

## WEST BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

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### **The Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 29th June 2021 at 8.30pm in the Main Hall, West Buckland Village Hall.**

**Present:** Cllr's C Silverlight (Chair), S Bellamy, Ms S Drury, D Mitton and J Nutt.

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

**20/06/21. To accept apologies for absence.** Apologies were accepted from Cllr D Lacey.

**21/06/21. Disclosure of interest in items on the agenda.** There were no disclosures.

**22/06/21. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 25/05/21 as an accurate record.**  
With amendments to item 13/05/21 (Footpaths) the minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

**23/06/21. Matters arising from the minutes not covered by the agenda.** There were no matters arising.

Cllr Bellamy joined the meeting at this point.

**24/06/21. Democratic Period.** There were no members of the public.

**25/09/21. Planning:**

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

**46/21/0014.** Erection of orangery to the rear of Reaphay Farm, Stoford Lane, West Buckland. Comment: West Buckland Parish Council has no objections.

**46/21/0015/LBC.** Erection of orangery to the rear of Reaphay Farm, Stoford Lane, West Buckland. Comment: West Buckland Parish Council has no objections.

**46/21/0016** Erection of a part two storey and part single storey extension to the side and rear of Highwood Barn, Sawyers Hill, West Buckland. Whilst recognising the applicant's desire to create more space in the dwelling it was noted that the conversion of Highwood Barn from an agricultural building was approved as a Class Q application and one of the restrictions was that it could not go beyond the existing footprint of the barn. It was decided that the Parish Council would not comment on this application.

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

**46/21/0006** Amended Plans 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.  
Decision: conditional approval granted.

**46/21/0008** Removal of mower and log store and erection of a timber framed workshop/office at Pollards, Silver Street, West Buckland.  
Decision: conditional approval granted.

**c) Any other planning matters.** It was brought to the Parish Council's attention that it had not been consulted about a concrete road which had been built to give improved access into Higher Ruggin Farm. 46/21/0012/AGN Application for prior notification for the formation of an access track on land at Higher Ruggin Farm, Ruggin Road, West Buckland had been submitted to SWT and the Planning Officer decided this was permitted development and therefore no prior approval was required. It was noted that although the concrete track was required to allow larger sheep lorries access to the farm, the application did not include a turning area for the lorries once they reach the farm.

**26/06/21. Highways.**

**a) To note any required work to be reported to SCC.** Nothing reported.

**b) To receive an update on any outstanding highways work.** The damaged ditch at Buckland Farm Road/Ruggin Road has still not been repaired and the sign and cone have now sunk in the water in the ditch. This section of road is now unsuitable for anything more than a transit and it is getting worse.

**c) Update on requests to Highways for a speed check, dropped kerb and 40 mph speed limit request.** Kate Brown, SCC Traffic Engineer, has emailed two plans to the Clerk and said it would be helpful if the Parish Council could mark on the plans what they would like as regards speed limits so that she can arrange for some speed readings to be taken. It was agreed how the plans should be marked. The speed checks are required so that the Parish Council can see if speeding is an actual problem or a perceived problem. The kerbs are marked at Dyers Close for a drop kerb on either side, but no work has taken place. There was no update on the Parish Council's request for a dropped kerb at Frogs Lane.

**d) To discuss parking around West Buckland Primary School.** Cllr Ms Drury said she had contacted Highways to raise concerns about the safety of the signs that are being suggested by the Headteacher. She had seen a photo on Facebook of PCSO Fyne with some of these signs at Wiveliscombe Primary School. The Clerk has advised the Headteacher to come back to the Parish Council when SCC Highways has given them permission for the signs. Councillors were concerned that stopping parents parking by the school will move the problem elsewhere and suggested asking PCSO Hallett for his view. It was suggested that PCSO Hallett could ask the Headteacher to write to parents about illegal parking and that his appearance at the start and end of the school day would be helpful.

**e) Any other highways matters.** An email was received from the parishioner who has been trying to set up a speed watch group in the parish, expressing his frustration that although six people had told him they had completed the training the Police only had the names of three. He felt that PCSO Hallett did his bit and generally responded very quickly but the speed watch team were not doing their job. Due to his concerns about speeding in the village he asked the Parish Council to try and get three of the digital signs erected at the three areas of concern:

Village Hall, the motorway bridge approaching the school and Sawyers Hill / Crown Hill. The request was noted but councillors decided they needed the results of the speed check before discussing this any further.

