



BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

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Think Mask, Think Lateral Flow Test

Wednesday, 02 February 2022

Councillors

You are summoned to an Extraordinary meeting of the **Town Centre & Events Committee** of Buckingham Town Council will be held on **Monday 7th February 2022** at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Cornwalls Meadow, Buckingham.

Please note that the meeting will be preceded by a Public Session in accordance with Standing Orders 3.e and 3.f, which will last for a maximum of 15 minutes. Members of the public can attend the meeting in person. The Council is trialling the use of video conferencing to enable the public and guests to address Council meetings virtually. If you would like to address the meeting in this way, please email committeeclerk@buckingham-tc.gov.uk or call 01280 816426 for details.

The meeting can be watched live on the Town Council's YouTube channel here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC89BUTwVpjAOEIdSlfcZC9Q/>

Mr. P. Hodson
Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

Members are asked to receive apologies from Councillors.

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.



Twinned with Mouvaux, France;

Neukirchen-Vluyn, Germany



Members are reminded when making decisions that the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010 requires Members to have due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who don't, and to foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who don't.

All Committee documents can be found on the Buckingham Town Council's website. Alternatively, the Clerk send you a copy of any minutes, reports or other information. To do this, send a request using the contact details set out above.

3. Music in the Market

To discuss and agree a location for 2022's Music in the Market event.

TCE/97/21

4. Report regarding Music in the Market from John Howarth and Suzy Smith, Music in the Market Organisers

Appendix A

5. Chair's Items

6. Date of the next meeting: Monday 21st February 2022

7. COMMITTEE IN PRIVATE SESSION

Exclusion of Public and Press

8. RECOMMENDED In terms of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, the following items will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment and contractual matters and it is, therefore, **RECOMMENDED** that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

9. Welcome Back Fund

To discuss and agree a funding bid for the Welcome Back Fund

TCE/98/21

To:

Cllr. R. Ahmed
Cllr. F. Davies
Cllr. Mrs. M Gateley (Town Mayor)
Cllr. S. Hetherington
Cllr. A. Mahi Vice Chair

Cllr. L. O'Donoghue
Cllr. R. Stuchbury Chair
Cllr. R. Willett
Mr. D. Jones (co-opted member)

TCE/97/21

**BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN CENTRE & EVENTS WORKING GROUP
MONDAY 7th Feb 2022**

Contact Officers: Deputy Town Clerk and Events Coordinator

Music in the Market

1. Recommendations

1.1. It is recommended that this committee note this report and decide on whether to move the Music in the Market event planned for Friday 3rd June 2022 to the Buckingham Rugby club or revert to holding the event in Buckingham Market Place.

2. Background

2.1. Buckingham Town Council work with the Buckingham Acoustic Club to arrange an annual Music in the Market event. This event has traditionally taken place on the Sunday of the Late May bank holiday weekend in the Bull Ring.

2.2. Last year the event was moved to the Buckingham Rugby club in order to gain extra social distancing space. This event was very successful and well received by all parties.

2.3. Buckingham Rugby Club are a family club with a large membership from the town.

2.4. The Rugby Club and the Acoustic Club would both like to keep this year's event at the rugby club.

2.5. Two of the local businesses owners in the town have raised objections to moving the event away from the town centre. They feel that local businesses will lose business, at a time when businesses are facing many challenges. They point out that the Town Council has consistently sought to support local businesses and to enable the development and prosperity of the town centre.

2.6. This year the late May bank holiday has been moved and instead there will be a four-day bank holiday at the start of June to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Therefore, committee have already agreed that this event will take place on Friday the 3rd June rather than the usual Sunday.

3. Downsides of moving the event to the Buckingham Rugby Club

3.1. There is objection from town centre businesses. The event is very profitable for the two central pubs who provide drinks to attendees. In addition, all the surrounding venues see increased footfall. Hospitality businesses have had a very difficult time during Covid and an event in the centre of the town would be beneficial to them. It is likely that representatives will attend the meeting to put their case in detail.

3.2. The event is called Music in the Market and is well established with regular attendees. Changing the venue could initially lose some attendees.

3.3. The Town Council generally seeks to support the prosperity of the town centre and increase footfall to support businesses and ensure the ongoing attraction of the town centre to residents, visitors, and tourists. Events such as Music in the Market contribute to this aim.

4. Benefits of moving the event to the rugby club

4.1. The **rugby club** would like to move the event. Their Chair states:

“The primary, and entirely selfish, reason is one of finances. The pandemic has had a considerable impact on our income over the last two years. Unlike other leisure facilities, like pubs, restaurants and clubs, we have not been able to tap into all of the financial support offered by the government. Also, because of the nature of contact sports, the Rugby Football Union has greatly limited our activities in which had meant we have lost out on player fees and bar revenues.

This came at a time when we have seen certain sections of our club grow at a phenomenal rate which brings with it additional cost in grounds maintenance and the provision of kit and coaching and somewhere to train. The following is an extract from an internal document as we are looking to raise funds to create a new training area on the existing site:

The project is to create a new training area. This is necessary to accommodate the considerable groundswell of players joining the club within the last 3 to 5 years, particularly by adult and youth females and a mixed social section. More specifically that includes:

1. *Many people local to Buckingham will know that the town boasts a Hockey team that play in the Premier Division. Few will know we have a Ladies Rugby team that plays at National Championship level, just one below the Premiership. That is a fantastic achievement for a club within a relatively small catchment area. With that success we found ourselves with enough female players to create a second team who now, for the first season ever, also play a competitive standard of rugby in the National Competitions. Confirmation can be found here: <https://www.englandrugby.com/fixtures-and-results/search-results?team=3543&season=2021-2022#results>*
2. *A successful ladies team has also meant a dramatic growth in girls between 13 and 18 playing the sport. Buckingham now has 3 separate age grade teams 13's (16 players) 15's (35 players) 18's (24 players) with the 15's and 18's playing in the RFU National Cup and Bucks Leagues. This can be evidenced here: <https://www.bucksinvitationalleague.co.uk/index.html>*
3. *Pre-pandemic the club set up a touch (no contact) rugby group for anyone that wants a run around and to keep fit and socialise with others but not have to worry about the more physical or technical aspects of the game. This section of the club is open to anyone from the local community, regardless of age, gender, ability or interest in mainstream rugby. This group now features over 40 regular players and is one of the fastest growing sections of our club.*

The above is in addition to the c. 360 children that play rugby in Maids Moreton every Sunday and the 100+ senior male players that play every Saturday. In recent analysis of our registered player database 72% come from the MK18 postcode, Buckingham and surrounding villages.

In short, the rugby club needs the support. We also hope that the location offers the event certain benefits over being in the town centre. Set-up and breakdown at a time to suit you, plenty of onsite parking, toilets, and room for market traders, food vendors, and children's entertainment. In the event of inclement weather, we also have both the clubhouse and marquee for shelter."

4.2. The **Buckingham Acoustic Club** would like to move the event. They have written to the Council as follows:

"Reasons for going to the rugby club

The whole set up of stage etc was a lot easier, as they were able to have the stage come in the day before, it was rigged on the day

The event site is a flat surface

Much more family orientated and festival orientated

Safe environment for children

More space so more food vendors can be brought in

Room for traders to set up

Reasons for not being in town centre

Site is on a slope making it harder to set up

Set up and tear down has to be done on the same day

People drift in and out of event

People at the event can't really sit down"

5. Operational Considerations

5.1. From an operational point of view the rugby club is a much safer venue to operate. There are no roads which could be a danger for intoxicated individuals or unattended children. There is ample space so children can run off and play safely. This allows their parents to relax and stay for longer.

5.2. This is an enclosed private space so levels of intoxication are easier to control and troublemakers can be asked to leave if necessary.

5.3. The Rugby club has easy access parking and disabled facilities.

5.4. The event is further away from residential housing and will cause less disruption to residents.

5.5. However the event has been run successfully at the town centre in the past and would continue to do so; the comparison is relative.

Appendix A**Discussion regarding Music in the Market, or not****From John Howarth, Music in the Market Organiser**

Apologies to all present that I cannot attend tonight due to existing commitments.

Background.

'Music in the Market' is an event originated and organised by Buckingham Acoustic Club. The first time it was staged was in 2001, on a makeshift non-weatherproof roofless platform situated in the market area north east of Moreton Road, taking place on the late May Bank Holiday Sunday when it was feasible to put in place a road closure. The aim of the event was and still is to give an outlet to the regular performers from the Acoustic Club's open mic meetings, and to entertain the people of Buckingham with talent they may otherwise miss. In the years following the first event, it moved to a position adjacent to what used to be Barclays Bank, where it stayed for many years. I have been involved with event intermittently since 2006, when I first moved to this area. At first it was as a performer, and as the event evolved I became the main organiser in 2018.

At some point soon after the event was conceived, it may even have been for the first event, the Council became involved with sponsorship, allowing costs for the stage itself, lights and a PA system including its sound engineers, the inevitable consequential costs of security, litter management, first aid presence and road closures, with a small amount left to offer to the actual musicians. For this investment from the council, the people of Buckingham were given a community event which lasted all day from around 1pm till 10pm.

Music Not in the Market

2020 brought Covid and cancellation. 2021 initially brought a second cancellation, but then a later date became an option. The Council suggested that the event could be incorporated into the Buckingham Fringe Week in July, but in order to integrate with other fringe events, the date would have to be on a Saturday, which is a market day with the consequence that road closures were not possible as that would detrimentally affect market traders.

The Rugby Club answered the call and came to the rescue, offering their venue. This offer came with a great deal of expertise and experience of mounting their own events. It became apparent that the venue offered many advantages over the Market:

- plenty of space, and as there was still a great Covid fear around, the added bonus that everyone could maintain social distancing and still see and hear the music.
- grass to lay out picnic blankets, chairs, even small easy-ups along the perimeter fence in case of rain.
- proper toilets, plus space for additional portaloos
- space for kids to safely run around and play, with zero traffic nearby, turning what had previously been a town centre hard surface event next to a busy street into a child friendly family event on grass
- a dedicated children's play area, with bouncy castle and other attractions

- plenty of space for food vendors, so a variety of street food could be offered which in turn would encourage people to stay
- we were now able to create a 'Traders' Village', where small traders could offer their wares – traders who would find it difficult to find an outlet in the town. We had long had the ambition to create a traders village, but we could not accommodate them in the old venue due to emergency road access requirements.
- a fully functioning self-contained bar and barbeque, operated by the Rugby Club, who are familiar with catering for a festival and have the appropriate expertise, and who are able integrate and co-operate with the running of the event.
- a Korfball sport demonstration on one of the football pitches, simultaneous with and separate to the music performances.

For the organisers:

- the ability to pre-rig the stage the preceding day, rather than from 7am on the day, when the road can be closed. As this is a volunteer operation, that one element eliminates a lot of stress in the preparation of the event. (In the past it has happened that the start has been delayed due to the stage not yet being ready and safe.) At the other end of the day, there is no urgency to clear up for similar reasons, and thus the clear-up can be done the next day in daylight.
- a flat surface for the stage (the market has a steep slope, which makes rigging the stage a complex and tedious process)
- backstage space for the musicians to assemble and prepare. The market layout has very cramped and awkward space, and there is a security risk to equipment as the backstage area is accessible from the street. All much worse when it rains.
- plenty parking for musicians with their equipment to offload directly into the backstage area. No more humping gear from Waitrose car park.

Feedback from 2021 event:

People turned up in large numbers and were prepared and wanted to stick around all day and into the evening. There was somewhere to sit, there was grass for the kids to run around, there was no traffic, there was a bar, there were toilets, there was a variety of food on offer. It was now a family-friendly event and not an area where parents may wish to remove their kids as day turned to night. It was now a festival. The Acoustic Club did not get any feedback which suggested that an event in the market would have been a better idea.

Following the event the Acoustic Club Committee held its own debriefing meeting, when those present unanimously decided that we would prefer our next event to be held at the Rugby Club, assuming that the Rugby Club felt the same way. Recent conversations have shown that they do.

The prime aims of Music in the Market has always been to provide an outlet for the musicians, and to provide entertainment for the people of Buckingham. Any benefit to local traders on the day has been a side effect of the event, not a reason for it.

....more

From Suzy Smith, Music in the Market Co-Organiser

FTAO of Amanda Brubaker

I'm sorry that I cannot attend the meeting on Monday - I'm working that evening.

My reasons for Buckingham Acoustic Club hosting an event at The Buckingham Rugby Club are as follows:

The allocated space is considerably more user friendly and attracts a much broader range of people.

The area is much safer - particularly for youngsters who want to run around. Traffic free!

Hosting a music event in town will appeal to less people and doesn't provide anywhere to relax for family groups.

Having the event at The Rugby Club provides extra help and support with the general organising and ensuring that health and safety protocols are carried out.

I don't consider that local traders are too negatively impacted by not having this event in town. The pubs will continue to cater for their usual customers and will still attract business at The Band Jam event in the town in August.

The pubs are able to host music night and gigs at any other time of the year to attract business too.

By having the event elsewhere we're able to invite many local traders and businesses who would struggle to compete in a high street environment. Therefore, creating new opportunities for smaller local businesses.

The feedback regarding last year's event at The Rugby Club was extremely positive.

The public had a proper 'all day' event and could relax comfortably.

Many people who attended expressed how much better and safer they felt at The Rugby Club

Music in the Market is less appealing in town for many if there's just a concert kerb to sit on and nothing else (particularly for youngsters) to do.

It also means that many young families don't stay for the evening music - the atmosphere does change and becomes, dare I say, less appealing. The pubs may benefit a little but family groups drift back home as it's not a family friendly atmosphere after dark.

Family groups were still enjoying the 'vibe' until late evening at last year's event.

From an artist's point of view. Allocated parking was available for musicians - which was a godsend!

I can't see any reason why this event should remain in town and can see so much potential for all in relocating.

There will also be several large jubilee events this year so Music in the Market may not attract a large crowd if held in town as it will have so much competition for a day out in more attractive surroundings.

Suzy Smith