

WEST BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

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A Meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 25th September 2018 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, D Mitton, C Rayson and C Silverlight

In attendance: PCSO S Baker and the Clerk, Mrs J Larcombe.

70/09/18. To accept apologies for absence. Apologies were received from County Cllr J Thorne.

71/09/18. Disclosure of interest in items on the agenda. There were no disclosures of interest.

72/09/18. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 28/07/18. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and they were duly signed by the Chair.

73/09/18. Matters arising from the minutes not covered by the agenda. Cllr Mitton reported that he had attended the drop in session regarding changes to dementia day care services provided by SCC and the closure of Strathfield House in Wellington. Only eight people use it and it has to be staffed by professionals. Reminiscence Learning is considering providing professionally staffed day care and this would give carers some respite. Some day care providers expect carers to stay. Cllr Mitton asked whether it was the cost of the building or the cost of staff that was the problem. He was told that staff cost a lot but the charge for using another venue will be looked at.

74/09/18. Democratic Period. There were no members of the public present.

75/09/18. Police Report. It was agreed to move this item forward to allow PCSO Baker to leave the meeting. PCSO Baker summarised the Police Report for August which had been circulated by email at the start of September. Of 264 logs for the Wellington Rural Beat area 22 were for the Monument beat. These included a burglary in West Buckland where a cement mixer was stolen from a building under renovation and an item stolen from a person using violence. Advisory information reminding everyone of their responsibilities has been put in the community newsletter following an incident between a dog walker and a landowner. Rogue Trader Week takes place in October and the Police will be handing out leaflets. A Community Speedwatch poster and a Hate Crime poster have been circulated to put on notice boards. Cllr Mrs Blogg asked whether the Beat Surgeries were working. PCSO Baker said she hadn't got out to them as much as she should have and explained that a new way of working is about to start and this will get PCSO's back to community policing and

not response. They have been given laptops and mobile phones and will be encouraged to carry out their work while out in the community using places such as cafes and village halls. They will no longer be attending road traffic collisions or collecting CCTV footage. They will be using bicycles some of the time because the number of vehicles available to them has been cut back. Cllr Silverlight said he had noticed an increase in crime in the monthly Police Reports. PCSO Baker felt there was nothing to worry about at the moment; people move in and out of areas. The darker nights often lead to an increase in crime. Cllr Lacey mentioned the residential dwelling house burglary, which had taken place in a property close to the Village Hall, whilst the owners were away on holiday. Jewellery, money and documents had been taken from a safe and there was conjecture as to how the burglars had gained access. This burglary has upset the village and people would like to know how they got into the property. PCSO Baker did not know about this crime and explained it was still with the Scenes of Crime team. She will try to find out more.

PCSO Baker left the meeting.

76/09/18. Planning:

a) To consider any Planning Applications received by the Parish Council prior to the meeting:

46/18/0024 Change of use of land for the siting of a temporary agricultural workers dwelling with additional temporary unit for storage and office use at Pitt Farm, Wellington Road, West Buckland.

Comment: West Buckland Parish Council support the granting of conditional approval because of the legitimate need.

b) To receive decisions from planning applications determined by TDBC.

46/18/0019 Change of used of land to site 2 mobile homes for travelling showmen at Orchard Court, Chelston, Wellington (retention of part works already undertaken.

Decision: conditional approval granted.

c) Update on planning enforcement matters reported to TDBC. Ann Dunford, Planning Enforcement Officer, has reported that she has been talking to the agent regarding E/0010/46/16 at Gerbestone Manor Farm. While there was concern that nothing seemed to be happening it was noted that there are not many officers left in the planning department and they are having to reapply for their jobs following the decision to merge with West Somerset Council.

d) Any other planning matters. There were no other planning matters.

77/09/18. Highways.

a) Matters arising from previous meeting/s. It was felt there was no point in asking again for the nearly empty dumpy bags of salt to be removed from Buckland Hill as they might not be replaced for this winter according to the County Councillor's report. Cllr Silverlight was asked if he could try to clear the vegetation which had grown up around them so they could be seen. The Parish Council did pay for two salt bins for Buckland Hill in the past but they were stolen. SCC will soon be contacting the Parish Council with the winter highway arrangements for 2018/19. If the Parish Council is informed that dumpy bags of salt will not be provided on Buckland Hill unless it pays the legal position will need to be considered. There are still some 20 Kg bags of salt left from previous years.

b) To note any highway defects to report to SCC. No highways defects reported.

