

## WEST BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

### The Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room, West Buckland Village Hall.

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

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

**56/08/21. To accept apologies for absence.** There were no apologies. Cllr Thorne had advised that he would be late arriving.

**57/08/21. Disclosure of interest in items on the agenda.** Cllr Lacey declared a personal interest in planning application 46/21/0021 as he has provided a professional service to the applicant. Cllr Ms Drury declared a personal and pecuniary interest in item 70/08/21 as the joint owner of one of the properties that has responsibilities regarding upkeep of the bridleway.

**58/08/21. Representatives from Citizens UK and Taunton Area Cycling Campaign to inform councillors about a proposed cycle route adjacent to the A38 between Wellington and Taunton and answer questions.** The representatives from Citizens UK and Taunton Area Cycling Campaign cancelled at short notice. Councillors were disappointed because had more notice been given there would have been a chance to arrange for a presentation from Airband High Speed Internet at this meeting rather than having to arrange a separate meeting. This item on the proposed cycle route will be rescheduled for the October meeting.

**59/08/21. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 27/07/21 as an accurate record.** With a correction of Footpath 27 to Footpath 37 in item 48/07/21 the minutes were agreed as an accurate record and were duly signed by the chair.

**60/08/21. Matters arising from the minutes not covered by the agenda.** No matters arising.

Cllr Thorne and Cllr Habgood joined the meeting during this item.

**62/08/21. Democratic Period.** Mr Loveridge, who has been leading on the Blackmoor Community Fibre Project, reported that he had met with Rebecca Pow MP on 30<sup>th</sup> July to discuss the issues around the provision of full fibre broadband to areas of the parish that have poor broadband provision. Cllr Ms Drury and Cllr Threlfall, who has been leading on the Pitminster Community Fibre Project, also attended the meeting. They were able to fully explain the issues to the MP and she now has a better understanding of the problems. Following that meeting Michael Asher, Constituency Support Manager, arranged a meeting with Matt Barrow of Connecting Devon & Somerset (CDS) on 10<sup>th</sup> August. On the day before the meeting with the MP emails were received from Lynda Sudlow, Community Liaison Executive for Airband High Speed Internet, explaining that Airband had signed a contract with CDS to supply a new fibre to the premise (FTTP) network to parts of the parish. Cllr Ms Drury and Cllr Threlfall are pushing the Pitminster Community Fibre Project and are still waiting the hear back from Matt Barrow. Mr

Loveridge said he had thanked Mr Barrow and had told him that he didn't want Pitminster west taken out of the C14 scheme as it might make the rest of the C14 scheme unviable. This has been agreed by email. Airband will be the only option for most of C14 and anyone in that area should register their interest online on the Airband website. Arrangements will be made for Lynda Sudlow to attend a public meeting to explain about Airband's FTTP project to interested people in the parish.

**63/08/21. Update on broadband issues.** This was covered in the previous item. A public meeting will be arranged during September for a presentation from Lynda Sudlow of Airband High Speed Internet.

**64/08/21. Update on councillor co-option.** No applications were received and the vacancy will be advertised again.

**65/08/21. Planning:**

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

**46/21/0019** Change of use of public house (Class A4) to licensed bed and breakfast (Class C1) at Blackbird Inn, Wellington Road, West Buckland.  
Comment: West Buckland Parish Council object to this application because the plans do not show any turning area in the car parking area to the west of the building and the applicant has not shown through the traffic plan how all vehicles can safely enter and exit this area in a forward direction to access off road parking. The A38 is a very busy road and it would be dangerous for vehicles to reverse onto it from the car parking area. The client for the bed and breakfast business will provide a different pattern of use from that of a public house.

**46/21/0021** Erection of 8 No. business units with associated external works at Compound1, Foxmoor Business Park, Chelston, Wellington.  
Cllr Lacey declared a personal interest as the company he is a director of, provides a professional service to the applicant.  
Comment: West Buckland Parish Council object to this application because there is insufficient mitigation in the application for possible flooding and this needs to be addressed. The Parish Council believes that there should be no further development on Foxmoor Business Park until a roundabout has been built on the Foxmoor Business Park/M5 Link Road junction.

**SCC/3849/2021** Construction and use of methane stripping plant. Land at Wellington Landfill Site, Higher Poole, Wellington. Grid Reference 315168 121830.  
Comment: West Buckland Parish Council support this application.

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

**46/21/0011** Improvements to vehicular access to Pumping Station, Hockholler Road. West Buckland. Decision: conditional approval granted.

**46/21/0014.** Erection of orangery to the rear of Reaphay Farm, Stoford Lane, West Buckland. Decision: conditional approval granted.

**46/21/0015/LBC.** Erection of orangery to the rear of Reaphay Farm, Stoford Lane, West Buckland. Decision: conditional approval granted.

**c) Any other planning matters.** The Clerk informed councillors that SWT are carrying out Design Guide Consultations. The aim is to adopt across West Somerset and Taunton Deane. Builders will have to abide by the guidance. Cllr

Mitton commented that he knew of examples of where the builders had followed the Design Guide but the new owners had made changes outside of the guidance.

#### **66/08/21. Highways.**

**a) To note any required work to be reported to SCC.** It was reported that the pathway alongside the A38 is getting narrower and the vegetation needs to be cut back by landowners as people are having to walk in the road.

**b) To receive an update on any outstanding highways work.** The post missing a sign warning vehicles about the ditches in France Lane, sited adjacent to Horseshoe Cottage, has been removed and marked for replacement. The road has been resurfaced at Ruggin and markings on the road for the repairs to the ditch have disappeared under the tarmac.

Cllr Nutt reported that the SCC Senior Flood and Water Management Risk Technician had informed him that they will be requesting that the riparian owners clear the watercourse at the bottom of Sawyers Hill, and they will be advised about riparian ownership and responsibilities.

**c) Update on requests to Highways for a speed check, dropped kerb and 40 mph speed limit request.** Remedial work to the high kerb in Dyers Close has still not been done. Highways will be pursued and asked when this will be done. They will also be asked what they are going to do about the Parish Council's request for a dropped kerb at Frogs Lane.

**d) Update on fingerpost sign refurbishment.** Cllr Silverlight and Cllr Nutt will paint the small fingerpost sign at Chelston and will then move onto the one at Crossways. Cllr Lacey will advise on what warning signs are required.

**e) Any other highways matters.** It was reported that a red lorry trailer, believed to be full of old fridges, is parked in a lay bye close to the M5 Junction 26 roundabout. There was concern because a loaded lorry trailer had been left in the lay bye for 6 weeks in the past. This will be reported to the appropriate agency.

#### **67/08/21. To note any reports from:**

**a) County Cllr.** Cllr Thorne's written report had been circulated by email prior to the meeting. He reported that he had emailed Highways to ask about the remedial work for the high kerb at Dyers Close but hadn't received a response. The new unitary council for Somerset will have between 80 – 85 councillors. Parliamentary Orders for ward boundaries might not be approved until mid March 2022 and councillor nominations will need to be made by late March for elections in early May 2022.

**b) District Cllr.** Cllr Habgood noted that people would have been upset whichever of the two unitary proposals had been chosen, but now was the time to get on with it. The phosphate issue is still holding up planning applications and some people are very upset. It is hard to see an end to it and once it does there will be a backlog in applications. Housing delivery targets are not being met and affordable housing is not being built. If SWT do not have a five year demonstrable land supply for housing it will cause issues. Cllr Habgood was concerned it was being held off so that the new unitary council had to deal with it. 800 plus homes were being delivered for several years, but this has dropped back.

