

TCE/05/20

Minutes of a meeting of the Town Centre and Events Committee of Buckingham Town Council held on Monday 7th December 2020 at 7pm online via Zoom.

Present:

Cllr. R. Ahmed	
Cllr. G. Collins	Town Mayor
Cllr. T. Bloomfield	Vice Chair
Cllr. Mrs. M. Gateley	
Cllr. J. Harvey	
Cllr. A. Mahi	
Cllr. L. O'Donoghue	
Cllr. Mrs. Strain-Clark	
Cllr. R. Stuchbury	Chair
Cllr. M. Try	

Also attending:

Mr. P. Hodson	Town Clerk
Mrs. A. Brubaker	Events Co-ordinator
Mrs. N. Stockill	Committee Clerk

No Members of the public were in attendance but no-one spoke.

861/20 Apologies for Absence

Members received apologies from the Deputy Town Clerk.

862/20 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

863/20 Minutes

Members received and **AGREED** the minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 19th October 2020 received at Full Council on Monday 23rd November 2020. (TCE/04/20)

864/20 Action List

Members received and noted the updated report.

865/20 Covid 19 Update

Members noted that this subject would be discussed within agenda item 19 (Markets – Covid Update).

866/20 Buckingham in Bloom

- Members received a written report from the Events Coordinator and **AGREED** the recommendations therein:
It is recommended that Buckingham in Bloom is held in 2021 giving local residents the chance to show off their front gardens, hanging baskets and community gardens. This is an event that can take place in lockdown conditions and includes all age groups.

- It is recommended that a representative from either Preston Bissett Garden Centre or Buckingham Garden Centre be invited to be one of the judges for 2021.
- As a winner's cup is already in existence, it is recommended that this year a small trophy or shield is presented to the winner of each category. An overall winner will be chosen from the winner of each category and the cup presented to the overall winner.
- It is recommended that Preston Bissett Nursery be approached to see if they would like to sponsor the event by donating prizes for the winners.

Proposed by Cllr. Bloomfield, seconded by Cllr. O'Donoghue and unanimously **AGREED** for the lead Councillors to determine four competition finalists, with the overall winner to be determined by a judge from Preston Bissett Nurseries.

ACTION EVENTS COORDINATOR

867/20 Community Board Funding

Members received and discussed a written report from the Town Clerk and **AGREED** to accept the funding from Buckinghamshire Council's Buckingham & Villages Community Board of £1,780 funding for the #BuckinghamAllWrappedUp project to promote shopping in Buckingham and to add this to budget.

Members noted that the project will encourage people to visit Buckingham to shop and use the restaurants and cafes in the lead up to Christmas, particularly on the days when Buckinghamshire Council is providing free parking. This will be achieved through leaflets, posters, bunting and a selfie backdrop, along with a social media and press campaign. A raffle will be used to encourage people to shop in as many venues as possible. The bunting and selfie backdrop will be undated and available to use for future Christmases in order to increase their marketing value. The project will support the economic recovery of the Town Centre by encouraging more people to visit the Town Centre, and those who do to visit more businesses and spend more of their money locally.

868/20 Accessibility Working Group

Members received the following recommendation from the Resources Committee (minute 789/20):

*Proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. O'Donoghue and unanimously **AGREED** for the Town Centre & Events Committee consider setting up a working group in liaison Access4All to examine the way forward.*

Members **AGREED** for an invitation to be issued to all Town Councillors, Members of the Economic Development Working Group and local community groups.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

869/20 Culture and Arts Strategy

Members received a written report from the Town Clerk and unanimously **AGREED** for Council staff to provide a detailed plan for creating a culture and arts strategy. It was **AGREED** that a working group be set up, consisting of councillors and partners, at the appropriate time.

Members were in agreement that Buckingham needed a modern arts facility for the range of commercial, voluntary, charitable groups across the town and that any plans for the development of an arts centre should be included within the redraft of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

Cllr. Stuchbury reminded Members of Cllr. Strain-Clark's previous efforts to fund the development of an arts centre in Buckingham. Cllrs. Stuchbury, Ahmed and Newell suggested reviewing best practice business models such as the successful Art Centres in Milford Haven, Aberystwyth and Warwick. Both Art Centres are based on University Campuses and pursue a diverse programming policy, supporting local groups and University ensembles. Cllr. Stuchbury cautioned against using public money to support a private organisation's art centre.

