

WEST BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

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The minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 24th November 2015 in the Committee Room, West Buckland Village Hall at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr's Mrs M Blogg (Chair), D Lacey, Mrs C Hannath, J Nutt, C Rayson and C Silverlight.
In attendance: the Clerk, Mrs J Larcombe.

103/11/15. To accept apologies for absence. Apologies were received from PCSO's S Cridlin and L Fyne.

102/11/15. Disclosure of interest in items on the agenda. There were no disclosures.

103/11/15. To agree the minutes of the meetings held on 27/10/15. The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting and they were duly signed by the Chairman.

104/11/15. Matters arising from the minutes not covered by the agenda. There were no matters arising.

105/11/15. Democratic Period. There were no members of the public present.

106/11/15. Planning:

a) To consider any Planning Applications received by the Parish Council.

46/15/0039 Erection of entrance lobby at Camelot House Nursing Home, Camelot House, Ham Road, Ham, Wellington. Applicant: Camelot House Nursing Home.

Comment: West Buckland Parish Council support the granting of approval.

b) To receive results from planning applications determined by TDBC. There were no decisions to report.

c) To note result of planning appeal APP/D3315/C/15/3005229 Gerbestone Lodges

The appeal was allowed and the enforcement notice was quashed. In accordance with Section 177(1)(b) of the 1990 Act, the Conditions Numbered 02 attached to the planning permissions dated 30 September 2008 (Ref. 46/2008/021 and Ref. 46/2008/022), granted by Taunton Deane Borough Council are discharged. Planning permission is granted on the application deemed to have been made under Section 177(5) of the 1990 Act for:

a) The erection of four log cabins for use as holiday accommodation at Gerbestone Manor, Wellington (Ref. 46/2004/043)

b) The erection of four log cabins for use as holiday accommodation (Phase2) at Gerbestone Manor, Wellington (Ref. 46/2005/035) without complying with the Conditions Numbered 02 of the planning permissions (Ref 46/2008/021 and Ref 46/2008/022) but subject to the other conditions attached to those planning permissions

Ref. 46/2004/043 and Ref. 46/2005/035 so far as they are still subsisting and capable to taking effect.

d) Complaint to TDBC about not receiving planning appeal decision. The Clerk reported that she had made a complaint to TDBC as councillors were upset that they hadn't been informed of the Gerbestone Lodges planning appeal decision. Julie Harcombe Planning and Development Business Support Manager, responded and explained there have been some procedural changes over the last few months that have been necessary following reduced resources and high workload within TDBC's Planning Department. A number of processes which may have previously been doubled up on by contacting direct and also providing information via the website have been more streamlined to help resource issues. Planning decisions are not sent to anyone direct except to the Applicant/Agent, all decision are immediately published on the website when they are issued. Town and Parish Council already receive an email each week which informs them of every decision made in the previous week. Alternatively Councils can also sign up for web alerts which links them immediately to those applications they may wish to look more closely at. With regard to Planning Appeals if the Parish Council has commented on an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate it is them who would issue the copy of any subsequent decision. Every TDBC Planning Committee Agenda includes a report of appeals made and appeals determined. The Clerk asked that this information is circulated to all Town and Parish Council Clerks and this has been done.

e) TDBC Planning Training Session covering highway considerations in respect of planning applications on Tuesday 8 December at 6pm. The Clerk will book places on the training for Cllr Mitton and Cllr Mrs Blogg.

f) Any other planning matters. The Clerk confirmed that the time limit granted to Blackdown Garden Centre for them to complete highways work under planning approval 46/15/004 is November 30th.

107/11/15. Highways.

a) To report on work carried out by the SCC Highway Department and to receive reports on work that is needed. Some potholes were noted.

b) Matters arising from previous meeting

- **Ditch at Lee Park – update.** Nick Whitemore, Area Works Manager TDBC, responded by email on the 18th November to a letter from the Clerk. He has said TDBC will get the ditch cleared out that runs under the hedge line in the open space within the next three weeks. In her letter the Clerk asked for clarification about TDBC's responsibility for clearing this ditch but Mr Whitemore has not provided that information.
- **Removal of lumps of concrete left on the verges following the removal of signs at Ford Street and collection of 20 mph warning signs following surface dressing.** The lumps of concrete have still not been removed.

c) Any other highways matters. There will be a temporary road closure in Silver Street from the 11th January for five days for drainage works to be carried out near Silver Street Farm.

Cllr Silverlight reported that he had collected the free bags of de-icing material and distributed them around Blackmoor.

108/11/15. To receive reports from:

a) Police. The Police Report for October was circulated by email. There were 12 police logs for October for the beat, which is low again in comparison to other months. These included a road related issue on the Wrangway, where mud on the road was reported, and another road related issue in West Buckland with cows on the road.

b) Village Hall Committee. Cllr Hannath reported the post box has been put on the wall adjacent to the entrance. The school PTFA will be sending a representative to Village Hall Committee meetings but this duty will be shared amongst its members and different people will be attending each month.

c) Any other reports. Cllr Mitton reported on the NALC Conference. There had been discussion about whether the county associations or the town and parish councils are the 'members'. The President, Lord Litton, was charged to have a look and in principle it is the town and parish councils who are the members. This will be discussed further and a final decision will be made at the conference next year. NALC now has a deficiency in funding which is partly due to the new pension requirements. AON has sponsored them in the past but this has been reduced to almost nothing as there are now other insurers in the market. Government grants have also been substantially reduced. There will be an increase in affiliation fees for 2016/17 which could mean an increase of £9 for West Buckland. SALC's County Committee decided not to increase its subscription rate next year. Parishes receive 15% of CIL funding, if they do not have a neighbourhood plan, and TDBC receive 85% which they spend on infrastructure. TDBC has claimed to have written out to all town and parish councils to explain who will be making the decision about what it is spent on, Churchstanton Parish Council would like SALC to appoint a representative from their County/Area Committees. The representative could report back to councils.

109/11/15. Finance

a) To agree and authorise payments. It was resolved to make the following payments:
TDBC - £100.00 election expenses (chq no 1297)

Wicksteed Leisure Ltd - £97.80 replacement flat swing seats (chq no 1298)

Mrs J Larcombe – 223.54 Clerk's salary and expenses (chq no 1299)

Cheque dated 29th December 2015: Mrs J Larcombe - £189.54 Clerk's salary for December (chq no 1300)

Cllr Mrs M Blogg - £22.00 reimbursement for payment to RBL for Remembrance wreath (chq no 1301)

Heathfield Garden Contractors have cut the grass on the playing field and it was agreed that the payment can be made if they submit an invoice before the next meeting.

b) To discuss whether the Council should apply for funding to purchase a laptop. NALC has negotiated funding from the government for grants to enable councils to comply with the new transparency code regulations. Cllr Mitton suggested that the Council should apply for funding for a laptop computer for the council. SALC and the government recommend that each council has its own computer. The Clerk said she did not want another computer and wished to continue using her own. It was suggested that all the council's documents could be stored on the computer and it could be looked after by a councillor. The Clerk pointed out that all the council's documents are saved on memory sticks which are swapped between the Clerk and Chairman on a regular basis to keep them updated. There are other options such as 'cloud' storage which might work better than storing documents on one computer. There would also be other issues such as insurance and acceptable use to consider. Councillors will think about this and it will be discussed again at the next meeting.

c) To discuss the budget for 2016/17 and agree the precept. Councillors discussed the draft budget for 2016/17. A request has been received for the Council to review the amount of the Churchyard grant with a view to increasing it. The Council has not been informed about the decision on the amount of Council Tax Support Grant that will be paid by TDBC and do not know how much grant they will receive from TDBC towards the playing field, Churchyard grant and footpaths. It was agreed that the Council could not meet TDBC's deadline of 21st December for submitting the precept because it was waiting for information from TDBC. It is the Council's ambition to keep the precept the

same and a decision on the precept will be made when it receives the information it needs from TDBC on the CTSG.

