

## **Bampton Town Council: Notes of the Public Forum. November 6<sup>th</sup> 2012.**

Mr Edwards expressed strong feelings regarding the notes of the previous public forum, particularly with regard to his comments about the resignation of a number of former councillors. He was of the opinion that 'vexatious questions' had caused former councillors to resign. Mr Edwards then referred to allegations of fraud that he believed had been made by Mr Pitt prior to becoming a councillor. This he linked to a complaint made to the Standards Board for England in 2010. Mr Smith, Acting Chairman, advised Mr Edwards that the appropriate course of action was to write to Mr Simon Johnson, the Monitoring Officer at Mid Devon District Council who was willing to deal with the complaint.

Lucie Moore, speaking as a former councillor, observed that the details of the complaint made in 2010 has been passed to the previous council but that they had decided not to pursue the matter due to lack of evidence. Similarly, the Monitoring Officer at MDDC chose not pursue it either.

Mr Lawrence felt that Mr Edwards ought to present any evidence he had to support his allegations. Questions were also raised as to why the matter was being raised now.

Mr Hatchett stated that people do consider the value of the individual when voting and that he, personally, would wish to know if former councillors had behaved inappropriately.

There was general agreement that the co-option of councillors had created problems for the previous council but it was generally felt that a new Council brought in by election would be a good thing.

Mr Jeff Thomas reported on the meeting of the Flood Committee that had been held the day before. The need for a representative from BTC on this committee had been noted and Mr Smith agreed with this point. The volunteers had extended their duties to also deal with snow duties. It was felt that a central situation for their equipment would be helpful. Clarification was also required on insurance matters and the meeting was told that all insurance matters were all being reviewed to ensure that adequate cover was in place.

Mrs Gilmour complimented the Flood Team on taking both the initiative and responsibility for their work. She went on to query the wages and expenses paid to the former clerk. Figures had been requested from the previous council to endorse these payments but had not been supplied. Mrs Hicks felt that the previous clerk had established the need to work in excess of thirty hours a week and payment had been made accordingly.

Lucie Moore asked for a Bampton Town Fair debrief meeting to be arranged. She also queried the presence of Peter Beckwith at the fair as Mr Woolley had already provided a safety report. Mr Beckwith has a strong history of event organisation and holds relevant and accreditation in this role He attended on fair day to provide an overview as an event assessor and his contribution on the day was considered to be valuable in ensuring that the fair took place. His professional standing had been acknowledged by Mr De Vey, the owner of the fairground, and he has an excellent reputation with the relevant authorities.

**The Minutes of the Meeting of Bampton Town Council**  
**held on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2012.**

1. Members present were Brian Smith (Interim Chairman), Francis Stoner, Keith Pitt and Rodney Baker. Jane Eyre (Acting Town Clerk).

District & County Councillor Polly Colthorpe,

Apologies were received from District Councillor Ray Stanley.

2. The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record with the proviso that Cheques Nos 101865, 101868, 101869, 101870 and 101873 were noted as being Bampton Fair costs; and that Minute 7a include Mr Beckwith's accreditations, and that the report he offered to provide would, if found acceptable, not cost more than £500 in total.

Mr Beckwith had provided a full CV, showing extensive experience in crowd control and security, communications, Health and Safety and Fire Safety; he had worked in these areas of management for international circuses, music events including Glastonbury, sporting events such as Royal Ascot, Superbike meetings and Premier League football grounds. Further training and experience had been acquired through work with the MOD and Reuters.

3. The committee, being required to agree the minutes of 4<sup>th</sup> September 2012, decided that Cllrs Pitt and Stoner, having been the only members in attendance still on the Council, would meet to discuss and formally agree the minutes as appropriate.

4. There being no matters arising from those minutes as yet, Cllr Polly Colthorpe kindly gave her report.

- Mr John Hart, the Leader of Devon County Council had been touring the district with regard to the Localism initiative, and setting a budget for the New Year. Several meetings were held, to discuss where cuts in spending may or may not be appropriate.
- Tiverton Youth Centre had now reopened to great effect. It now houses a resource for music and theatre and is a greatly improved facility all round.
- Waste Strategic Plan. This covers forward planning of landfill sites and recycling depots until 2026. Specific sites across the county are now being considered by County Hall.
- £120 million of funding from central Government, to be spent on the strategic road network, will not bring any benefit to the Mid Devon area, according to the decisions recently released.
- Of the Local Enterprise Partnership Funds, Heart of the Southwest had acquired a £50 million grant to improve broadband connections, with BT being cited as the preferred provider.
- A food and drink festival celebrating local producers will be held on Sunday December 11<sup>th</sup> December at the Pannier Market in Tiverton.
- The State of the District Debate. Meetings were being held in Mid-Devon, which would be improved in the future by greater public involvement.
- Bampton Business Group had been awarded a grant of £200 to be spent on improving road signage in order to bring more visitors to Bampton. £120,000 is still available from this fund and more applications from local groups would be welcomed.

