

E/02/23

Minutes of a meeting of the **Environment Committee** of Buckingham Town Council held on Monday, 31st July 2023 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Cornwall's Meadow, Buckingham.

Present: Cllr. R. Ahmed Vice Chair
 Cllr. F. Davies Chair
 Cllr. M Gateley
 Cllr. J. Harvey
 Cllr. L. O'Donoghue
 Cllr. A. Ralph
 Cllr. R. Stuchbury

Also present: Mr. L. Phillips Estates Manager
 Mr. S. Beech Compliance and Projects Manager
 Ms. P. Cahill Committee Clerk

Via Zoom: Ms. Kirsty Shanahan, Buckinghamshire Community Energy

Absent: Cllr. Schaefer
 Cllr. Willett

No members of the public attended and so there was no public session.

188/23 Apologies for Absence

Members received apologies for absence from Cllr. Schaefer and Cllr. Willett.

189/23 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

190/23 Minutes

Members agreed the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 12th June 2023 be confirmed as a true record.

191/23 Request for support of grant application for the Energy Efficient Homes Fair

Members received a presentation via Zoom from Kirsty Shanahan of Buckinghamshire Community Energy(BCE) and considered whether to recommend to Full Council that it votes to support BCE's grant application to Buckingham and Villages Community Board.

Members raised the following questions and Ms. Shanahan responded:

What is the projected budget for the event?

The overall budget is about £4000; this is the amount being applied for to cover staff costs, venue hire and marketing costs. Exhibitors will pay to attend. Tickets will cost £5.

How successful was the Princes Risborough Fair?

175 attendees. The ticket price was £8. Buckinghamshire Council funded some tickets.

This was their first Fair, and the measure of success is anecdotal, but exhibitors' feedback was excellent; she recognises that marketing of the Fair could have been stronger.

Are you expecting people who sign up to stay all day?

The Fair will be 4 hours with numerous speakers; attendees can dip in and out.

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PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY 2010/CRIME AND DISORDER ACT, 1988: the decisions made during the course of the meeting were duly considered and it was decided that there were no resulting direct or indirect implications in respect of crime and disorder, or equalities considerations, other than those stated in the minutes.

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Will people on benefits and/or in social housing receive relevant advice?

Income is irrelevant; all attendees will receive the same advice. Profiteering will not be the main focus.

Is Buckinghamshire Council attending the Fair?

It is hoped that Buckinghamshire Council Energy Doctors will be in attendance.

Are local Housing Associations attending the Fair?

Difficulties encountered in trying to contact the Associations. Ms. Shanahan agreed to contact Cllr. Stuchbury who will look at possible introductions.

What about the private rental sector?

Government legislation will come about to introduce minimum standards for energy efficiency.

Members thanked Ms. Shanahan for attending the meeting and answering Members' questions.

Cllr. Harvey Proposed, Cllr. Gateley Seconded and Members unanimously **AGREED** the recommendation.

Ms Shanahan left the meeting.

192/23 Budgets

Members received the latest figures.

To assist members in understanding the budget documents, the Compliance and Projects Manager clarified that if a budget code starts with 1 it is income, 4 is expenditure and 3 represents National Insurance and pensions etc. An expenditure line might show as over budget but may be offset by income such as a grant on another line.

A request will be made to the Town Clerk for an update on Community Centre solar panels.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

The Estates Manager explained that a faulty sewage pump resulted in unplanned additional expenditure for Chandos Park toilets.

The Compliance and Projects Manager informed Members that office staff are in the early stages of formulating an expenditure plan for s106 funds which will then be proposed to Members.

193/23 Bourton Park Bridge Repairs

Members received a verbal update from the Estates Manager.

As of Friday, the repairs to Bridge No. 1 have been completed. Bridge No. 2 is still open at the moment but is being checked carefully every week; if it needs to be closed then it will be. Quotes for the removal of the condemned bridge have been requested and these will be brought to Committee. Cllr. Stuchbury Proposed an explanatory press release. Cllr. Harvey Seconded. Member unanimously **AGREED**.

