

WEST BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

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The Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 26th February 2019 in the Committee Room, West Buckland Village Hall at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr's Mrs M Blogg (Chair), Mrs C Hannath, D Mitton, J Nutt, C Rayson and C Silverlight.
In attendance: County Cllr J Thorne and two members of the public.

149/02/19. To accept apologies for absence. Apologies were accepted from Cllr D Lacey.

150/02/19. Disclosure of interest in items on the agenda. There were no disclosures of interest.

151/02/19. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 29/01/19. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and were duly signed by the Chair.

152/02/19. Matters arising from the minutes not covered by the agenda. There were no matters arising.

It was agreed to bring the following item forward on the agenda.

153/02/19. County Cllr Report. A written report from Cllr Thorne was circulated by email prior to the meeting (Appendix A).
Cllr Thorne gave a verbal update to his report. SCC has reported that the number of fatal road accidents and casualties on Somerset roads has dropped in 2018 but Cllr Thorne said that he felt the supporting information is confusing.
Noting that SCC has found an additional £3.75million Cllr Nutt asked if there was a chance a grant would be found for the CAB but was told this money would be going into the Council's reserves. Cllr Mitton noting the update on broadband asked if this was the latest news. Cllr Thorne said he was very concerned about this matter and how defensive officers are when questioned about CDS. This project covers all the rural areas in Somerset and Phase 2 has not connected a single property in Somerset.

Cllr Thorne left the meeting.

154/02/19. Democratic Period. The members of the public did not wish to speak.

155/02/19. Planning:

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

46/18/0032 Erection of an occupational workers dwelling at Alexandra Dunn Racing,

Cordings Farm, West Buckland Road, West Buckland.

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

46/19/0004 Removal of Condition No 11 of application 46/04/0020 to allow property to be occupied as a single dwelling house at Church View, Sawyers Hill, West Buckland (resubmission of 46/17/0052).

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

Application in a neighbouring parish **44/18/0029** Erection of stable block, creation of manege, alterations to field access including closure of secondary access and provision of new field access track at Scottsdale, Ford Street, Wellington.

Comment: West Buckland Parish Council has no objections to the granting of approval.

The following application was received just after the January Parish Council meeting and a response was required before this meeting.

46/19/0001 Erection of extension to farm building with erection of additional agricultural building and 2 polytunnels and formation of access track at Catsbear Farm, Ruggin.

Comment: West Buckland Parish Council has no objections to the granting of approval

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

46/18/0029 Change of use of land for creation of miniature railway with the erection of building and formation of access on land off Stoford Lane, West Buckland.

Decision: conditional approval granted.

c) Any other planning matters. It was noted that work has started on the conversion of the former village shop into a dwelling despite still waiting for a decision on the recent planning application for amendments to the approved plans.

156/02/19. Highways.

a) Matters arising from previous meeting/s. Repairs have been carried out to the edges of the road in Silver Street.

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

c) Parking issues at Crown Hill. It was reported that vehicles leaving Crown Mews often find it difficult to pull out into the road due to their visibility being blocked by vehicles parking tight to the entrance. The matter has been reported to County Cllr Thorne so the issue can be taken up with SCC Highways. It was acknowledged that there is no easy answer to this issue and that it will probably get worse. A car was set alight in the car park at the bottom of Sawyers Hill and people are now afraid to park there. Cllr Nutt has reported to Highways that the burnout remains of the car are still in the car park. He asked about the ownership of this piece of land but this wasn't known.

d) To discuss the decision by Wellington Town Council to install a litter bin on the B3187 within West Buckland Parish Council and to consider whether this Council should contribute towards the initial and ongoing costs. Cllr Mitton reported that a Town or Parish Council can install a litter bin in another parish without the permission of that parish but they do need permission from Highways. There was also concern that even if a litter bin is installed it might not stop people dropping rubbish. As there had been no official contact from Wellington Town Council with full details about the project it was agreed to defer this item until the next meeting when it is hoped Wellington Town Council will have supplied full details.

e) Any other highways matters. No other highways matters.

157/02/19. To receive reports from:

a) County Cllr. This was covered under item 153/02/19.

b) Police. The Police Report for January 2019 was circulated by email earlier in February.

- c) **Village Hall** Cllr Mrs Hannath reported on the Village Hall Committee Meeting held on 6th February. The Hallmark inspection is due and will take place in July 2019 when the hall isn't so busy. The boiler has been serviced, a solar light has been fixed on the boiler room wall and repairs include a fence post in the car park and a new water heater in the toilets. A toilet cistern needs replacing. A new transmitter is being purchased for the speaker system and a quote is being obtained for a lapel receiver. A quote is being obtained for regular top ups of the oil tank. The new Treasurer will be added to the bank signatories and the previous Treasurer will be removed from the list.
- e) **Any Other Reports.** There were no other reports.