d) Sector Led Body for Audit. From the start of the 2017/18 financial year parish and town councils can choose to have an auditor appointed to them by a new 'sector-led body' or they can decide to procure their own, but they must have an auditor appointed as a legal requirement. Smaller authorities with a turnover of less than £25,000 will be exempt from having to submit an annual financial return, but will still need to have an auditor appointed in case there are questions from electors to be resolved. The SLB will be the first point of contact in this case. NALC, SLCC and ADA are currently working together to set up a 'sector led body' to procure audit for smaller authorities for the start the 2017/18 financial year. This process is being supported and funded by DCLG. As was the case with the former Audit Commission, the running costs of the new body will be funded from the audit fees charged to smaller authorities, but the overhead is planned to be lower as the SLB will not carry out a number of functions done by the former Audit Commission. The board of the new body will comprise an independent chair, two independent members, and representation from NALC, SLCC and ADA. Secretariat support will be provided by NALC. The new body will have a Memorandum Understanding with DCLG, who will have optional observer status, and who will also review and monitor progress and quality of SLB work. The SLB will appoint auditors for all those smaller authorities 'opted in' to the new arrangements. Those smaller authorities who wish to participate in the SLB do not need to do anything as all smaller authorities are automatically opted in to the new body and will have an auditor procured for them. A council is entitled to opt out of the new arrangements. The decision to opt out must be through a formal meeting of the council, and as such every council which is eligible to opt-out needs to actually formally consider if they are going to. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

110/11/15. Playing Field

a) Use of the playing field for parking and other events. The Council is asked from time to time if the playing field can be used for parking and people often contact Cllr Mrs Blogg and there is not enough time for the request to be discussed at a meeting. At times it is difficult to know what the weather conditions will be when the field will be used and people expect that they will be able to use it. It was agreed that parking on the playing field is at the discretion of the Parish Council and will be restricted to the Village Hall side. If the field is considered to be too wet for cars to park without damaging the field permission will not be given or will be withdrawn. In such conditions parking could also be restricted to four wheel drive vehicles.

b) Any matters to note. The grass has been cut again as it has continued to grow in the mild weather.

The swing seat will be replaced in the spring.

111/11/15. Footpaths: any matters brought forward. Cllr Silverlight emailed Cllr Blogg regarding a locked gate on footpath WG 14/22. The landowner has locked the gate because he is trying to stop fly tipping. The email was forwarded to Mr Gould, PPLO, and he contacted Sally Vickery, Rights of Way Officer SCC. She has contacted Cllr Silverlight to tell him that she will go and have a look to see if the gate remains locked. She added that she sympathised with the landowner if he is having trouble with fly tipping but at the same time access needs to be maintained for the public, without having to climb the gate. Cllr Silverlight has checked again and the gate remains locked. The Council was concerned that SCC was not enforcing the unlocking of the gate and felt that the gate could be replaced by one which included a pedestrian gate. Cllr Silverlight will follow this up with Sally Vickery.

The Clerk will ask Sally Vickery if she could provide A3 copies of an updated map of the parish showing the footpaths.

112/11/15. Correspondence and items of interest. The Clerk has written to Historic England in response to their report from the initial assessment of the West Buckland War Memorial. Their attention was drawn to the following inaccuracies.

- The location of the memorial is Silver Street, West Buckland, Wellington, Somerset, TA21 9JS.
- In the paragraph beginning with history the committee minutes were dated June 1919 (not 19191)
- The railings were not replaced in 1992. They were repaired on one side after they were damaged by a vehicle.

The following correspondence was noted:
War Memorials Trust Bulletin.

113/11/15. Any other urgent business at the Chairman's discretion. None.

114/11/15. Dates of Meetings for 2016: Tuesday 26 January; 23rd February; 29th March; 26th April; 31st May; 28th June; 26th July; 30th August; 27th September; 25th October and 29th November. Provisional date 5th January.