

## Notes of the Public Forum 4<sup>th</sup> February 2014

Ms Katrina Munro attended the meeting to say that she had distributed copies of a letter to some members of the Council prior to the meeting regarding new brown signs. She had been in discussion with Devon County Council as she wished to place more signs around Bampton to direct more people to the Heritage Centre. To be discussed at the next meeting.

Mr Woolley attended to inform the meeting that he had been to the Safety Advisory Group meeting at MDDC regarding last year's fair. He reported that everyone had been generally happy with the event although some concern had been expressed regarding the number of stallholders who had left early. This was thought to have been prompted by the clocks having gone back the week before and the day getting dark earlier. MDDC are offering to provide a training course for stewards to offer guidelines on their responsibilities. The next SAG meeting will be on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2014.

Mr Woolley continued; as Chair of the Parish Plan Steering committee he now believes the job is complete. Copies of the plan have been widely distributed. Mr Les Hartley provided a copy of the final accounts and informed the meeting that the monies remaining in the account would be passed to BTC. Cllr Tanner, as Acting Chair, thanked everyone who had been involved in the work and the decision to offer the remaining funds to BTC. Mr Woolley noted that the organization had been properly constituted and had successfully fundraised from various bodies to support its work.

Mr Hartley then asked Cllr Baker, the Finance Officer, about a payment that had been made to EW Management and was informed that this was the payment to cover the hire of the skip.

Mrs Wendy Lunell spoke with regard to the Neighbourhood Plan. Having recently visited her son in Hook Norton where such a plan had just been completed she had brought back a copy of that plan for the Council's interest.

Mr Colin Rowland said that the South Molton Road site had been put forward to the Planning Committee and was 'ready to go'. He stated that he would like to work with BTC and felt that had BTC supported his planning application at School Close the access to the new housing could have been through the old school site and not via School Close. Mr Hartley, as former Chair of BTC felt that this was inaccurate, as Highways had not supported the plan. He and Mr Rowland disagreed on this point.

Mrs Lunell said that the Planning officer who attended the Local Plan review meeting had said that all the sites shown on the Bampton map would be used. She felt it was important for people to make their feelings known to the Planning Dept at MDDC during the review time. Cllr Tanner added that it was important that the infrastructure of Bampton needed to grow to support new housing.

Mrs Fagg had compared the old and new versions of the Local Plan to establish the differences and felt that the plans should be scrutinized to ensure that nothing had been removed that may have eventually benefited Bampton. She also asked if there was any chance of a public meeting being held to discuss the matter. All responses to the review should be returned to MDDC by 24<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

Wendy Lunell added that a Neighbourhood Plan does have legal status, whereas the Parish Plan does not, and it can be used to influence the Local Plan in details such as lighting and building materials. It cannot however be used to promote less development. Issues that do not have to go to the planning committee should not be included. The Neighbourhood Plan can cover a period of five, ten or fifteen years into the future. It is very difficult for BTC to make a decision regarding their Neighbourhood Plan until MDDC have made their plan as to whether Bampton is a town or a village. All community groups have to be consulted in the creation of the plan and there must be evidence in the plan that they have been consulted. A Steering Committee must be appointed and the exact neighbourhood covered by the plan defined. The initial stage is a pre-consultation agreement and various stages worked through until the final version is agreed at a referendum of the whole village. All costs associated with the creation of the plan should be taken into account.

Minutes of the Meeting of Bampton Town Council  
Held on Tuesday February 4<sup>th</sup> 2014.

1. Present were Cllrs Tanner (Acting Chair) Stoner, Baker, Weston, Pitt, Pope, Ward and Gilmour.  
Cllrs Colthorpe and Stanley also attended. Apologies were received from Cllr Smith.
2. There were no declarations of interest.
3. Cllr Ward queried whether the church was a partner in the Heritage Lottery fund grant to the Heritage Centre, he felt the Parochial Church Council were actually joint grantees.  
With reference to a computer for the exclusive use of BTC, an amount of £350 had been agreed as acceptable. The minutes were then agreed as a true record of the meeting.
4. Cllr Ward agreed to seek clarification regarding Bampton church being a partner to BHVC in the grant from the Heritage Lottery fund.
5. Cllr Colthorpe spoke about the budget at Devon County Council. There are concerns regarding the future of day centres and the youth service, a consultation process is now underway. People who manage their personal allowances for their own care are using day centres less and spending their money elsewhere. The youth service is not a statutory provision and Ofsted now recommend a targeted service rather than providing a universal service. Both services may now go through 'remodelling'. Cllr Colthorpe asked all Councillors to respond to the consultation. Cllr Gilmour thought any reduction in services would be detrimental and that there are areas of great need for the youth service in rural areas. Further to this Highways would see its budget diminished by 6%. Waste and refuse has to accommodate an annual increase in Landfill Tax, this currently means that £700,000 has to be saved from that

budget before service provision is considered. In the Corporate budget the concerns were that there was a reduction of 25% in the previous budget and any further cuts would have a serious effect on the ability of the council to perform.

Cllr Stanley noted that there would not be a waste to heat plant on the Eastern extension at Tiverton. Exeter already has a plant and waste may go there. There will not be an increase in the MDDC part of the council tax although increases are expected from DCC, the police and the fire service. All car parks in Mid Devon are now to be reviewed and the charges recalculated. There is a debate ongoing about an increase in council house rents and this is expected to be in excess of 4%. The Housing Service at MDDC has been benchmarked as one of the top performing in the country.

6. Finance. Cllr Ward was asked to check whether the PCC had yet arranged their payment towards the maintenance at the Millennium Green.

The Clerk asked whether new locks for the filing cabinets in the Albert fowler room could be authorized as it was obvious that someone was using a set of keys and the cabinets were not secure. Cllr Gilmour proposed that this be done with Cllr Pope seconding with all in agreement.

#### **February payments due.**

J. Eyre	Clerk's salary	£652.36
M.Morgan	Toilet cleaning	£310.00
N.Page	P3 maintenance work	£110.00
C.R.Fagg	P3 co-ordinator	£34.10
Ken White Signs	Model aircraft sign	£24.00
J Eyre	Clerk's expenses	£24.69
HMRC	NI contribution	£2.56

#### **January 2014 Receipts**

8 <sup>th</sup> January	Riverside Hall	£110.00
8 <sup>th</sup> January	Riverside Hall	£83.00
8 <sup>th</sup> January	Riverside Hall	£83.00
8 <sup>th</sup> January	Car park	£133.00

Cheques not presented as of 22<sup>nd</sup> January

Cheque number 1902 £100.00

Cheque number 1915 £2.56

#### **Bank statements at January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2014**

HSBC £29,381.18 cr Scottish Widows £36,531.39

7.Planning.

14/00111/FULL Old Quarry Stables Replacement extension No objections

14/00140/OUT Four bungalows, Ashleigh Park. East of Simla Cottage.

The paperwork for this application to be circulated and the Clerk to ask for an extension on the response date. To be referred to the agenda for March.

**8.a.** Cllr Gilmour asked what would be the outcome of not having a Neighbourhood Plan? It is very difficult to begin to create one until the outcome of MDDC's review of the Local Plan is completed. Mr Peter Williams, Forward Planning Officer is to be invited to speak to BTC. Cllr Stoner asked if MDDC could be asked to formulate a policy on fracking. Cllr Stanley thought that there were better sites available than in this area. Cllr Tanner adjourned the meeting briefly to allow for a discussion on this subject. It was generally felt that Bampton lay on the edge of the map of possibilities.

**b.** The TAP Fund money has yet to be spent and although there had been discussions about joint funding bowling strips and cricket nets to be used on the Rec. no definitive communications had been received from either Morebath Cricket Club or Morebath Parish Council agreeing to partnership working. As the site is governed by English Heritage the proposal to dig out an area on which to create bowling strips was unlikely to be supported for archaeological reasons. A letter to be sent requesting information as to how Morebath PC intends to spend its TAP Fund and suggesting discussion between themselves and Morebath Cricket Club in order to make a final decision at the March meeting of BTC.

**c.** A quote of £469.00 inc vat has been received for a dedicated BTC computer. Although this was in excess of the agreed amount the total after vat had been reclaimed would be approximately £380. Cllr Ward proposed accepting the quote and Cllr Baker seconded, all in agreement.

**d.** Cllr Ward had found the creation of a budget a difficult proposition and needed to know what should be budgeted for. He suggested improvements to the public toilets and to the play park on Station Road and that quotes should be requested for these works. Cllr Pitt pointed out that £37,000 had already been spent on the play park and BTC did not own the public toilets. To be discussed at a later date.

**e.** It was agreed that Cllrs Pitt and Gilmour would attend a meeting with Mr Andrew Busby at MDDC to discuss whether MDDC would continue to fund the upkeep of the public toilets. Cllr Gilmour felt strongly that MDDC should maintain their obligation in this respect allow BTC to look after its own responsibilities in the town.

**f.** In response to a letter from Mr Densham of MDDC regarding legal fees incurred by the owner of Shillingford Play Park. BTC offered to pay £370 in full and final settlement to retain the park for public use.

**g.** Cllr Stoner had reappraised a document received from the Environment Agency with regard to the management of Manor Mill floodgate. The Council agreed his amendments and the Clerk is to return the document to the EA for their agreement. The Flood Group needs to be a sub-committee of BTC to be covered by their insurance. It was suggested that they should combine with and be a sub-group of the Snow and Gritting group, which would provide the volunteers with a personal liability of £25,000 until the insurance, comes up for renewal at the end of May. All agreed.

**h.** DCC had requested works to make safe the trees by the play park on Station Road. One must be taken down and remedial work is required on another. Quotes to be requested to do the specified works and also to remove all three trees.

- i. Cllr Pope to ask the Bampton in Bloom group to include improving the rose garden in their plans for this year.
- j. Cllr Stoner has identified a place on the wall by the Rec where the Fields in Trust plaque could be recessed into the stonework. Cllr Gilmour proposed that he arrange this, seconded by Cllr Pope.
- k. The Clerk agreed to contact Mr & Mrs Fagg with regard to the funding for the P3 group.
- l. The issue of audio recordings of the meeting came to be discussed as part of the Standing Orders. Cllr Gilmour thought there was a clear message being sent from central Government and the Monitoring Officer at MDDC that transparency was to be encouraged and was supported by MDDC who are recording their meetings and in some instances using live streaming. If councilors are not confident of standing by what they say in meetings they must look to themselves. There is also a need to have audio recordings available for people with literacy or sight problems. There was some discussion as to whether this should be voted on on an annual basis and a general agreement that there should be no recording of closed meetings. Cllr Tanner asked for a vote to show those in favour of meetings being recorded; Cllrs Baker and Weston abstained from the vote with the rest in favour.
- m. Pedestrians are still finding it difficult to cross Newton Square safely to reach the post office. The number of people using the post office service has dropped by 50% and there is concern that the service may be lost due to the low number of customers. The council agrees that the road crossing issue is a dangerous one which needs addressing. The Clerk to ask Mr Leigh of DCC Highways if a crossing can be arranged.
- n. Cllr Tanner asked that the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Cllr Baker, to allow Rotarian Ken Mills to speak about Exe Valley Rotary using the BTC marquees at Uffculme Show. The meeting recommenced and Cllr Pitt reminded the meeting that the marquees had previously been loaned for a private function and that a donation of cash or goods had been offered. BTC had then been asked to pay for the goods. . Mr Woolley to be contacted regarding his offer of a financial donation or the donation of the coconut matting. Cllr Gilmour said that the whole situation needed formalizing a cost agreed. She suggested that there be two levels of cost; £100 for charities and £250 for commercial or private functions. Evidence of appropriate insurance must be seen before the marquees are removed. Proposed by Cllr Gilmour and agreed by all
- o. Membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks had been suggested as being a practical and useful support to the work of the council. Cllr Gilmour proposed taking up membership, seconded by Cllr Pitt.

The date of the next meeting will be **Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2014** in the Albert Fowler Room. The meeting will commence at 7.30pm and will be preceded by the Public Forum at 7pm.