The Town Clerk commented that the Buckingham University, Royal Latin School and The Buckingham School would all needed to be consulted on the development of a strategy along with other local stakeholders.

870/20 Forthcoming Events

870.1/20 Members received and discussed a written report from the Events Coordinator. Proposed by Cllr. Harvey and seconded by Cllr. Strain-Clark to schedule a tentative date of the 18th September 2021 for the Good Endings Fair. **AGREED** Cllr. Stuchbury stressed that arrangements for the event would be kept under review and be discussed further at a future meeting of TC&E Committee, noting that this should be dealt with sensitively given the grief and loss being faced.

ACTION EVENTS COORDINATOR

The following report recommendation were **AGREED**:

- It is recommended that the Council plans the 2021 events as usual but with an online version and more socially distanced options also planned as alternatives where possible in case of us being in lockdown and large events being unable to take place. Planning for some of the larger events such as Bonfire & Fireworks, Charter Fair and Christmas Parade start in January so this work will commence shortly.
- It is recommended that the necessary road closures are applied for in bulk in January as we do every year. This way the Council only has to pay one fee of £860 rather than individual fees if we apply for the closures individually.
- When planning new events, the schedule of events show below should be considered to make sure that there is room in the calendar for additional events.
- It is recommended that a working group is set up to start planning for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations in 2022. This group should include outside bodies as necessary.

The Town Clerk suggested that a standing subgroup could be created or an Extra Ordinary meeting could be arranged, if necessary, to progress some of the larger events. Members **AGREED** Cllr. Stuchbury's proposal to take any urgent decisions to a sub-committee of TC&E Members before arranging, if necessary, an extra ordinary meeting of TC&E. Members discussed whether it was realistic to host a Food Fair on the 27th

February 2021. The Events Coordinator explained she'd already received a number of enquires from stall holders and was working on a risk assessment. It was noted that arrangements would have to be coordinated around the covid-19 vaccination programme.

Members **AGREED** the current plans to host the Food Fair on the 27th February 2021 but to keep arrangements under review in line with the advice from Public Health England.

870.2/20 Members **AGREED** the proposed schedule for events at LHSCC.

871/20 Event Reviews

871.1/20 Local Democracy Event

Members received a written report from the Events Coordinator and **AGREED** the following report recommendations:

- It is recommended that the Council continues with the Local Democracy event as this gives the students the opportunity to talk to local councillors, local MP and other organisations such as Thames Valley Police and to have their say as well as for the organisations taking place to hear the views of the young people.
- If the event is unable to take place face to face again next year then it is recommended that it is held via Zoom once again.

Cllr. O'Donoghue recorded her thanks to the Events Coordinator for her hard work leading up the event.

Cllr. Stuchbury proposed writing to Greg Smith MP, thanking him for attending the event and for his offer to give the school children a tour of parliament. **AGREED**

ACTION EVENTS COORDINATOR

871.2/20 Christmas light switch on

Members received and discussed a written report from the Events Coordinator and the following report recommendations were **AGREED**:

- It is recommended that the Christmas Light Switch On for 2021 goes ahead with a live event Covid-19 restrictions permitting.
- If Government restrictions are once again in place next year, then look at putting an on online event similar to this year's. Involving the whole town of Buckingham in the light switch on proved to be successful and it is recommended that we do the same thing again next year as this is something that can be done whether we are in lockdown or not and includes those that are unable to get into town for the main event.
- It is strongly recommended that the video recording made of the 2020 event is used again, perhaps as a projection as part of next year's Christmas Lights Switch On, and certainly online over this year's festive period and in the run up to next year's event.
- It is recommended that video content of this kind by considered for other suitable events.

Members commented that it was difficult to join the online event from earlier in the day. Members recorded their thanks to all of the staff and Councillors that helped facilitated the event.

872/20 Mayor's Christmas Cards

Members received a written report from the Lace Hill Sports and Community Centre Coordinator and AGREED to make the Mayor's Christmas Card Competition an annual community competition. Cllr. G. Collins said it was very difficult to judge as there were so many fantastic entries.

ACTION LACE HILL SPORTS AND COMMUNITY CENTRE COORDINATOR

873/20 Rubbish Campaign

Members received and noted a written report from the Committee Clerk. The Chairman thanked the Committee Clerk for the report and said Committee would consider a similar litter picking campaign in 2021.