**c) Police.** PCSO Hallett's Police report was circulated by email on 18<sup>th</sup> August. He reported that there had been 21 calls into 101 and 999 for West Buckland between 18/07/2021 - 18/08/2021. These calls involved: 6 abandoned 999 calls; 2 domestics; 2 dissatisfactions with service; 2 suspicious; 1 concern for welfare; 1

Blackmail; 2 contact records; 2 assist other services; 1 alarm activation; 1 RTC; 1 burglary and 1 road related incident. Between 18/07/2021 - 18/08/2021, AW053 beat (Wellington Town Centre and South) received over 300 calls. West Buckland having only 21 calls is a real positive. Wellington Beat Team have no concerns regarding the slight increase in crimes since last month. There were 0 calls to police for ASB in West Buckland. PCSO Hallett has completed three Community Speed Watch sessions- in these sessions PCSO Hallett only caught 2 Speeders. This is a positive and shows that the speeding through West Buckland is minimal. PCSO Hallett is pleased to announce that the Community Speed Watch Scheme will be up and running for members of the community to run in the next few days. PCSO Hallett has been completing regular patrols of West Buckland, covering all areas. PCSO Hallett wants to encourage members of West Buckland community to contact him with any information, intel or feedback they have and he is always happy for a chat.

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

#### **68/08/21. Finance:**

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

Mrs J Larcombe - £310.50 Clerk's salary & expenses (Payment ref: 2122/20)

Nigel Richards - £45.00 grass cutting at Church Drive, Peacocks Close, Silver Street Green and the War Memorial (Payment ref: 2122/21)

Cllr C Silverlight – £82.98 expenses claim for replacement plaque for tree planted for Queen's Diamond Jubilee and 2 mini roller kits for painting fingerpost signs (Payment ref: 2122/22)

**b) To note any receipts and the bank account balances**

A VAT refund of £2,036.51 has been received from HMRC.

The Village Hall Committee has repaid £540.00, the cost of the 4G router and wi-fi which SCC would not include in the Climate Change grant funding.

Current account balance - £6,370.43

Instant Access account balance - £21,686.98

**c) To discuss any projects that need applications made to the Funding for 'Opening Up Safely and Reconnecting Communities' scheme.** No projects put forward.

#### **69/08/21. Playing Field:**

**a) Any points to note from the regular inspections.** Cllr Nutt reported that the memorial bench in front of the village hall had been repaired and repainted. There was an incident with teenagers inappropriately using the equipment in the play area, equipment they were too old for. It was believed this followed a party in the village and it was hoped this was a one off incident.

**b) To discuss paying SWT to empty the litter bin in the playing field.** It was agreed in principle that the Parish Council should pay to have the bin emptied rather than a councillor emptying it but before a contract was signed enquiries should be made about the possibility of having a bin where there was a choice between recycling and general waste.

**c) Update on planting a commemorative tree/s for the Platinum Jubilee.** It was agreed to try and purchase another Acer Campestre Queen Elizabeth, the same as was planted for the Diamond Jubilee.

**c) Report on meeting to discuss planting fruit trees in the playing field.** Cllr

Ms Drury reported on the site meeting with Helen from Transition Town Wellington. Cllr Silverlight and Cllr Nutt also attended the meeting. Helen had been very knowledgeable and had come up with suggestions to plant trees along 3 sides of the field, 3 metres from the hedge. Nut trees were suggested for the side against Frogs Lane. The Clerk expressed her concerns about planting trees on that side of the field as that is the area that has been used for parking when community events such as the fete are held on the field. There was also concern that adequate room would have to be left to allow the contractor to cut the hedges and it was felt that the trees would need to be further from the hedge to allow this. Cllr Bellamy will put together a map for the next meeting showing the proposed planting. It was recognised that the Parish Council would need to be mindful of other users and would need to obtain the views of the community. It would also need to look at who will maintain the trees in the future.