Cllr Smith thanked Cllr Colthorpe for her report.

#### 5. Bampton Fair

A vote of thanks was given to Mr Alan Woolley and all of the volunteers. At least twenty-two people gave voluntary support to the Fair on the day and they covered a wide range of responsibilities. It was agreed that the Fair had given a great deal of enjoyment, and Cllr Smith had received two letters complimenting the town on its convivial attitude.

Mr Woolley noted that the catering tents in the Riverside Hall car park would benefit from having their own power supply. This could be arranged with Western Power, and as the consumption is low, it may also be worth asking them to 'donate' the electricity used. It was also thought this arrangement might encourage the producers on this site to stay until 8pm, as the on-street food traders do.

The radios had proved to be a great help; hired for the whole week, which gave adequate time for training and practice, and economically worthwhile.

Cllr Stoner mentioned that Nick Richards, from South West Tree Fellers, had provided valuable help in putting the signs up. He felt it would be useful for Nick to take a refresher course regarding the erection

of signs; and Cllr Smith thought that a councillor should also take this course. Next year's signage should include a sign at the top of Frog Street on Morebath Road to prevent unauthorised access. It was also noted that next year's Fair would take place on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2013, after the clocks have changed.

Station Road car park. The work on the wall is completed and paid for. A guarantee will be requested on the finished job.

Public toilets. A lighting system, which operated off motion sensors, was fitted in time for the Fair, and a vote of thanks was also given to Debbie and Mick Morgan for keeping all of the public toilets in such excellent order throughout the Fair and the After The Fair weekend.

Flood Plan, snow plan and the Pump House. A delivery of sand is expected, and a volunteer work team will be required to fill the sand bags. Cllr Stoner is awaiting delivery of a key to the gate to access the Shuttern in Frog Street. He will continue to be the Town Council's representative on the Flood & Emergency Volunteer Group. It needs to be confirmed that the Flood Group falls under the auspices of the Town Council, as it appears that the existing insurance arrangements do not cover volunteers in all circumstances. Further volunteer members of the group are to be agreed when the full Council meets in December.

It also transpires that gritting machine is not currently covered by insurance. It may be worth considering keeping the smaller machine in the former ladies toilet on the bridge. This building also requires insurance as does the Pump House, neither having been previously covered. The Pump House can now be accessed by a 4x4, after Cllr Baker supervised cutting back of brambles. The roof repairs are in hand, with a quote awaited, and the electricity supply to be reinstated. This building may provide suitable storage for the large gritter but access would have to be guaranteed by the school. A visit to discuss this situation is to be arranged immediately. It was thought that this arrangement would benefit the School, the Surgery, the Fire Station, School Close, Market Close, West Street and Barnhay, by ensuring access was quickly available. A suggestion had been received stating the possibility of paying to either rent a unit on the industrial estate, or to erect a storage facility on the Station Road car park. It was felt that this would cause several problems, as any such facility would have to be moved for the Fair, and there was no wish to lose parking spaces.

Parish Plan. Mr Alan Woolley gave an account of the origins and purpose of the Parish Plan. The cost of the creation, appraisal, final report and printing currently stands at £2,340 with a further £560 yet to pay. A public meeting will be held on November 10<sup>th</sup> to reveal the findings of the survey. The Council were shown a brief analysis of the information that will be available and thanked Mr Woolley for his time. It was not thought appropriate to offer an action plan until the full Council was in place; but that this would be something to consider in the New Year.

#### Planning.

Ref:12/01177/FULL Extension at 15 West Street No objections.

Ref:12/01405/FULL Extension at 30 Brook Street. Two letters of objection received. Application referred to MDDC.

Ref:12/01475 Removal of agricultural tie. No objection.

Two further applications were considered which had been received late but required a response before the next meeting.

Ref:12/01440/FULL 45 Brook Street. Returned to MDDC for clarification on details.

Ref:12/01507/CLU 48 Brook Street. Two councillors declared an interest. Returned to MDDC as not enough councillors left to constitute a quorum.

#### Finance.

Invoices paid:

M.Morgan	£510	Chq 101874
(Toilet cleaning including increment for Fair Day)		
J.Eyre (Acting town clerk)	£225	101875
South West Water (Overdue bill)	£133.77	101876
Richard H White (Rent for Bampton Fair)	£100	101877

#### Any other business.

Correspondence had been received from Bampton Business Group regarding the lights and Christmas trees for the Christmas Shopping evening. Businesses are to be asked to contribute towards the cost of the trees and Cllrs Smith and Baker agreed to make contact, with their own donations immediately.

A decision was taken to provide funding up to £2000 in the next financial year towards improvement work at the Millennium Green.

The next meeting of Bampton Town Council will take place at 7.30pm on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2012