874/20 Skate Park Consultation

Discussed within minute 875/20

875/20 Buckingham Action Group

Members received a verbal report from Cllr O'Donoghue noting that a number of experienced skaters and representatives from Action 4 Youth were enthusiastic about helping in the Skate Park redevelopment and that Cllr O'Donoghue was ensuring this took place. Cllr. O'Donoghue **AGREED** to bring relevant updates to a future committee meeting.

876/20 Access

Cllr. Strain-Clark asked if any Councillors felt disadvantaged by participating in online Committee meetings or whether holding meetings online disadvantaged any members of the public. The Town Clerk said that meetings would continue to remain accessible whilst ensuring that councillors, staff and the wider public are able to follow government advice by staying at home to stop the spread of coronavirus. It was hoped that at an appropriate time in the New Year, Council could start to look at plans for a mix of in-person and virtual meetings. The Town Clerk informed Members of an increase in public participation in Town Council meetings since the move to virtual committee meetings and noted that some meetings had now been viewed online by over 100 people.

877/20 Town Centre Manager

Members received and discussed a written report from the Town Clerk. Proposed by Cllr. O'Donoghue and seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury that members ask the Resources Committee to consider a detailed proposal to appoint a Town Centre Manager. The Town Clerk informed Members that the role would not require an increase in the Precept and would be funded from within the Town Council's existing resources. A vote was taken and the results were:

In favour: 8
Against: 0
Abstentions: 1

878/20 Pumpkin Trail

Members received and noted a written report from the Office Apprentice

879/20 Markets – Covid Update

Members received a verbal report from the Town Clerk, noting that during the second nationwide lockdown there were restrictions on the type of stall that could trade on markets. This did not affect the vast majority of Street Market traders and the market continued to run at capacity.

One stall that was affected was the card seller. It was hoped that by diversifying his stall and selling newspapers that he would be considered similar to retailers such as WH Smith who were allowed to continue trading. Unfortunately, the advice from EHO was that he was not compliant and therefore unable to stand. He was temporarily replaced with a food vendor, however as a loyal regular trader his place is reserved for him and at the time of writing this report it is anticipated that he will return on Tuesday 8th December.

The markets were already fully Covid compliant with increased space between stalls and marked queuing areas. No complaints or concerns have been raised by the public.

During an unannounced inspection EHO were very happy with the social distancing measures in place and agreed the Street Market was a safe place to shop.

The Flea Market was unable to operate during lockdown but will restart on the 5th December 2020. Social distancing measures are in place.

The markets are running well with a waiting list for new traders. Unfortunately, due to social distancing measures it has been decided to keep the current spacing between stalls and to not attempt to squeeze additional traders in.

The Markets Manager has done a fantastic job growing the markets' social media presence. Instagram has been a particular success with many of the new traders being engaged through the platform. As of the 30/11/2020 Buckingham Town Markets have 4003 Instagram followers.

880/20 Play Around the Parishes

Members **AGREED** for the Events Coordinator to book 3 x Family Fun Day 5 hour sessions at a cost of £810 per session. The total cost of £2,430 to be taken from budget code 301/4094 Youth Project.

The sessions will be held during the annual summer holidays and it is recommended the following dates are chosen.

Monday 26th July 2021

Monday 9th August 2021

Monday 23rd August 2021

ACTION EVENTS COORDINATOR

881/20 Budget

881.1/20 Members received and note the latest budget figures.

881.2/20 Members received and noted the revised budget forecast (covid-19 impact).

881.3/20 Members received and discussed a written report proposing the draft budget for 2021/22 and the revised draft five-year budget. The following report recommendation was **AGREED**.

It is recommended that the Committee recommend the proposed five-year budget and revised ear-marked reserve, with any changes Members agree, to be included in the proposed budget for 2021/2022 be included in the draft precept for Full Council to consider at the Precept meeting in January 2021.

The Town Clerk **AGREED** to circulate an updated budget calculation to Town Councillors.

882/20 Twinning

There were no updates.

883/20 News Releases

Members **AGREED** for the office to prepare the following press releases:

- Play Around the Parishes
- Events for 2021

884/20 Chair's Items

Cllr Ahmed's son will be relaunching the Buckingham Free Meals project during December 2020, offering free hot meals and shopping deliveries to those in need. The volunteers were hoping to find an alternative site to the Community Centre which was not available.

885/20 Date of the next meeting

Monday 8th February 2021

Meeting closed at 9pm

Signed

Date