**e) To agree to book a contractor to cut the hedges.** It was agreed to book W J Orchard & Son as they have a tractor mounted hedge trimmer that has enough reach to cut for the hedges concerned. The Parish Council will be discussing the adoption of a Climate Change Policy and in future contractors could be asked about their green credentials. The Clerk recognised the need for the Parish Council to discuss reducing its carbon footprint but said there was also a balance between ensuring contractors were considering their green credentials and getting the work done with the right machinery. At present SWT cut the grass and they will be thinking about climate change but it might not be so important to small family owned businesses.

**f) To note the booking of the annual play equipment inspection.** The Clerk reported that she had booked the annual inspection of the play equipment etc with Wicksteed Leisure Ltd.

**g) To report on the site visit at Cobb Castle.** Cllr Silverlight and Cllr Nutt reported that they had met to look at the area of open space at Cobb Castle. While it would be possible to erect some equipment and a fence the cost is likely to be at least £30,000 to provide anything meaningful. The Clerk was concerned that the Parish Council might then be asked to take on the grass cutting for this area of open space. Some councillors questioned whether play equipment was really needed here. Cllr Nutt reported that following the site visit he had spoken to a resident and they had told him that a number of the properties were owned by Live West Housing Association. There were children living in these properties but most of them played in the centre of the estate. It was agreed that a community consultation needed to be carried out to see if there was a need. The Clerk will contact the person who made the initial enquiry to see if there are any groups that could be used to consult the community at Cobb Castle through.

**h) To discuss how a consultation will be carried out in preparation to making bids for funding for new equipment.** Cllr Habgood noted that Bradford-on-Tone had carried out a consultation with their community and suggested contacting their clerk to see how they had done this.

The play area is used a lot by younger children and any funding/provision of new equipment should not be to their detriment.

It was agreed to go ahead and obtain quotes to replace all the surfacing under the swings rather than spending a lot of money on a repair. Quotations will also be obtained to replace the surfacing under the slide.

**70/08/21. Footpaths: to discuss any footpath matters.** Cllr Mitton reported that Footpath 14/32 at Ruggin is a restricted byway. Hardcore has been put down when it was

repaired previously but it has been washed away. The cross channel drainage is deteriorating. Cllr Mitton, as PPLO, will write a report to send to SCC Public Rights of Way.

It was reported that an electric fence has been put across Footpath 14/29, which is illegal. Cllr Mitton will check whether electric fences are legal if they have 'breakers' to use to open the fence to get through it.

**71/08/21. To discuss whether the 2023 town and parish council elections should be moved forward to 2022 so that they can remain in sync with principal authority elections going forward.** Cllr Mitton noted that in 2019 most Town and Parish Councils did not have elections and councillors were elected uncontested. He suggested that the new unitary council should pay for any elections required in 2023, at the end of the current 4 year term. It could be made clear that the 2023 elections were for a 3 year term, to bring Town and Parish Council elections in line with the unitary council elections. It was unanimously agreed that elections should be left until 2023 and the unitary council should pay the cost of any elections.

**72/08/21. Correspondence: to include correspondence from West Buckland WI regarding Passenger Transport Strategy (Somerset).**

A letter had been received from the President of West Buckland explaining about the WI National Federation of Women's Institutes' (NFWI) "Get on Board" campaign concerning the decline in the number of bus services in rural areas, and to express her interest in being consulted on the development of Bus Service Improvement Plans in the village of West Buckland. In April 2021, the NFWI published a report which looked at people's experiences of using local bus services and the impacts of cuts on women and people living in rural areas. The Parish Council had also received an invitation to a 'Bus Back Better Stakeholder Update event being held on behalf of SCC. Cllr Nutt will try to attend, and Cllr Mitton will attend if he cannot. West Buckland WI will be asked if they could provide a representative for the network of local representatives.

**73/08/21. Any urgent business at the Chairman's discretion.** There was no urgent business.

**74/08/21. Date and arrangements for the next meeting.** The next meeting will be held on 28th September 2021 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room of West Buckland Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm.

Signed  
Chair

Date