158/02/19. Finance:

- a) **To agree and authorise any payments.** It was resolved to make the following payment: Mrs J Larcombe - £312.75 Clerk's salary and expenses (Chq no 1436).
- b) **To consider the Council's banking arrangements for the future.** It is very difficult to change signatories on the Council's bank account with NatWest and as signatures will need to be changed after the elections the Clerk recommended changing to Unity Trust Bank as everything can be completed online. Online payments could be made instead of writing cheques which some organisations, including the District Council, will no longer accept. Cllr Mitton declared a personal interest as SALC banks with Unity Trust Bank and he is a signatory. There will be a £6 per month charge, but postage will be reduced and Unity Trust Bank also pays a better rate of interest on reserves. It was agreed the Council would transfer its accounts to Unity Trust Bank once the precept has been received.
- c) **Review of the effectiveness of the internal audit.** The Internal Audit was felt to be effective and it was agreed to ask Karen Ward to carry out the 2018-19 Internal Audit.

159/02/19. 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.** No matters reported.
- b) **Any other matters to note.** The Grand Western Archery Group has booked the Village Hall on March 17th and they have asked permission to park in the playing field. It was agreed to give permission subject to the field not being too wet.

160/02/19. Footpaths: any footpath matters brought forward. Cllr Mitton reported that he has submitted the Parish Paths Consultation Forms.

161/02/19. To discuss whether the Council agrees to sign the Memorandum that Companies House requires to accompany the Articles of Association for SALC to become a limited company if required. Cllr Mitton declared a personal interest as the Chair of SALC. He reminded councillors that Peter Lacey started this move towards SALC becoming a company. The Memorandum is an official form that needs to be sent to Companies House, agreeing to sign the form does not incur any cost. The other Councils that will be signing the form are: Ashcott, Brympton, Comeytrove and Watchet. It was agreed that West Buckland Parish Council would sign the form and Cllr David Lacey would sign the form on the Council's behalf.

162/02/19. Update on promoting the Parish Council Election on May 2nd. Information about the elections is on the front page of the Community Newsletter, on the website and on posters displayed in the parish. An information event was held before this meeting. The Clerk is waiting for the nomination forms to arrive.

163/02/19. Correspondence and items of interest. The following correspondence was noted:
Somerset Waste Partnership Newsletter February 2019.

164/02/19. Any urgent business at the Chairman's discretion. There was no urgent business.

165/02/19. Date of the next meeting. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 26th March 2019.

Appendix A

- Budget 2019-20 – The budget went through full council last week and in the end was not as painful as expected, because shortly beforehand it was calculated that SCC would have roughly £3.75 million more available for the year than originally thought. This meant many of the proposed £2 million frontline services cuts were able to be reversed, including cuts to gully clearing and jetting, verge cutting, flood water management, dementia support in care homes, and support to help vulnerable people into work. Also, £200,000 is being used to fund the outcomes of a full review of winter gritting in readiness for next winter - so potentially reversing the £120,000 saving approved last September. Cllr Thorne would like to think that councillors such as himself speaking out on the impact of such cuts on rural areas has contributed to the change of heart, even if only slightly. He has been making the point that whether you live in a rural or an urban area everyone pays the same council tax but they are not all getting the same level of services for their money.
- Climate change emergency – SCC last week agreed to declare a climate change emergency in Somerset and has allocated £25,000 towards the cost of looking at what the council can do to reduce its carbon footprint and reduce its impact on climate change. It was a cross-party initiative driven by an activist group calling itself Extinction Rebellion and which is trying to push this through every local council in the land. Cllr Thorne did not support it, because he does not believe he was elected to save the world. He feels he was elected to make sure local issues were resolved, such as repairing potholes, keeping street lights working, resolving traffic issues, making sure schools deliver good quality education, etc.
- Junction 25 – The various funding pledges are now being taken up and a financial package put together ahead of the planned launch of the development on 4th March by contractors Alun Griffiths (Contractors) Ltd. The ERDF grant has been accepted, and a decision to accept TDBC's contribution was taken the week before last. The contractors are holding two drop-in sessions for anybody interested in Ruishton Village Hall on 7th and 14th March both from 3 pm to 8 pm.
- Broadband – The members' briefing paper on Connecting Devon and Somerset/Gigaclear which was promised for January did not materialise. He complained, only to be told that it wasn't promised at all, the officer merely said that if there was anything to say in January then a briefing paper would be issued, but otherwise it would be going to scrutiny committee in March as planned. He feels this is a further illustration of the county council's defensiveness when it comes to CDS.
- Children's services – A snap inspection by Ofsted has found an improving service with confident staff making good decisions. Previously, it had been a failing service and SCC has put millions of £s into it to attract new staff and set it on the way to becoming a good rated service.
- A358 Community Liaison Forum – the first forum session is being held on 26th February and the idea is to bring together representatives of organisations with an interest in the A358 Taunton to Southfields dualling scheme, ahead of the Preferred Route Announcement (PRA) being made. The forum will establish a process for keeping communities informed on the development of the scheme and share the most up-to-date information and how the project is progressing. Further information can be found by emailing A358TauntontoSouthfields@highwaysengland.co.uk
- Model railway – The planning application by Taunton Model Engineers was approved on 25th February after a considerable delay.
- SEN shop - An online one-stop-shop for education, health, and social care information for children with Special Education Needs has been launched. Called the Local Offer website it can be found here: <https://choices.somerset.gov.uk/025/local-offer/>. The site gives clear information on what provision is available across the county and how to access it.