

WEST BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

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The Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of the Parish Council held via Zoom on Tuesday 30th March 2021 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs Mrs M Blogg (Chair), D Lacey, S Bellamy, Ms S Drury, D Mitton, J Nutt and C Silverlight,

In attendance: The Clerk, Mrs J Larcombe.

296/03/21. To accept apologies for absence. County Cllr Thorne had emailed the Clerk to warn that he had a clash of meetings and would try and join this meeting as soon as he could.

297/03/21. Disclosure of interest in items on the agenda. There were no disclosures.

298/03/21. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 23/02/21. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

299/03/21. Matters arising from the minutes not covered by the agenda. Cllr Mitton reported that he had met with Cllr Miss Drury, Cllr Nutt and the Clerk to discuss compiling a Communications Policy for the Council. A draft policy will be brought to the next meeting.

300/03/21. Democratic Period. There were no members of the public present.

301/03/21. Planning:

a) To consider any planning applications received by the Parish Council prior to the meeting.

46/21/0006 Erection of entrance lobby and temporary cabins for office and MRI with alterations to car park and internal reconfiguration at Cave Veterinary Services, Georges Farm, West Buckland Road, West Buckland.

Comment: West Buckland Parish Council are aware that lorries have difficulties turning to leave the site when they are making deliveries to the business and recommend that provision is made for this.

46/21/0008 Removal of mower and log store and erection of a timber framed workshop/office at Pollards, Silver Street, West Buckland. Comment: no objections.

b) To receive decisions from planning applications determined by SWT Council.

46/21/0004 Change of use of former village shop storeroom, with erection of a single storey extension to the front, to form 1 self contained dwelling together with parking and associated works at Former Village Shop Dyers Close, West Buckland.

Decision: permission refused.

c) **Any other planning matters.** No other planning matters.

302/03/21. Highways.

a) **To note any required work to be reported to SCC.** It was reported that a lady had been injured when she tripped trying to step over a high kerb in Dyers Close. Since the incident the kerb has been marked for a survey and costing for a tactile crossing. The Parish Council noted that it had raised concerns about this kerb in the past but were told it was alright. The Clerk will contact Highways asking for work to be carried out to make the kerb safe.

b) **To receive an update on any outstanding highways work.** The Clerk has emailed Josian Lebrun to ask whether there has been any progress with planning to remove the silt under Park Bridge, Sawyers Hill but has not received a reply.

c) **Update on suggestion for a 20 mph zone in the village.** The Clerk has emailed Highways but has not received a response yet.

d) **Any other highways matters.** The Clerk reported that a quote from Nigel Richards to carry out grass cutting on specified verges and footpaths has been accepted. He has provided a copy of his public liability insurance. Another contractor was asked to quote but no quote was provided. The Parish Council Facebook page was used to ask parishioners if they knew of suitable contractors that could be approached to quote for the work but no other suggestions were received. It was noted that Mr Richards also does work for Bradford-On-Tone Parish Council.

Now lockdown has finished Cllr Miss Drury, Cllr Silverlight and Cllr Nutt will paint the finger post sign near Manleys Farm. Cllr Lacey will help with fixing the replacement arm onto the sign.

303/03/21. To note any reports from:

a) **County Cllr.** A written report from Cllr Thorne was circulated by email prior to the meeting.

b) **District Cllr.** No report received.

c) **Police.** PCSO Hallett's report was circulated by email. He reported that there had been 13 calls into 101 and 999 for West Buckland since February's report on the 21/02/2021. These calls involved: suspicious x 3; concern for welfare x 2; contact record; abandoned 999 calls x 3; criminal damage; dissatisfaction with service; missing person; theft and weapons. Out of the 13 calls made to either 999 or 101 four of the calls were from the same address. This address is a registered care home. There were 0 calls to police for ASB in West Buckland. Over the past month PCSO Hallett has started the process of sorting community speed watch in West Buckland at two different sites and has completed speed checks and vehicle checks within the village. He has continued to engage with the children, staff and parents from West Buckland Primary School. As the covid rules change over the next few weeks he reminded everyone to please remain vigilant and safe.

d) **Wellington Parish Network meeting 17th March.** Cllr Mitton and the Clerk attended the meeting and while both agreed the meetings were a good idea, they were concerned that this meeting, and the last meeting, had been spent speculating about what would happen following the Local Government Reorganisation. It is proposed to hold a meeting in June but that is before a decision will be known. If a meeting is held in June, it should be a constructive meeting where the parishes represented talk about working together.

304/03/21. Finance:

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

payments: Mrs J Larcombe - £315.41 Clerk's salary and home working expenses for March. Monthly Zoom subscription (Payment ref: 2021/33).

Mr J Stanworth - £25.00 final grass cutting (Chq no 300006).

The Clerk reported that since the last meeting a cheque payment of £300.00 had been made to F J Orchard & Sons for hedge trimming at the playing field and other areas around the village (Chq no 300005).

Bank charges of £18.00 will be taken from the account on the 31st March.

£658.41 will be transferred from the Instant Access account to the Current account to return the Current account to £500.00.

Bank balances on 30.03.21: Current account - £200.00 and Instant Access - £21,535.38

b) Amendments to bank signatories. Cllr Mrs Blogg, who is one of the three Unity Trust Bank signatories, will be retiring from the Council in May. It was agreed to add Cllr Nutt as a signatory.

c) To note award of SCC Climate Emergency Grant for project with Village Hall (solar panels). The Parish Council has been notified that it has been awarded £8,540, the full amount applied for, to pay for the cost of solar panels and LED lighting for the village hall. SCC will be providing a funding agreement. Once this has been received and agreed a quote needs to be accepted so that the work can be carried out. Power was delegated to the RFO in conjunction with Cllr Miss Drury, Cllr Bellamy and Cllr Nutt to agree with the Village Hall Committee which quote to accept.

305/03/21. Playing Field

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

b) Any other Playing Field matters. It was reported that some people are hanging dog poo bags on the fence rather than putting them in the dog bin provided at the entrance to the field.

The goal posts need repainting and Cllr Nutt offered to do this. The white paint purchased for painting the finger post signs can be used for this and additional paint will be purchased if necessary. The brackets on the goal posts need repairing before the new goal nets can be put up. The repairs will need to be carried out by someone with portable welding equipment.

306/03/21. Footpaths

a) Update on site meeting with landowner Footpaths T29/33 and T29/34. Cllr Mitton, acting in the role of the Parish Paths Liaison Officer and not as a West Buckland Parish Councillor, has met with the owner of Reaphay to discuss the owner's proposed alternative route for the footpath. He felt that this proposed route is better than the current route, which goes through the farm buildings, and the one that was applied for previously. It will also put the entrance back to where it originally was. Cllr Mitton felt the person who objected to the application for a diversion had never actually visited to look at the proposal as they had not picked up that the path was closed. Cllr Mitton meeting the owner of Reaphay as the PPLO does not commit the Parish Council in any way if an application for a diversion order is submitted to SCC.

b) To discuss any footpath matters. Cllr Mitton gave a reminder that dog owners are allowed to use footpaths to walk their dogs but they should not be abusing this by letting their dogs go off the footpath or by not picking up poo from their dogs. This includes the footpath from the playing field. He will write something for the Parish Council Facebook page. Cllr Miss Drury reported that while out walking with a neighbour on the bridle path in Ruggin they had picked up litter which included dog poo, human faeces, human urine in containers and wet wipes.

307/03/21. Broadband issues in parts of the parish

a) An update on schemes to improve broadband speed in the parish. The Pitminster scheme is still ongoing. Mr Loveridge has not heard from Openreach about a community scheme for Blackmoor. Cllr Ms Drury reported that she had received a response from Rebecca Pow MP. Airband are taking up the CDS mantle and will be planning to provide superfast broadband for the West Buckland area, although it will be some time before this happens. People are encouraged to register an interest. There are also some moves to improve 4G including trying to get a better 4G signal from the mast.

b) Proposal to carry out a survey from Cllr Nutt. Cllr Nutt reported that he had received some advice about carrying out a survey from the person who is leading on the Pitminster scheme. It was agreed that Cllr Nutt would carry out a survey by telephone and Cllr Bellamy will put the findings on a digital map.

Cllr Silverlight's property is at the end of what is possible for copper in Blackmoor.

Ruggin - 30mps is the best Ruggin can get and only via 4G late at night when 4G demand is quieter. It is mostly 6-8 mps at best. Most properties in Ruggin are unable to receive the minimum 2mps required for cable connection and have therefore been rejected by companies for connection. This leaves 4G their only option.

The Parish Council needs to remember that some premises will be in the very small percentage that will never be able to access superfast broadband and that will have to rely on 4G.

307/03/21. To discuss the LGR consultation and proposals from One Somerset and Stronger Somerset.

Cllr Mitton said the Secretary of State will be looking at the two proposals to see which would bring the best economy of scale and which would bring the best savings. The Stronger Somerset proposal splits Somerset into east and west but there would still be some collaboration ie Somerset Waste Partnership. They also propose forming a trust to look after the children's services currently run by SCC, which makes it more complicated. The Stronger Somerset proposal takes more account of our local level of government. The One Somerset proposal is for 17 – 20 area boards to cover the whole of Somerset. Unitary ward councillors will meet with their groups before these councillors make decisions affecting them. Stronger Somerset say they will work with network groups of various types. This Parish Council would need to consider which group would suit it best. At present there are discussions with the Wellington group, but it might also consider joining the AONB group. SALC are running consultation meetings on the 7th and 8th April, one for the parishes in the north part of Somerset and one for parishes in the south (rather than east and west). Representatives from both One Somerset and Stronger Somerset will be invited to present their case. Cllr Mitton will be chairing both meetings as Chair of SALC. Cllr Bellamy will attend the south meeting on behalf of the Parish Council. It was noted that the consultation period ends on 19th April and it was agreed the Parish Council would not respond.

308/03/21. Policy for Co-option. As Cllr Mrs Blogg is planning to retire in May the Council is likely to be looking at co-opting a councillor. The Clerk recommended that the Parish Council should agree a Co-option Policy. A draft policy will be brought to the next meeting.

309/03/21. Correspondence: to note. The legislation to hold remote meetings comes to an end on the 7th May 2021 and the Government has concluded that it is not possible to bring forward emergency legislation on this issue, at this time. The government has also published a 12-week call for evidence about how remote meetings have been used, this is to inform any potential future legislation regarding their use beyond the coronavirus pandemic. Local councils are strongly urged to respond to the call for evidence. NALC will also be

responding as part of ongoing engagement with the government and other key stakeholders such as the LGA. As part of its lobbying on remote meetings, NALC is also supporting the application by Hertfordshire County Council, Lawyers in Local Government and Association of Democratic Services Officers to the court for a declaration. This will continue despite the government's decision and is expected to be determined before the end of April.

Parishioners have emailed the Parish Council to complain about tree felling at Gerbestone Woods. The Forestry Commission are the organisation to contact as felling licences should be obtained from them before any tree felling on this scale is carried out.

310/03/21. Any urgent business at the Chairman's discretion. There was no urgent business.

311/03/21. Date and arrangements for the next meeting. The next meeting will be held on 27th April 2021 at 7.30pm via Zoom.

The meeting closed at 20.57

Signed

Date