WEST BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

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The Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of the Parish Council held via Zoom on Tuesday 25th August 2020 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr's Mrs M Blogg (Chair), D Lacey, Mrs S Drury, D Mitton, J Nutt and C Silverlight.
In attendance: County Cllr J Thorne, one member of the public and the Clerk, Mrs J Larcombe

177/08/20. To accept apologies for absence. Apologies were received from PCSO V Henderson. Cllr Habgood joined the meeting briefly to give his apologies and explain that he was attending a SWT Council meeting. He reported that he had met with a parishioner from Ham to discuss an issue with grass cutting on an area of open space at Castle Cottages.

178/08/20. Disclosure of interest in items on the agenda. There were no disclosures of interest.

179/08/20. To agree the minutes of the meetings held on 28/07/20 and 11/08/20. Both sets of minutes were agreed as accurate records of the meetings. Arrangements will be made for the Chair to sign the minutes.

180/08/20. Matters arising from the minutes not covered by the agenda. There were no matters arising.

181/08/20. Democratic Period. The member of the public said he was listening to the meeting as a possible candidate for co-option.

182/08/20. Planning:

a) To consider any planning applications received by the Parish Council prior to the meeting. There were no applications to consider.

b) To receive decisions from planning applications determined by SWT Council. No decisions.

c) Any other planning matters. Planning appeal APP/W3330/W/20/3240206. Change of use of former village shop store into 1 No. one bedroom dwelling and retrospective reconfiguration at 2a Dyers Close, West Buckland (resubmission of 46/19/0015). The appeal has been dismissed.

Myra Spalding, Planning Enforcement Officer SWTC, has emailed the Clerk to report that Belle Vue Camping is currently operating within the 28 day change of use permitted development regulation and has a planning application, albeit currently invalid, with SWTC. 46/20/0013 refers. She has investigated the other alleged breaches reported by the Council and in her opinion there are no breaches.

183/08/20. Highways

a) To note any required work to be reported to SCC. No required work reported.

b) Update on flooding problem in Silver Street, near to the Village Hall. During recent spells of heavy rain Silver Street flooded close to the Village Hall. Cllr Mrs Drury and the Clerk reported this flooding and the Clerk asked for an update on the problem. The road has flooded before and a blocked drain was going to be jetted. Cllr Thorne has also been trying to get the problem resolved. The Clerk has not received an update. Cllr Lacey reported that he had spoken to highways superintendent and he told him the drain had been jetted and reported clear but the flooding problem hasn't been resolved. They don't know where the outfall is and need to put a camera down the drain. They have involved Wessex Water. Highways are aware of the local feeling and everyone was encouraged to keep reporting the flooding when it happens.

c) To receive an update on any outstanding highways work. Some potholes have been repaired.

d) To discuss the poor quality hedge cutting by SCC in the village. When highways cut the hedges at Silver Street, Crown Hill and Sawyers Hill they only cut a single width, which is not enough for traffic using the roads. It was agreed to ask the contractor who cuts the playing field hedges to cut some additional hedges. He has already been booked to cut the playing field hedges and Cllr Lacey will liaise with him.
Hi-Line (SW) Ltd have removed the branches they left overhanging in Silver Street.

e) Update on fingerpost sign repairs. West Country Blacksmiths Ltd have not started the repairs to the finger post signs and the Clerk was asked to remind them. The broken arm on the finger post sign at Manleys is just below the finial. Cllr Silverlight will ask for permission to go in the field to see if the finial can be removed. Cllr Mitton volunteered to assist with trying to remove the finial.

f) Any other highways matters. No other highways matters.

184/08/20. To note any written reports from:

a) County Cllr. Cllr Thorne, referring to his support to get the flooding in Silver Street dealt with, said he was annoyed that officers were not responding to councillors. Cllr Mitton said he was puzzled about the One Somerset and Stronger Somerset proposals and said the public need to know what is being proposed. The business case for One Somerset has gone to the Secretary of State. The District Councils, who want to stop this, are putting forward proposals for two unitary councils for Somerset. If the English Devolution White Paper due out in Autumn 2020 includes Somerset, the District Councils will be able to put their case and there will be a public consultation. A decision will be made by January 2021 and it would operate in a shadow form from April 2021 until April 2022. Cllr Mitton said he couldn't see how the District Councils could put together their case and consult in the time frame.

b) District Cllr. No report.

c) Police. The Police Report for July was circulated by email at the start of the month. There were 209 calls into 101 and 999 for the Wellington Rural Beat for the month of July and 13 calls for ASB across the whole of the rural beat.

185/08/20. Finance:

a) To agree and authorise any payments. It was resolved to make the following payments: Mrs J Larcombe - £303.64 Clerk's salary, expenses and monthly Zoom subscription (Payment ref: 2021/10)
Cllr David Lacey - £30.00 repayment for 2 boxes of nitrile gloves (Payment ref: 2021/11)

b) To agree the payment of a grant to Taunton & District Citizens Advice Bureau. It was agreed to pay a grant of £100.00 (Payment ref: 2021/12)

c)To agree the annual payment to the Village Hall Committee for electricity used by the defibrillator. It was agreed to pay West Buckland Village Hall Trust £20.00 towards the cost of electricity for the defibrillator (Payment ref: 2021/13).

d) To receive the Internal Audit Report. The report and comments were noted.

e) To discuss purchasing a large scale (1:25,000 - Taunton and the Blackdown Hills) Ordnance Survey map for the Parish Council which includes a mobile phone download of the map that links to the GPS on a smart phone. It was agreed that the clerk could purchase the map and download it to her phone.

186/08/20. Playing Field

a) Any points to note from the regular inspections. There were no points to note.

b) To report on the installation of the table tennis table. The table has been installed and it has been arranged that the bats and balls will be delivered to Cllr Ms Drury. There are slightly heavier table tennis balls that can be purchased for use on outdoor tables.

c) To consider a request from the Head Coach and Team Manager (West Buckland residents) of Taunton RFC U12 team to use the playing field for training sessions on some Sundays, between 9.30am – 11.30am. A risk assessment has been supplied and the team has public liability insurance. It was agreed that the U12 team could use the playing field on some Sundays for training. The Clerk will be informed when the field will be used. Permission to use the parking will need to be obtained from the Village Hall Committee. A small part of the field is used for dog training on a Sunday but there is room for both activities. The Clerk said she would like to review the Playing Field Policy at the next meeting. All groups and activities using the field need to have permission from the Council and will need to provide risk assessments and public liability insurance.

187/08/20. To note website accessibility requirements and work carried out by the clerk. The Clerk explained that The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018 requires public sector bodies, which includes parish councils, to ensure reasonable adjustments are made to their websites, so they are accessible to people with various disabilities. From 23 September 2020 all local council websites will have to comply with those regulations. Local councils need to make reasonable adjustments to their websites and operations so people can access information. They are required to include an accessibility statement on their website setting out to what extent they meet the requirements and what alternative arrangements are available. Good practice would also see councils including a plan to narrow the accessibility gap over time. The website standards that councils are expected to meet are the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1. The Clerk has carried out a check using Sitesort to check what changes need to be made. Only information added since 23 September 2018 needs to meet the requirements. It was agreed that the Council would pay the Clerk for additional hours needed to carry out this work.

188/08/20. Update on advertisement of a casual vacancy. Electoral Services SWTC have provided a copy of the notice to advertise the vacancy and this is now being displayed. Ten or more parishioners can write to SWTC before 2nd September to request an election. If no election is requested the Council can co-opt a councillor. If there is a co-option it will be advertised on the notice board, the Council's Facebook page and the website. Anyone interested will be asked to write to, or email, the Clerk to say why they are interested in becoming a councillor and to provide information about their background and the skills they could bring to the position of councillor. People can put themselves forward, but the Council

makes the decision on who to co-opt. Social media will be checked to see what they are posting. It is a standard procedure for employers to check prospective employees' social media to see what they are posting.

189/08/20. Correspondence from Cllr David Fothergill, Leader of SCC. A letter regarding SCC's proposal for one unitary council for Somerset has been circulated to councillors. The District Councils are putting together a proposal for two unitary councils.
Cllr Mitton and the Clerk will be attending a remote meeting hosted by Wellington Town Council on September 9th. They have invited representatives from the parish councils that adjoin their boundary to discuss how the parishes could work together, or form a network, to deliver services that will be devolved down to parishes as a result of Somerset becoming unitary with either one or two councils.

190/08/20. To discuss a letter from the Village Hall Committee asking the Parish Council to take responsibility for emptying the rubbish bin at the entrance to the Village Hall. The Clerk was asked to get a quote from SWTC to empty the bin on a regular basis. This quote will be discussed again at the next meeting and the Council will decide whether to accept the quote and pay for the bin to be emptied or to remove it completely. There was concern that the bin was being used by lorry and van drivers who just wanted to empty out the rubbish in the cab of their vehicle.

191/08/20. Correspondence to note. There was no further correspondence.

192/08/20. Any urgent business at the Chairman's discretion. There was no urgent business.

193/08/20. Date and arrangements for the next meeting. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 29th September via Zoom. The Village Hall Committee is looking at what is needs to do to reopen. Cllr Mitton has been involved in the reopening of a hall in Wellington and offered to share his risk assessment.

Chair:

Date: