

Notes of the Public Forum 3rd September 2013.

A further complaint was received regarding model planes being flown from the Recreation Ground. The complainant alleged that the planes are now dive-bombing his bungalow and he fears for the welfare of his livestock in nearby fields. The police have informed him that they are unable to act as there is no bye-law prohibiting the flying of model planes. The Chairman agreed to write to the local police officer to establish the situation.

The Rev, Lynne Burgon introduced herself to her first BTC meeting. She then spoke in support of the Heritage Centre, which will be based in the church. She felt the centre would bring business to Bampton in times of economic hardship and wanted BTC to provide financial support for the project as the PCC had spent a great deal of time working to make this possible. Cllr Gilmour responded that BTC had to use the funds given to it by Government to best effect on behalf of the people of Bampton. The £3000 requested by the Heritage Centre was equivalent to 400 hours of work or one quarter of an average family wage. As Cllr Stanley noted in a previous meeting, with frontline cuts in local services life will become more difficult for many people and fuel poverty was also a big issue. Rev Burgon suggested that BTC should direct anyone suffering from financial hardship to the church.

The Chair of the Riverside Hall trust spoke regarding the need for a new hall. The National Lottery had paid for a feasibility study in 2006. This study had been passed to the previous council but nothing had happened and the hall had deteriorated in the meantime. The Chairman acknowledged that this is an important issue for Bampton and requested a copy of the Feasibility Study. There is no current plan and no proposed site other than the existing one. Cllrs Gilmour and Tanner agreed that this is something that BTC should begin to address.

Mrs Way of New Park Cottage asked that the recommendation regarding her planning application, discussed at the previous meeting, be changed. It was explained that this was not possible and that the matter would be decided by Planning at MDDC.

Mrs Fagg commented that the pavement works at School Close had left high, obstructive kerbs around the site. She complained that the rubbish pile left for collection had been thrown about again and asked why it had not been collected. The response was that it could not be collected as planned, also due to the work being carried out on the pavements. MDDC had been asked to check on the situation.

A resident complained about the lack of street lighting in West Street while other streets still had street lighting. He felt this was dangerous and had contributed to a recent burglary on his premises. Cllr Colthorpe responded that Devon County Council were switching off some street lights between 12.30am and 5.30am to save money. She agreed to ask for the lighting to be checked and to ask if the situation could be improved.

Katrina Munro spoke on behalf of the Heritage Centre. She stated that the Bampton Business Group had proposed the idea two to three years ago. The group realised that the project would not be sustainable in a commercial premises so approached the church. Some of the older parishioners had expressed concerns but the PCC had agreed to the proposal. Ms Munro went on to say that Cllr Gilmour was the only person to have made negative comment about the project. Cllr Gilmour stated at this point that she stood by all she had said. £11,000 had been received from the National Lottery with funding also received from other bodies totalling £35,000; Ms Munro offered to supply any supporting information that may be required.

Mr Colin Rowland said that he had been appalled to learn that BTC had not been informed of the Special Planning Meeting on 28th August to discuss the application to further develop Scott's site and that our District Councillor appeared to vote against the people of Bampton. Some Councillors also stated that they were disappointed with Cllr Colthorpe on that occasion but it was acknowledged this was a professional, not a personal, response.

The Public Forum ended at 7.40pm.

The Minutes of the Meeting of Bampton Town Council Held on 3rd September 2013.

1. Councillors present were Brian Smith, Edward Tanner, Rodney Baker, Rachel Gilmour, Jean Pope, Keith Pitt, Francis Stoner, William Weston and Jack Ward.
Mr Kevin Finan, Chief Executive officer of Mid Devon District Council was also present, as were Cllrs Colthorpe and Stanley.
2. Brian Smith and Edward Tanner made declarations of interest regarding Bampton Fair and Jack Ward and Edward Tanner regarding the heritage Centre.
3. The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true record.
4. Matters arising. A meeting had been held on the 13th August regarding the revision of the Local Plan. A statement had been sent to MDDC and a decision taken to ask that Bampton be given village status.
5. Mr Kevin Finan was welcomed to the meeting by the Chairman, Cllr Smith. He was invited to the meeting to discuss the Special Meeting of the Planning Committee held on August 28th regarding Scott's Development. Cllr Smith asked why Bampton Town Council had not been informed of or invited to the meeting? Cllr Colthorpe responded that it was not usual practice to inform local councils of such meetings. Cllr Colthorpe as Chair of the Planning Committee at MDDC had requested the Special Meeting without the minutes stating what the meeting would be about. The Town Clerk noted that any party that objected to the plans should have been invited to the meeting but BTC were not informed in that respect either. Cllr Colthorpe went on to explain that the original application from Devonshire Homes had lacked information regarding the marketing exercise, viability and costings. On top of this the original application showed the land as an allocated site for industrial use. Devonshire Homes had also asked that the site be used for housing, which was also rejected as it was felt that employment land was needed. In the meantime the Local Plan went to inquiry and the Planning Inspector changed much of what was written there so it became difficult for the Planning Officer to defend her original reasons for refusal. The situation was compounded by Devonshire Homes submitting the information that had been missing from the original application and convincing MDDC that the appeal would be lost, despite the matter having been already referred for appeal to the Secretary of State.
Cllr Stoner asked at what stage in the planning process does the situation change? A vote was taken on the information supplied as it stood in law at the time of the vote. If the law changes in the interim why should it affect the decision? Cllr Colthorpe responded that the 'rules had changed during the game and that this was a special case and might also be attributed to human error. Of the years she had been involved in planning this had only happened twice, although both times it had happened to Bampton.
Cllr Gilmour observed that for democracy to work people have to have faith in those whom they elect. It had been suggested that evening that a very cosy relationship existed between MDDC and Devonshire Homes regarding planning, which excludes BTC. In that instance an apology is not enough and procedure has to be considered and addressed.
Cllr Stoner promised to ask the Inquiry on Wednesday that Devonshire Homes are not awarded costs.

Further to this questions were asked as to why further planning details were sent regarding Duvale Barton with barely time to make them public or to respond and why another application on tonight's agenda had been allowed by the Planning Office before the date BTC were given to respond to it? It was generally considered to have been an unsatisfactory week regarding communication with MDDC Planning.

- 6. i. 12/01625/MFUL Scotts Business Park. The inquiry took place on the 3rd and 4th September 2013.
 - ii. 13/0193/CAT 13 Newton Square. Application to fell trees. Decided by Planning Officer without reference to BTC.
 - iii. 13/01076/CLU Annexe at Moory Meadow. No objection.
 - iv. 13/01117/FULL 29/31 Brook Street. No objection.
7. Finance. The accounts are ready to go to audit. A figure was given as a valuation of the Riverside Hall. Cllr Gilmour proposed that the figure remain, seconded by Cllr Baker. Cllr Ward suggested that council property should be revalued every few years.
 Car park monies: 13/8 £126.90 30/8 £162.72
 A total of £1132.77 since April 2013

September payments due.

		£
D/d MDDC	Toilet and car park rates	77.00
Nigel Payne	Completion of work at Millennium Green	1418.92
J.Eyre	Town clerk (inc £48.55 expenses)	565.55
MJF Contractors	Grass cutting	418.72
Bampton PCC	Upkeep of the churchyard	300.00
Nicholas Page	P3 Upkeep (Styles etc)	200.00
Just the Job	Hollett Garden grass cutting	20.00
Jean Pope	New keys for toilet	16.10
Michael Morgan	Toilet cleaning	270.00

August receipts

Open reach way leave	24.50
Riverside Hall films	166.00
Car parks	160.00

Bank statements @ 31st August 2013

HSBC £19,822.92 cr Scottish Widows £36,531.39 cr

8. Ongoing business.

- a. Cllr Pitt asked why the Millennium Green was still registered as a charity when BTC was the sole trustee. Clerk to check the history of the MG and any covenants on the land etc. Cllr Pope and two volunteers had cleared the stream. Digger driver Mark from Roadform, working on the School Close site, cleared parts of the watercourse, which had been heavily in-filled. Unfortunately the rubbish found, and left in a heap to be collected, was still on site due to the pavement works blocking the access.

- b. Quotes to make secure doors and windows at the Pump House are to be chased up by Cllr Smith. Cameras are to be purchased following a proposal by Cllr Pope seconded by Cllr Baker.
- c. Receipt of the statement regarding the revision of the Local Plan was received from Peter Williams, the Forward Planning Officer at MDDC.
Mr Williams will attend the next meeting of BTC to discuss the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan.
- d. Further to a request from Mr Rowland regarding the lease of his land, which is used as an allotment. Mr Manning of Bampton Allotment Association had been contacted. He had supplied information, which showed that it would be more logical and practical for the Allotment Association to establish a lease between themselves and Mr Rowland, rather than the lease to be held by BTC. Proposed by Cllr Baker seconded by Cllr Tanner.
- e. Complaints had been received from the public regarding the state of the public toilets. Following checks by councillors Cllr Pope had cleaned the toilets for four days last month. Cllr Smith thanked her for all her hard work. She has since checked the toilets and encouraged the toilet cleaner to be more thorough. It was generally felt that a poor job was being done. It was agreed that a list of the essential jobs should be supplied, pending a review of the contract. Cllr Pitt to collect cleaning equipment from MDDC.
- f. Cllr Pope asked if the recycling bins in the car park could be emptied more often as recycling is left even when they are full and gets scattered around the car park. It constitutes fly tipping. It is thought that businesses are using the glass recycling bins causing them to fill up quickly. There is also a business waste bin sited in the car park, which contains food waste and is often very smelly. Cllr Ward offered to look into who owns this.
- g. Mr Browning requested a cheque towards the new brown tourist signs. There was some discussion as to why this should be payable to Bampton Business Group rather than DCC, but it was agreed it would be paid on receipt of an invoice. Cllr Pitt stated he did not wish to be a signatory to this.
- h. It was acknowledged at the beginning of the discussion that the vote to support the Heritage Centre taken at the last meeting could not be considered valid as Cllrs Ward and Tanner had failed to declare an interest. There were several concerns expressed regarding the financial figures, given in a copy of the accounts provided on request. Primarily that over £25,000 of the funds were being allocated to sign boards, shelving, office equipment and professional fees. This was considered to be a huge amount of money. The council were also disappointed to see that the opening event, for which funds had been allocated in the budget, was only open to people willing to pay to get in. This did not give the impression of it being an event that was open to the whole community. The only place in the budget where funds had not been allocated was for volunteer expenses, despite it being an accepted norm in voluntary projects that it should not cost to volunteer. It was thought that this would limit the range of people who might be willing to give time to the project but who would benefit from some help, with travel expenses for example.
Cllr Gilmour suggested, in light of the various concerns expressed, that rather than a donation of £3000, which constitutes a significant percentage of the precept received by BTC to use to good effect in Bampton, it may be appropriate to offer an interest free loan for the amount requested.

This would be payable upon the presentation of invoices (not retrospective) and the final date to claim would be by the 31st December 2014, the project completion date as cited by the National Lottery. Further to this it should be stipulated that, as with the National Lottery Grant, if the project proves to be unsustainable within ten years of its launch date the loan must be repaid. Beyond that date the loan may be kept and no repayment will be expected.

The loan will be made available once the original business plan, accounts submitted to the Lottery with the bid and a copy of the constitution of the Heritage Centre management group have been made available for the perusal of BTC, with copies to be kept. This was then proposed by Cllr Gilmour and seconded by Cllr Baker and agreed by the council.

- i. **There will be a volunteer's social evening to thank all the existing Bampton Fair volunteers and to welcome new volunteers on Monday 30th September at 7pm at The Riverside Hall.** At a recent meeting of the SAG group it was agreed to put all emergency procedures in place to cover a worst-case scenario. Cllrs Pope and Stoner working with Alan Woolley aim to bring all the relevant paperwork by the end of September.

The banner will be raised across the street on Saturday 28th September and signs are to be arranged for Frog Street.

- j. Shillingford play park. The petition was sent in to MDDC and as a result they have proposed to create a contract to maintain the park for another three years. This will be confirmed when it has been agreed by committee at MDDC. Cllr Pitt asked for his thanks to everyone who signed the petition to be recorded.

A teenager had damaged some of the equipment at Station Road car park. This was witnessed and the police called so the person responsible for the damage was accosted. The police held a meeting with the boy and his parents who suggested that he help to repair the damage caused. Three quotes will now be requested for this work.

- k. The final details of the Clerk's contract were agreed. This included an increase in hours to twelve a week and the relevant point on the NALC salary scale acknowledged.

- l. Correspondence had been received from DCC Highways regarding a road works at Black Cat, which will close the road from 4th November 2013 until February 2014.

This has implications for Devonshire Homes who are obliged to exit Bampton on the South Molton Road. MDDC Planning have been informed.

Also from Mrs Hicks who raised several points and a response was agreed.

The date of the next meeting will be 1st October 2013