c) To discuss quotes for fingerpost sign refurbishment. The first quote for refurbishing the finger post sign at Budgetts Cross is in excess of £1,000. There was concern about what parishioners would feel if the Parish Council spent that amount on repairing one sign, particularly with the SCC highway cutbacks that are planned. Some highways work such as

hedge and verge cutting might need to be picked up by the Parish Council. It was questioned whether there would be a problem with TDBC clearing the ditch at Lee Park in the future and whether the Parish Council might have to take that on. Cllr Lacey and Cllr Silverlight will have a look to see whether there are any other options for repairing the signpost. Painting the signs is a job for the spring and summer. The Clerk has found a lengthsman who might be able to do the work and he will be asked for a price.

d) Any other highways matters. The hedge trimming is booked for the playing field, Steart Lane, Sawyers Hill and opposite Frogs Lane. It was suggested that the area by Vokers bridge should be cleaned up in the Spring.

78/09/18. To receive reports from:

a) County Cllr. Cllr Thorne was unable to attend the meeting and his report was circulated by email. (Appendix A)

b) Police. This report was dealt with as item 75/09/18.

c) Village Hall. A report was received from the Village Hall Committee meeting held on 5th September. There was a discussion regarding locking up the hall. A few regular users of the hall have a key and lock up after their booking. Volunteers have been doing some of the locking up but enquiries will be made about paying someone to lock up the Hall or asking the caretaker if she would like more hours. The temperature of the hot water from the heater for the toilets has been adjusted to 50 degrees not 40 degrees as it was. The temperature will be monitored. The WI will have a Craft/Produce stall at the Christmas Fayre and the Village Hall will do the raffle. The treasurer is retiring at the next AGM. It was suggested that an advert for a new treasurer be placed in the Community Newsletter. At the next meeting the committee will discuss putting a solar light near the front door in time for the Winter.

d) Taunton & District CAB AGM. Cllr Nutt attended the AGM held on 5th September at the CICI Centre, Taunton and reported on the key points from the meeting. Appendix B

e) TDBC Great Plastics Debate. Cllr Mitton reported on the Conference held on the 14 September 2018. Appendix C.

f) Any Other Reports. There were no other reports.

79/09/18. Finance:

a) To agree and authorise any payments.

It was resolved to make the following payments:

Taunton Deane Borough Council - £181.20, repairs to basketball post (Chq no 1417)

Mrs J Larcombe - £297.38, clerk's salary and expenses (Chq no 1418)

West Buckland Village Hall Trust - £44.00, room hire and £20 annual contribution towards the electricity used by the defibrillator (Chq no 1419).

With some members of the Parish Council indicating they will not stand for re-election at the elections next May new signatories for the bank account will need to be agreed and set up. This will be looked at in early 2019.

b) To review the Council's Financial Regulations. There were no changes to the Financial Regulations following the review.

80/09/18. Playing Field:

a) Any matters to report from inspections carried out during the previous month; any actions taken or to be taken as a result. There were no matters reported. Cllr Mrs Blogg is worried whether securing clips are included with the new football nets

b) Update on repairs to play equipment following inspection report. The basketball post has been repaired. Wicksteed will soon be inspecting the swings.

c) Any other matters to note. There were no other matters to note.

- 81/09/18. Footpaths: any matters brought forward.** Cllr Mitton will check on the progress of the proposed Footpath Diversion Order.
- 82/09/18. Review of the Council's Standing Orders.** There were a number of changes following the introduction of the new GDPR. It was agreed to adopt the updated Standing Orders.
- 83/09/18. Correspondence and items of interest.** The following correspondence was noted:
Clerk and Councils Direct – September 2018
Post Office – correspondence an dposter warning about scam mail.
Nothing further has been heard from Taunton Model Engineers.
- 84/09/18. Any urgent business at the Chairman's discretion.** There was no urgent business.
- 85/09/18. Date of the next meeting.** The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 30th October 2018 at 7.30pm.

Appendix A

County Cllr's Report: 78/09/18 a)