Cllr Nutt raised concerns that the stream at the bottom of Sawyers Hill was overgrown with vegetation and was creating a flooding risk if there is heavy rain. The Clerk has tried to contact Josian Lebrun, SCC Flood Risk Management Engineer, who met with Cllr Nutt and the former Chair in February 2020 to discuss removing the build-up of silt under and around Park Bridge. She will try to contact Mr Lebrun again and will also contact highways to make them aware of the risk. A fingerpost sign at Chelston has been painted. The one at Birdcage Cottage will be painted next.

**27/06/21. To note any reports from:**

**a) County Cllr.** Cllr Thorne's written report was circulated by email prior to the meeting. He reported that a decision on the unitary proposals was expected any day. Covid rates are rising again. A previously hidden fact about Connecting Devon and Somerset's roll out of a gigabit capable fibre broadband network for our rural areas has been uncovered by Cllr Thorne. While in theory it can be claimed to be true, in practice it turns out to be far from the actual truth because CDS is using Airband UK to deliver the network in this area and Airband is only offering two packages, 100 MBs and 250 MBs, which means users cannot achieve gigabit speeds. Any commercial provider wanting to use the network has to apply for consent from Airband to do so. To date, no such applications have been made and this means that the only broadband provider using the network will be Airband, so homes and businesses who want to connect will have to sign up with Airband, and their minimum term contract is 18 months.

Cllr Mitton referred to the SCC electric vehicle charging strategy and the prediction that most EVCPs will be provided on private land such as supermarkets and other destination sites and workplaces rather than being provided by the public sector. He said that he thought they were going into public car parks. 50,000 will be needed across Somerset but it is expected that only 30,000 will be in place in time. The strategy includes home charging points and those in public car parks. They are appearing in some places in West Somerset and Parish Councils are also putting some in. Cllr Ms Drury spoke about the Co Charger community charging scheme. The Parish Council has discussed providing a charging point in the village but does not have anywhere of its own where this could be provided. Cllr Ms Drury and the Clerk will be attending training on Carbon Literacy. Two free places on the training have been provided by SCC as the Parish Council was a successful applicant for the Climate Emergency Grant Fund. An item on Climate Emergency will be added to the next agenda.

**b) District Cllr.** Cllr Habgood reported that James Hassett, SWT Chief Executive and another senior leader are leaving the council. He commented that progress with the new SWT Development Plan is very slow. Both the TDBC and West Somerset Local Plans are coming to the end of their lives and the lack of a five year land supply leaves the council open to unplanned development.

Cllr Thorne left the meeting.

**c) Police.** The Police Report from PCSO Hallett was circulated by email. There were 12 calls into 101 and 999 for West Buckland between 19/05/2021 and 16/06/2021. These calls involved two road related incidents, one missing person,

one road traffic collision, two abandoned 999 calls, one assisting other services, one contact record, two suicidal persons and two concerns for welfare. One of the suicidal calls and concern for welfare calls were for the same individual. There were no calls to Police for anti-social behaviour in West Buckland.

Between 19/04 - 19/05, AW053 beat (Wellington Town Centre and South) received over 300 calls. Only 12 of these calls involved West Buckland and shows that West Buckland is managing really well and having very few incidents. PCSO Hallett has not had anyone come forward to volunteer for speed watch since the last report was published. Anyone interested in helping out should email him. He has completed regular patrols in West Buckland to give reassurance to members of the community.

**d) Any other reports.** No other reports.

#### **28/06/21. Finance:**

**a) To agree and authorise any payments.** It was resolved to make the following payments: Mrs J Larcombe £312.50 Clerk's salary and home working expenses for May (Payment ref: 2122/10).

Nigel Richards - £165.00 grass cutting and strimming (payment ref: 2122/11).

R W Gale Ltd - £1296.00 demolishing wall at the playing field and removing rubble (payment ref: 2122/12).

**b) To note any receipts and the bank account balances.** There were no receipts since the last meeting. Prior to the meeting the current account balance was £7,326.70 and the Instant Reserve Account balance was £30,015.04.

