

## WEST BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman – Mrs M K Blogg  
4 Peacocks Close  
West Buckland  
TA21 9JY  
Tel 01823 663378  
email margaretblogg@btinternet.com

Clerk – Mrs J Larcombe  
6 The Old School  
Chapel Street  
Tiverton  
EX16 6ND  
Tel 01884 252647  
email westbucklandclerk@gmail.com

[www.westbuckland.org](http://www.westbuckland.org)

### **The Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2019 in the Committee Room, West Buckland Village Hall at 7.30pm.**

**Present:** Cllr's Mrs M Blogg (Chair), D Lacey, Mrs S Drury, D Mitton, J Nutt, Mrs L Peace and C Silverlight.

**In attendance:** County Cllr J Thorne, District Cllr R Habgood, four members of the public and the Clerk, Mrs J Larcombe.

**19/06/19. To accept apologies for absence.** There were no apologies.

**20/06/19. Disclosure of interest in items on the agenda.** Cllr Mrs Drury declared a personal interest in planning application 46/19/0017 as she lives near to the site of the application.

**21/06/19. To agree the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 20/05/19.** The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and duly signed by the Chair.

**22/06/19. Matters arising from the minutes, not covered by the agenda.** There were no matters arising.

**23/06/19. Democratic Period.** Members of the public raised the following points in objection to planning application 46/19/0017.

- Objections remain the same as for the previous application. It appears that the size of the usable space in the building has been reduced from 50 square metres to 31 square metres by removing the first floor. The plans still show a door and there were concerns the floor could be put back in.
- The site is about an acre, there is very little woodland left and there is no justification for a building.
- The building is out of keeping in the AONB.
- This is not an agricultural unit.
- The area is subject to flooding
- The bridle path is not suitable for additional use and there was concern traffic associated with the building and the ATV would cause further damage to the path. This could be at the expense of the person with the responsibility for the upkeep of the bottom part of the track.
- The site is not suitable for poultry keeping.
- The wildlife issue has not been addressed. Protected species have been identified on adjoining ground.

- When the applicant purchased the property they spoke about their dream of bringing Old Lake Cottage back to life.
- The original building burnt down. It never had a second floor but students from SCAT used it to practise building skills and altered the building without planning consent. There is real concern that the building might become something it never had permission for originally..
- Wellington is a transition town and the application will do nothing to meet those aims

#### 24/06/19. Planning:

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

**46/19/0017** Erection of agricultural and woodland management building at Old Lake Cottage, Ruggin, West Buckland (resubmission of 46/18/0031).

Cllr Mrs Drury declared a pecuniary interest as she lives near to the site.

Comment: West Buckland Parish Council recommends refusal for the following reasons:

- The design of the building is not commensurate with the use of the land.
- The storage use listed in the application does not justify a building of the proposed size. The site does not have an agricultural use.
- The majority of the storage would be for a small agricultural enterprise, run by a family member, and for which no supporting documentation has been provided
- The site is accessed by a bridle path which is not suitable for vehicular access
- The site is not suitable for the keeping of poultry as an agricultural enterprise.

The Parish Council would like to draw the Planning Authority's notice to what it considers are inaccuracies on the application form or where they feel further clarification is needed.

**8. Pedestrian and Vehicular Access.** 'New or altered...' the applicant has answered NO. The site, before the current owners cleared it, was completely overgrown and had no pedestrian or vehicular access. The current access was installed when the site was cleared and without planning permission.

**9. Parking.** The applicant has answered NO. If the site is for an agricultural and woodland management building will parking will be required for loading/unloading?

**10. Trees and Hedges. And/or: Are there trees or hedges on land adjacent to the proposed development site that could influence the development or might be important as part of the local landscape character?** The applicant answered NO. The site is surrounded by trees and vegetation that could influence the development and are important to the character of the local landscape.

**12. Biodiversity.** The site is within an AONB (noted for it's abundance of wildlife) and adjacent to a SSSI. It is highly likely that the ruins, the site proposed and surrounding land, may be the habitat of protected species such as bats and reptiles, yet all the questions have been answered NO. Before any further consideration is given to this planning application, a full survey by a qualified and independent expert is recommended.

**21. Hazardous Substances. Is any hazardous waste involved in the proposal?** The applicant has answered NO. If the site is for an agricultural and woodland

management will no hazardous substances (e.g. agricultural chemicals and fuels) be stored on site?

It is recommended that surveys be carried to support the negative answers to items 10, 12 and a statement that no chemicals, fuels or any hazardous substances will be stored on site be provided to support the negative answer to item 21.

The Planning Application Details on the Taunton and West Somerset Council website appears to have errors relating to the location and plans of proposals (building plans etc).

The members of the public left the meeting.

**46/19/0015** Change of use of former village shop store into a one bedroom dwelling at 2a Dyers Close, West Buckland.

Comment: West Buckland Parish Council recommend refusal because this is over development of a very small site. The Parish Council did not object to the application to turn the shop into a dwelling but this is one step too far.

**46/19/0019** Proposal: Variation of Condition No. 02 (approved plans) of application 46/18/0026 at 2 Holway Cottages, Silver Street, West Buckland.

Comment: the applicant has added fascia and locks that are slightly out of keeping with the adjoining property. The planning officer should take into account the effect on the street scene.

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

**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). Decision: permission refused.

**46/19/0009** Erection of single storey extension to rear of Gammon Barn, Ham, Wellington. Decision: conditional approval granted.

**46/19/0010** Erection of single storey extension to rear of 32 Dyers Close, West Buckland. Decision: conditional approval granted.

**46/19/0014** Change of use of land from paddock to vehicle handover area at Chelston Motorhomes, Chelston Business Park, Wellington (retention of works already undertaken).

**c) Update on progress with a decision for application 46/17/0053 Removal of Condition No 03 of 46/16/0005 (Restrictions to trading of retail building) at Blackdown Garden Centre, Wellington Road, West Buckland.**

An email has been received from Gareth Clifford, Planning Officer, stating that the issue with this has been the continued need in the planning authority's view for the turn lane. The applicant has been in long discussions with the County Highway Authority to secure this lane as the Highway Authority is also of the view that it should be provided, however the land to achieve this is largely controlled by the Authority, except an area that BT control with a major cable running through it. The delay has been to try and achieve what is required without there having to be a significant payment to BT. Mr Clifford understands the discussion between the applicant and Highways is concluding and then the right turn lane will be provided and the current application would be withdrawn. Cllr Mitton commented that the payment to BT was not the Parish Council's problem and noted that other developers have had to pay BT.

**d) Consultation on priorities for spending Community Infrastructure Levy funding.**

Information about the CIL funding has just been published in the Community Newsletter

and one response has already been received. A list of responses has been compiled and they will be discussed at a future meeting.

**e) SW & T Council decision to delay stopping sending paper copies of planning applications until August.** The decision was noted.

**f) To note report on training sessions on downloading applications.** Cllr Mitton reported on the training session he attended. Cllr Mrs Peace also attended one of the training sessions. SWT Council claim to have been unaware that many Parish Councils do not have access to wi-fi and a projector at their meetings. There will be extra work involved in downloading documents from the SWT website and the Clerk's hours might have to be looked at. It was suggested that a councillor could perhaps take this on. Arrangements for viewing planning documents during meetings will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting. Cllr Mitton suggested that if the Parish Council purchase a projector it could be kept at the Village Hall. Cllr Mrs Drury will ask about this at the next Village Hall meeting.

**g) To discuss using CIL money to purchase a laptop and projector to view applications.** This will be considered when responses from the consultation are discussed.

**h) Any other planning matters.** E/10/46/16 Gerbestone Manor Farm: Ann Dunford has left the Council. Stacey Salter, Planning Enforcement Officer, has informed the Clerk that the file is currently with the Council's legal team who are providing advice on what formal action (or not) can be taken with regards to the building on site which is not strictly in accordance with the approved plans. The differences are small from what she can see from the files but it is a point of law on which clarification is needed.

#### **25/06/19. Highways.**

**a) Matters arising from previous meeting/s.** Gwyn Hughes, Assistant Highway Service Manager, has emailed the Clerk to report that the works to sort out the open ditches and additional HGV signage along School Lane will start on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2019 as scheduled. The works will last most of the week and it is hoped to be able to open the lane up at the conclusion of these works.

He also gave an update in relation to Chelston Roundabout; unfortunately highways has run out of time to programme the planned works for this scheme for this financial year. A site meeting was held with the maintenance contractor and it was provisionally decided to go away from having kerbing around the entire inside edge, as historically this is very expensive and does not last. Instead it was decided to remove the kerbs in their entirety and carryout some minor drainage works to re align side entry gullies and extend the 'French Drainage' stone apron down to the edge of the carriageway. To protect the verge the edge of carriageway will be marked with a rumble strip and vergemaster bollards placed regularly spaced around the entire verge length. A works order will be placed with the maintenance contractor to clear up the kerb stones which have been thrown back onto the verge. These works should be completed within a few weeks.

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

**c) Fingerpost sign refurbishment.** The Clerk reported that CIL funding can be used for this work and it will be considered as part of the consultation. Cllr Nutt will try to obtain three quotes for the work to refurbish the fingerpost sign at Budgetts Cross. Paint has now been purchased and the sign at the top of Buckland Hill should be the first one to be painted. Cllr Silverlight felt it should be surveyed again first. District Cllr Habgood, Cllr Mrs Drury and Cllr Mrs Peace volunteered to help with the painting. The Clerk will continue to make enquiries about Chapter 8 training so that signs close to the highway can be painted.

**d) Any other highways matters.** Cllr Mrs Peace reported that she was cutting the verge

close to her home, to improve visibility at a junction, when challenged by a Highways Officer who said she needed to have completed relevant Chapter 8 training before she could carry out the work. The verge was later cut by Highways, but only a strip with width of one metre. The land owners have since cut the whole verge. This will be discussed further at the next meeting and Cllr Thorne will make enquiries.

**26/07/19. To receive reports from:**

**a) County Cllr.** Cllr Thorne's written report (Appendix A) was circulated by email. Cllr Thorne will follow up concerns that residents and staff from Wellesley Hospital are congregating besides Budgens, Westpark 26, to smoke and eat snacks but they lack privacy and have to sit on blocks because there is no seating. There is also no rubbish bin and litter is being left behind. Another Wellesley Hospital building is being erected behind Budgens for and it was felt a structure could be put up for them. This would give them privacy.

**b) District Cllr.** Cllr Habgood reported that a new administration is in place and a balanced budget has been set for four years. The new Council has 18 months to approve the Local Plan and there will be lots of opportunity to comment on consultations. The Firepool debate goes on. Outline permission was granted but further plans will need to be approved. Cllr Habgood is the Vice-chair of the Planning Committee so needs to be careful when discussion is taking place on certain applications. Planning Committee meetings are going back to evenings.

**c) Police.** No report. Cllr Mrs Blogg said she was concerned that a letter sent to a Peacocks Close resident from Nextdoor.co.uk regarding signing up to an online neighbourhood group might be a scam. Cllr Mrs Peace confirmed that it was a national scheme and wasn't a scam. She has joined this online group and has found it very useful.

**d) Village Hall.** Cllr Mrs Drury reported on the Village Hall Committee Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2019. The Pre-school will move to the village school after July 23rd. There will only need to be a small uplift in bookings to bridge the gap and in some aspects it will make lettings easier due to the restrictions on the hall access around safeguarding whilst children are present. Advertising for the hall will be undertaken firstly by way of newsletter inclusion.

The transfer to online banking continues to be problematical due to errors at the NatWest bank. As a gesture they have given the committee financial compensation.

The treasurer will investigate competitive prices for the commercial supply of electricity to the Village Hall through a broker. The treasurer will also investigate options for a music licence.

It was agreed to go ahead with the purchase of a new weatherproof and lockable noticeboard. It will have a grey background and will take 8 sheets of A4 paper.

Several card tables have been refurbished by a committee member and their husband.

The window in the Committee room was broken on the outside presumably by a stone and has been replaced.

The lights are due for PAT testing in August.

A new 'Henry' vacuum cleaner has been purchased as one had suddenly stopped working. The old one will be looked at to see if it is viable to repair.

Hallmark will be visiting to assess the premises.

**d) SALC Councillor Essentials training session.** Cllr's Mrs Drury and Mrs Peace attended a training session at West Buckland Village Hall and reported that the training was well delivered, well timed and well attended. They both found it very useful and informative.

**e) Any Other Reports.** No other reports.

**27/07/19. Finance:**

**a) To agree and authorise any payments.** It was resolved to agree the following payments:

West Buckland Village Hall Trust	£24.00	Hire of meeting room
Jill Larcombe	£322.87	Clerk's salary and expenses
Karen Ward	£50.00	Internal Audit fee
Somerset Association of Local Councils	£50.00	2 places on Councillor Essentials training
Cllr C Silverlight	£100.48	Repayment for purchase of paint etc for refurbishment of fingerpost signs.

Cllr Mitton declared a personal interest in the SALC payment as Chair of SALC.

Cllr Silverlight declared a personal and prejudicial interest as the payments included one to him. He took no part in agreeing that payment.

**b) To agree to pay the annual affiliation fee for SALC for 2019-20.** It was resolved to pay the annual affiliation fee of £271.09. Cllr Mitton declared a personal interest as Chair of SALC.

**c) To receive the Internal Audit Report 2018-19.** The report was noted. There were no matters of non-compliance. Register of Interest forms need to be added to the website. It was recommended that the Council reviews its position regarding requirements to publish a Website Accessibility Statement by 2020.

**d) To approve the Annual Governance Statement 2018-19.** It was unanimously agreed to approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2018-19.

**e) To agree the Annual Accounting Statement for 2018-2019.** The Annual Accounting Statement for 2018-19 was unanimously agreed..

It was agreed to earmark the remaining £630 from the 2018-19 budget line for fingerpost refurbishment for work in 2019-20.

**f) Update on opening of new bank accounts.** The new bank accounts with Unity Trust Bank have been opened and £2,500 has been transferred to open the Current Account. Arrangements will be made the transfer the balances from the Council's NatWest accounts. The accounts will then be closed.

**28/07/19. 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.** Cllr Nutt reported that the goal nets are getting very tatty.

**b) Report on standard of grass cutting at the playing field.** A complaint has been received about the quality of the grass cutting in the playing field. It was noted that the field and the play area are being cut at different times. The DLO has been experiencing staffing difficulties and have been advertising for staff. Pressures on existing staff have resulted in a drop in the quality of the grass cutting.

**29/07/19. Footpaths: any footpath matters brought forward.** No matters brought forward.

**30/07/19. Consent for Councillor details to be published on the website and notice board.** This will be discussed further at the next meeting. It was suggested that councillors should have council email addresses to use for all council business.

**31/07/19. VE Day 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – to discuss whether the Parish Council would like to get involved.** Other village organisations will be contacted to see if they have anything planned or are interested in being involved in arranging something.

- 32/07/19. Correspondence and items of interest.** The following correspondence was noted:  
SALC – Code of Conduct training on 10<sup>th</sup> July at Somerton. Cllr Mitton declared a personal interest as Chairman of SALC. The Clerk noted that the SWT Council Monitoring Officer is arranging Code of Conduct training for councillors. Cllr Mitton questioned whether they would cover the same as the SALC training. West Buckland Parish Council has adopted the NALC Code of Conduct which the SALC training will cover. Two places will be booked for Cllr's Mrs Drury and Mrs Peace. The cost will be £60.00.
- 33/07/19. Any urgent business at the Chairman's discretion.** There was no urgent business.
- 34/07/19. Date of the next meeting.** The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2019. Cllr Habgood gave his apologies as there is a SWT Full Council meeting on that date.

## Appendix A County Councillor Report

- Finances – SCC’s finances continue to improve and the latest news is that the underspend on last year’s budget has now topped out at £5.9 million. The budget is less pressured and there is more money available than anticipated, which is good when SCC continues to operate in a climate of financial uncertainty, not knowing if they will be awarded various grants again which they have received in the past, and with demand continuing to rise for children’s services and adult social care. To put it in context, while it is a lot of money the £5.9 million represents 1.85% of the county’s £317.8 million total spending. That said, there are still challenges ahead and this year and next year will continue to be demanding for us.
- Prevention Fund - £1 million is being put into a ‘Prevention Fund’ which will be used to pay for council and community projects which help to prevent or reduce issues, problems, and needs with the idea being that future demands on services can be eased and people’s lives improved, in turn helping the council to be sustainable in the long-term.
- Health & Wellbeing Fund – Cllr Thorne still does not know much more detail about how the £2,000 should be allocated. The money comes out of the above Prevention pot and the fund is now being called the ‘Members Improving Lives Grant Scheme’ it will be open for bids from September 1 to November 30. The basic idea is to help communities develop activities which encourage people to join together, such as projects to reduce loneliness and isolation, or encourage gardening or healthy eating, anything that helps improve emotional health and wellbeing. It may be a match funding scheme, but as yet it has not been fully explained. If bids have to be in by the end of November, he anticipates that any grants would not start to be awarded until some time in the New Year. He doesn’t know if the fund will be repeated next year.
- Broadband – Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) has now given Gigaclear to end of next month to produce plans which are acceptable to it and to the Government and has issued the dire warning “*CDS will not shrink from taking further tough action if that is deemed necessary*” At the same time CDS has admitted that it is opening up its Community Challenge Fund to more communities, which is where they help local communities to come up with their own broadband solution. Each solution is bespoke to the community where it is installed. They are also looking at the Government’s Rural Gigabit Connectivity initiative, which is where the Government pays for a broadband ‘hub’ to be installed in remote areas on a public building such as a school and then commercial providers can build onto it and gradually expand provision.
- Park and Ride – Another incursion by travellers has recently taken place at the Gateway P&R site in Henlade and specialist bailiffs with police support were needed to remove them. An injunction was obtained giving them a deadline to leave and although some started to leave shortly afterwards, the remainder did not. The P&R was, however, able to operate almost as normal, but the Cricket World Cup organisers could not afford to take any chances and so they organised two alternative services, a P&R from Taunton Racecourse and a park and walk from Somerset College just in case. A clean up operation was ready to start as soon as the travellers were gone. I met subsequently with the council leader Cllr Fothergill to (again) raise my concerns that these incursions keep happening and I firmly believe we have reached the point where we have to invest in physical/permanent measures to prevent or severely restrict any repeat occurrences and I will be pressing for more to now be done. This particular instance was more challenging to resolve than others for reasons I cannot put in writing, but hopefully it is now behind us.
- Resurfacing programme – This year’s road resurfacing programme started yesterday (June 24). There will be 68 resurfacing schemes over two months, 17 on principal roads and 51 on non-principal roads, totalling 22 miles plus two flood related re-surfacing schemes. In addition, there will be surface dressing at 152 separate locations totalling 148 miles of roads. The total budget for this work is £14.5 million. As always, live info can be found on this website [www.travelsomerset.co.uk](http://www.travelsomerset.co.uk). The rural grass verge cutting programme for A and B roads has been completed and C and D roads will be completed by July 26.



- A358 – The latest rumour is that none of the three A303 projects (Stonehenge, Sparkford, and A358 Ilminster-Taunton) will be pulled as a result of Highways England revisiting the value for money ratios for all its major schemes and saying that across the country 11 will be ‘paused’ with some scrapped all together.
- SCC website – this has been revamped in the first of a series of improvements to the council's online offer with a focus on enabling people to find the services they want quickly and easily. Next up is to look at content within the site, and work with services and users to review and improve it. They will also refine and add new areas where customers can carry out transactions, and will reduce the number of websites the council has, concentrating its online presence into one place. The website link is <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/>
- Heat Health Watch – we are now in the annual Heat Health Watch period which runs nationally until September 15. Its purpose is to reduce the number of summer deaths and illness by raising public awareness. It also triggers actions in the NHS, public health, social care, and other community and voluntary organisations to support people who have health, housing, or economic circumstances that increase their vulnerability to heat. information about the risks, plus guidance can be found here [www.somerset.gov.uk/heatwavegh](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/heatwavegh)