- Budget – some of the agreed savings are as follows: County will be in touch with parish councils to say that if you want salt bins filled, or bags of salt to distribute, you will need to pay. The preventative gritting of many roads will also be stopped, but again you can pay for them to continue. Hedging and ditching will be stopped and only carried out reactively, provided there is a safety concern involved. The Slinky bus will charge half-fare if passengers use their concessionary bus pass (currently it is free with the pass). Subsidised bus services will be reviewed. All financial support for youth services will be stopped. Most, but not all, of the funding given to CAB will be stopped
- Park and Ride – TDBC has agreed to fund the park and ride service until September 2019. There is no guarantee what will happen after that date. The existing contract is due to expire in November this year. The average number of passenger journeys per month was given as nearly 28,500. There are talks going on with commercial operators to try to find ways to make P&R more viable.
 - Live road improvement info – You can now find out where road improvement works are going to happen in the near future by using a new webpage www.travelsomerset.co.uk/structural-maintenance. It carries what is called the council's 'structural maintenance programme' for the financial year. Precise dates and timings of work are added to the live map as they are finalised. Surface dressing and grass cutting programmes were added the site recently. It continues also to feature live travel information 24/7 and details of all planned roadworks.
 - Dragon Patcher – This was trialled successfully in Somerset last autumn. It is due to arrive back in Somerset this month. It is an innovative machine that can deliver road repairs and fill potholes up to five times faster than a traditional carriageway patching gang and can be controlled by one operator. As well as simply filling potholes, it can also be used to treat sections of road with cracks or minor deterioration to prevent potholes forming in future. The machine will operate until early November, leave during the colder months, and return again at the end of February/beginning of March.
 - Plastic roads – Cumbria has experimented with repairing roads using recycled plastics and while the technology is still very much in its early stages, the trial looks encouraging. Somerset started looking at this option for road maintenance in January and currently we are developing the option in more detail with Skanska and their supply chain and hope to start a trial shortly.
 - Flu jabs – Just like Christmas, it is never too early to think about flu, which really can be a

killer. It is easily transmitted and even people with mild or no symptoms can still infect others. The vaccination is the best protection that we have. Details of vaccination centres will soon be available so please check with GP's or local pharmacists.

- Broadband – Gigaclear finally seem to have got their act together, as there has been notification of a series of temporary road closures to allow them to start laying their fibre network, starting early August and running through to November in Churchstanton, Corfe, and Pitminster parishes.

- Libraries – Publication of the proposals for the future look of the library service has been postponed from Thursday (27th Sept) to 16th October. The reason is that the scrutiny committee meeting which was going to look at the proposals on Tuesday 9th October has been put back to Wednesday 24th October. Once they have had their say on the proposals, they will go to cabinet on 5th November for decisions to be taken.

- Learning disabilities – A peer support group is being set up in Taunton and county are looking for a volunteer to facilitate it. Anybody interested should email JBellew@somerset.gov.uk. Similar groups already operate successfully in Bridgwater, Yeovil, and Frome.

- Support for young people – County are appealing for people who would like to become advocates for children in care or those who need extra support, which involves speaking up for them and ensuring their voices are heard. It can be as simple as having a coffee and a chat

from time to time. There is an intensive training course involved over five weeks. Voluntary role but expenses are paid. Full info available at www.route1advocacy.co.uk.

- Sheltered housing support – From next month, the way the county funds support for sheltered housing tenants is changing. Instead of paying TDBC, who in turn commission care for their tenants, the money will be used to directly commission services via Community Connect, which is run through the Community Council for Somerset. This means that care can be provided for people wherever they live, whether that is in their own home or sheltered accommodation. Anybody who needs help with things like paying bills, correspondence, shopping, etc, will be able to have the help. Across Somerset there are only about 3,500 tenants in sheltered housing, whereas there are thousands more who live at home.

- Blackdowns AONB – The AONB management partnership is looking for a new home after being given notice to leave their leased premises in Hemyock next March. They want offices either in or adjoining the AONB with superfast broadband, parking, a meeting room for at least 10 people, space for up to nine members of staff to work, and a short-term lease of up to three years. The current accommodation is 700 sq ft or 65 sq m, so something similar is needed.

Appendix B. Taunton & District CAB AGM Report: 78/09/18 d)

Reports and accounts. Re-organisation in 2018 reduced costs significantly and 6700 clients were dealt with during the year. The cost base increases year on year and reached £309,000 last year, 2017. The deficit for the year was £6000. Staff costs are £190000 which is 62% of core income. General fund reserves are £163,000 but unforeseen building costs of £295,000 are eating into this. This means having to cut the cloth to fit. Auditors Albert Goodman were reappointed.

Taunton CAB Annual Report - Present situation - Services provided

6640 clients in Taunton - 20225 issues managed by 101 staff and volunteers in 5 locations

Core services provided:

Access to Advice

Macmillan Nursing

Taunton One team for odd issues

New - A Young Citizens Advice team dealing with the under thirties

Pension Wise for money - scam victims

Gender violence and abuse

Psychiatric ward at Wellsprings

Research and Campaigns

Switching energy providers and banks etc

This year's activity included:

2439 benefit claims clients

874 debt advice clients

28 debt relief clients

673 Eviction cases

539 Consumer advice clients

645 Employment issue clients who were awarded £17000 in settlements

According to the treasury assessment figures the CAB saved local government £1.4 million and provided £9.4 millions of wider economic benefit. Total individual benefits of £8.2 million. This according to the treasury is very good value for money

82 volunteers provide 600 hours work a week which would cost over £500,000 if they were paid.