**c) To note the completion of the Climate Emergency project at the Village Hall and minute payments made from the grant funding.** The solar panels have now been installed on the roof of the village hall and that completes the Climate Emergency project. The LED lighting was installed as the first phase of the project and a payment of £2,040 has been made to ARC Taunton Ltd since the last meeting (Payment ref: 2122/09). The invoice for the solar panels is expected before the next meeting and payment will be arranged once it is received as a contract was signed.

#### **29/06/21. Playing Field**

**a) Any points to note from the regular inspections.** The only issue during the month has been litter. Cllr Nutt was concerned that dog poo was being put in the litter bin at the play area at Lee Park but it was explained that it is now acceptable in many areas for dog poo to be put in litter bins.

**b) Discussion on additional equipment for the play area following the demolition of the wall.** Following the concerns raised at the last meeting about the condition of the wall in the playing field-the wall was inspected early the following morning and a decision was made for safety reasons to immediately fence the wall off, put up warning signs and to make arrangements for it to be demolished and removed as soon as possible. Due to the urgent need to demolish the wall for safety reasons it was not possible to obtain three quotes. Councillors were consulted by email and a decision was made to accept a quote from R W Gale Ltd and the wall was demolished on 2<sup>nd</sup> July. Some negative comments were made on the Village Facebook page about the demolition of the wall despite the Parish Council's efforts to explain why the wall had had to be demolished. A parishioner had emailed the Parish Council to say that with the demise of the play wall he was of the opinion that there is a real opportunity to install some decent equipment in at the playing field such as a multi-use games area (MUGA). He

asked the Councillors to consider this as an opportunity for the Parish Council to engage with the young people of the village/parish, to provide a new facility which is desired by the young people. He felt there were likely to be grants available in this period of recovery from the pandemic, for a new facility in the playing field. It was recognised that this would give an opportunity to provide equipment for young people in the 11 – 15 year age group. One of the first things that the Parish Council will need to do prior to applying for funding will be to establish a need for new equipment and this will involve a consultation with the young people in the parish and the primary school could be asked to be involved with this.

**c) Commemorative tree planting for the Platinum Jubilee.** Cllr Ms Drury would like the Parish Council to plant a tree in the playing fields to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. An Acer tree was planted in the playing field to commemorate her Diamond Jubilee. It was suggested that fruit trees could be planted. They would also provide an area of shade in the play area. Cllr Silverlight said he had a transition town contact who could probably offer some advice on varieties and siting. All options will be considered.

**d) Request from Pulse Gym to use the playing field for a Sports Day.** Permission was agreed subject to proof of insurance for the event and a risk assessment.

- 30/06/21. Footpaths: to discuss any footpath matters.** In his role as PPLO Cllr Mitton has put in a report on the condition of some of the parish footpaths but has not received a response from the warden yet. He is now putting together a report on the condition of the footpaths around Ruggin. He will also be looking into a report about the footpath behind Manleys Farm being blocked by an electric fence.
- 31/06/21. Update on broadband issues.** The comments from Cllr Thorne were noted. Cllr Silverlight reported that he had written to Rebecca Pow MP about the issues, in a personal capacity. The Parish Council will keep the pressure on.
- 32/06/21. Policies for agreement: Communication.** Cllr Mitton had circulated a draft policy and amendments had been made by the Chair and the Clerk. The Chair pointed out that the policy affected everyone, and all councillors needed to be happy with it. Councillors were asked to have another look at the proposals before the next meeting.
- 33/06/21. Correspondence: to note.** There was no further correspondence to discuss.
- 34/06/21. Any urgent business at the Chairman's discretion.** Cllr Nutt reported his concerns about computer waste building up again outside of units at Poole Trading Estate. Computer waste is believed to have been the cause of two previous fires on the estate. Cllr Nutt has been trying to report the problem to various authorities without success and felt that no one was interested. He disclosed a personal and pecuniary interest as he has a studio on the estate. It was suggested that he asked the Fire Brigade for advice.
- 35/06/21. Date and arrangements for the next meeting.** The next meeting will be held on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2021 and if Covid restrictions are lifted as planned the meeting will be held in the Committee Room at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 10.00pm.

Signed:  
Chair

Date: