the Town Council to take on Chris Nicholls Walk. Members discussed the possibility but **AGREED** that AVDC would need to bring the whole area up to a good

standard of repair and then provide a minimum 5 year covenant on the works before the Town Council took overall responsibility.

It was agreed that further information and ownership confirmation was required before further discussion.

ACTION: GREEN SPACES MANAGER

832/14 MVAS Sign

To receive a request for the purchase of a second sign and agree a budget
The GSM advised Members that the outdoor maintenance team were about to put new brackets for the Moveable Vehicle Activated Sign to be positioned in up to 10 various points around the town. A second sign would give wider coverage of the town.

Members **AGREED** to seek Full Council approval to take £2300 from reserves for an additional sign.

ACTION: GREEN SPACES MANAGER

833/14 Fir Trees for School, Community and Youth Groups (UK)

To receive and discuss and email from AVDC

Clerks note: Agenda item should read Free Trees for School, Community and Youth Groups (UK)

Members **AGREED** to leave the application to the Green Spaces Manager and to advertise on the Council's social media to encourage other groups to apply.

ACTION: GREEN SPACES MANAGER

834/14 Grit Bin

To receive and agree a request for Westfields

AGREED

835/14 Access Awareness

To receive a verbal update from Cllr Strain-Clark

Cllrs Strain-Clark requested that a hook or similar devise be fitted to the Chamber door so that it could be lodged open to permit easier access.

ACTION: GREEN SPACES MANAGER

836/14 Dog Foul Bins

To receive a request to review dog bins in the town.

Members discussed the increased amount of dog fouling seen throughout the town centre area. Members commented that the responsibility should always lie with the owner to clean up after their own pet.

Cllr Harvey questioned whether people actually knew that dog excrement was not recycled or dealt any differently than normal household waste and all went into landfill.

Members **AGREED** that a proper survey vs needs should be carried out, targeting areas with high density impact of children walking through.

ACTION: GREEN SPACES MANAGER

837/14 BCWP

837.1 To receive the minutes of a meeting held 15th December 2014

837.2 To receive the Agenda for the forthcoming meeting on 30th March 2015

Both received

Cllr Newell reported that the group had noted the Moreton Road footpath was much improved and the footpath from Highlands Road to Buckingham Primary School had also been attended to.

The Conservation Groups were working well in the town and the Canal Society were to re-fill the canal during the coming week.

838/14 Green Buckingham Group

To receive the minutes of a meeting held 26th February 2015

Received.

Cllr Newell reported the group would continue to hold bi-monthly meetings.

839/14 Correspondence

To receive an email Buckingham Tennis Club thanking BTC for its support.

Received.

Members also noted the suggestion about a permanent table tennis table and **AGREED** to explore costs and possible sites.

ACTION: GREEN SPACES MANAGER

840/14 News Releases

Dog excrement in the town, appropriate action by owners, inform the public that the waste goes to landfill.

841/14 Chair's Announcements

The Chairman thanked Members for their work on the Committee during the year.

Cllr Cadd confirmed he would be stepping down from the Town Council at the end of the year. Cllr Smith thanked him for all his work whilst serving on Buckingham Town Council.

842/14 Date of Next Meeting: Monday 1 June 2015.

Meeting closed at: 8.05pm

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