New Legal Aid scheme for victims of abuse who cannot afford legal aid

All in all this is a critical time for CAB and the proposed cuts of £500,000 will bite deep and make no sense in view of the savings to the Taunton Deane community of £9.4 million.

MIND presentation on the links between poverty and mental health.

Mind has the same funding problems as the CAB this year.

Facts: 1 in 4 people experience a mental health problem in any one year. WHO say depression is the biggest cause of ill health problems. There will be 750,000 anti-depressant prescriptions given out this week and 104 suicides. 250,000 people will consult their GP for depression. Somerset's population is 250,000 of whom 5000 are in distress at any one time. Cycle of deprivation: poor mental health = very poor money management = makes health problems worse = cycle

There are always better long term outcomes with CAB involvement in solving money problems with a care plan. For each £10 invested in CAB there is £35 income. The Council cuts will impinge directly on the community.

Mind deals with: debt issues; depression and anxiety; bi-polar issues; Psychosis and Schizophrenia episodes; personality disorders and dealing with loan sharks.

24% of women access services but only 13% of men do. There were 8 million cases of severe anxiety in 2013

The CAB is particularly good in mediating between clients and the benefits system but this needs early intervention. The new sanctions system forces people into depression and anxiety which ensures their failure to claim through missed appointments. This increases total costs for society and changes to the system are needed for this reason alone.

Mind provides support through: mental health crisis teams; SCC adult social care; talking therapy; Compass and MindWatch (well-being services) and tenants financial well-being system.

Mind tries to be pro-active and preventative, some cases are as simple as needing to travel by bus but failing through fear.

Appendix C. TDBC Great Plastics Debate: 78/09/18 e)

The purpose of the Conference was to discuss the possibility of developing

Taunton as a centre for research into reducing the use and recycling of plastics as a Unique Selling Point for Taunton.

The conference began by showing the video on the fate of three plastic bottles which had been circulated previously.

The first speaker was Professor Micky Howard from Exeter University. He pressed the idea that we should develop a circular economy approach to the use of plastics deciding initially whether plastics need to be used and at if it was to research whether at each stage From inception to disposal plastics which are used could be recycled.

Professor Khodabandehloo BMC UK talked about the dominance of plastics in our modern economy. He mentioned that enough plastic straws were produced each year to stretch twice around the earth. He drew attention to the five major gyros (areas in which plastics and other waste congregate) in the oceans. If action was not taken there would be more plastic in the oceans than fish. He pointed out the absolute necessity of reducing the use of plastic, cleaning up after its use, expanding recycling and using alternatives. He also mentioned the need for more education and health issues.

Dr Stuart Monk from the South West Academic Science Network spoke about the work of the network, the need for partnership working and accessing national funds. It was an interesting contribution but Cllr Mitton did not see the relevance to the subject of the Conference.

Natasha Bradshaw a Marine biologist spoke about the damage that plastic waste is causing in the Bristol Channel and the work that the Severn Estuary Forum is undertaking on the subject. She made some very good points and spoke about the centre for sustainable development and a knowledge hub. Her contribution was spoiled by confusion over the slides which she was attempting to show.

Nick Bryant the newly appointed Head of Strategy for TDBC made some generalised comments about planning for the future basically saying that when the politicians had made up their mind what they wanted he would implement those ideas.

The most productive comments were made by Jim Claydon (Past President of the Royal Town Planning Institute. He emphasised the need for Taunton to re-invent and regenerate itself. He pointed out the work that towns such as Lincoln and Ipswich had undertaken. Taunton had advantages such as the proximity of the motorway, land available at Norton Camp and Firepool (On which he suggested a major rethink over its future use) and Garden City Status. He suggested that it may need a Development Corporation.

Mr Owen Pask (Assistant Director Archail NORR) spoke about the need for integrated collaboration bringing together key players for research and development projects. He pointed out that second to packaging the building industry was the greatest user of plastics. He said that if Taunton was to develop as a centre of excellence in this area it would need something akin to a Research and Development Park perhaps looking at capturing lost value by using the circular economy model rather than just burning plastic waste.

The Conference was chaired, rather unevenly by Paul Jones the Editor of the County Gazette. It was attended by about 100 people and Councillor Farbahi summed up the meeting. It was a pity that our MP declined an invitation to attend apparently because she would not be allowed to have a place on the platform.