ACTION DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

Members thanked the Estates Manager and the Green Spaces Team for their work.

194/23 New cemetery revised plan

Members received a report from the Estates Manager.

Recommendation:

That Members agree to recommend to Full Council the revised cemetery and allotments plan based on the costs projected in 4.1 and to apply to the Public Works Loan Board to borrow up to £1,250,250.

The Estates Manager confirmed that:

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- The land purchase is still underway.
- The bund is a raised area of soil (an artificial mound).
- The building has been considered and an area has been set aside with consideration for utilities.
- Allowance has been made for parking for allotments and will be monitored and managed so as not to hindrance funerals.

Recommendation:

That Members agree to begin the public consultation for the revised plans and projected costs as required for the Public Works Loan.

The Compliance and Projects Manager explained that this was in the guidance from the Public Works Loan Board.

Cllr. Harvey Proposed an amendment: that the public consultation is not put out unless it goes to this Committee first.

The Compliance and Projects Manager explained that the guidance suggests an explanation that the plan has been revised based on the previous consultation. Members were reminded that the public were given the full details at the last public consultation, and due to the urgency, suggested members consider agreeing the Clerk be given permission to proceed with the public consultation in consultation with the Chair of this Committee. Members **AGREED**. Cllr. Harvey withdrew his Proposal.

The Estates Manager confirmed that plots on Brackley Road Cemetery cannot be pre-purchased due to the limited number remaining, but they are still available to purchase when a burial is required, including side-by-side plots. There is a waiting list for the new cemetery and people will be contacted when plots can be booked. Cllr. Stuchbury Proposed a press release regarding the current situation at Brackley Road Cemetery. Cllr. O'Donoghue Seconded. A vote was taken, and the result was:

For: 6
Against: 0
Abstention: 1

Cllr. Stuchbury Proposed, Cllr. O'Donoghue Seconded and Members unanimously **AGREED** the recommendations, as amended.

195/23 Updates from representatives on outside bodies

Cllr. Stuchbury put forward a motion to request involvement in drafting the Buckinghamshire Plan. As there was no seconder the motion failed.

The Dementia Strategy is now available to read on Buckinghamshire Council website. There is also a scrap metal consultation and an Autism consultation.

196/23 Buckingham Community Wildlife Project

Members received and noted the minutes of a meeting held on 21st June 2023 and thanked the individual volunteers for their work.

197/23 No Mow May

Members received a report from the Estates Administrator.

Recommendations:

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That Members agree to issue a press release highlighting the alternative strategies that have been adopted by the Town Council to promote biodiversity and support pollinators in our town.

That Members agree to issue a similar press release before the start of the 2024 grass cutting season.

Members unanimously **AGREED** the recommendations.

198/23 Action report

Members received the report and noted the updated information.

Cllr Stuchbury queried the absence of an action regarding the bench previously situated near the council chamber, however this matter was discussed in the Town Centre & Events Committee meeting of 3 April.

199/23 News releases

Brackley Road Cemetery

Bridges

Grass cutting/biodiversity strategies

200/23 Chair's announcements

The Chair referred to the area just outside the Chamber. The Estates Manager and Administrator have been in consultation with outside parties regarding tidying this up.

201/23 Date of next meeting: Monday 2nd October 2023.

Exclusion of public and press

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

COMMITTEE IN PRIVATE SESSION

202/23 Buckingham Community Centre

Members received and noted a report from the Compliance and Projects Manager.

The Compliance and Projects Manager confirmed that the fire system can be relied upon in the short term but requires replacing.

203/23 Tingewick Road Green Spaces updates

Members received a report from the Estates Manager.

Cllr. Stuchbury Proposed, Cllr. Harvey Seconded and Members unanimously **AGREED** the recommendations.

Meeting closed at 21:36

Chair

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