

## WEST BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

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### **The Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room, West Buckland Village Hall.**

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

**In attendance:** County Cllrs R Henley and Ms S Wakefield, PCSO S Hill and the Clerk, Mrs J Larcombe.

**50/07/22. To accept apologies for absence.** No apologies received.

**51/07/22. Disclosure of interest in items on the agenda.** There were no disclosures.

**52/07/22. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 13/06/22 as an accurate record of the meeting.** With the removal of 'They hope to open to the public in 2023' from 39/07/22 c) the minutes were agreed as an accurate record and they were duly signed by the Chair.

**53/07/22. Matters arising from the minutes not covered by the agenda (for information only).** There were no matters arising.

**54/07/22. Democratic Period.** No members of the public present.

**55/07/22. Police Report.** PCSO Steve Hill introduced himself and explained that he and PCSO Simon Bramley are now covering Wellington Town Centre and outlying areas including West Buckland. PCSO Chandler Hallett was covering West Buckland as part of this team but he has had to move to Taunton. PCSO Hill told councillors that calls to the Police from West Buckland residents are mainly about speeding through the village and parking. He is trying to set up a mini-Police group for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils and several pupils at West Buckland Primary School have expressed an interest for next year. When children are too old for mini-Police they are able to become Police Cadets. PCSO Hill said it was his intention to attend parish council meetings when possible and he would also provide a short monthly report. Cllr Silverlight said the report was useful for Neighbourhood Watch and asked for items of interest to be included as well as statistics. PCSO Hill was told that the school's 'buddy' signs are blocking visibility and the cones they are putting out are displacing cars into Lee Park where driveways are being blocked. Parking of vehicles directly opposite the school is also an issue. PCSO Hill agreed to look at this in September when the new school term starts.

PCSO Hill left the meeting.

**56/07/22. Update on broadband issues.** Cllr Bellamy referred to the notification from Airband that they would be installing 7 poles in Steart Lane and he asked whether this was the tip of the iceberg and questioned what else was planned. It was noted that Gigaclear are putting cables underground. Cllr Ms Wakefield said that in her area (Pitminster) they were putting some cables on poles and some underground. She felt they put cables underground where they could. The Clerk has emailed Airband's Community Liaison Officer for an update. Cllr Ms Drury referred to her email correspondence with Rebecca Pow MP CDS which has been totally unproductive and said if Airband can install poles in Steart Lane they could install them for Ruggin. She is still awaiting updates from the MP and CDS regarding a solution for hard to reach areas.

### **57/07/22. Reports**

**a) County Councillor.** Cllr Sarah Wakefield introduced herself and said she lived in Pitminster. She is the Associate Lead Member for Development and Assets on Somerset County Council and her role includes helping to decide on how planning will be dealt with by the new Somerset Council. There are a lot of issues regarding finance as the budget deficit has got considerably worse since May and the rise in inflation and fuel costs are making a significant difference. She is also a SWT District Councillor and the portfolio holder for Local Government Reorganisation. As part of that role she is helping with the setting up of a Town Council for the unparished area of Taunton. SWT has declared a cost of living emergency and is in the process of setting up a £50,000 support fund for residents most affected by food and energy price increases. The funding will be distributed by the Citizens Advice Bureau. As part of the Everyone Active scheme Children in Care will receive free leisure centre membership. Somerset Waste Partnership has won a Local Government Association award for its 'Recycling on the go' scheme which has seen recycling rates increase. SWT is consulting with taxi drivers who are struggling with increases in the cost of fuel. Cllr Ms Drury said it was very difficult to book a taxi unless you book in advance. SWT are also giving up to £1,500 of match funding towards the cost of installing EV charging points. Cllr Henley reported that SCC has launched its first consultation since the elections regarding giving the lowest funded households 100% council tax relief. They would be one of only a few councils who would be offering this much. He said he was concerned about the lack of a local bus service for West Buckland. The current service doesn't meet residents needs as it has to be booked in advance. SCC applied for £100million from the Government's Bus Back Better scheme but were only awarded £12million. In the past West Buckland residents could never show First Bus that it was commercially viable to run a service through the village. If Cllr Henley could get the evidence that people would use a bus service if it was available, he would use it to try and get them to consider putting a few buses through the village each day. He will launch a campaign to get the evidence and will survey people in the parish in August to find out what time of day they would like a service. He explained that SCC had removed the subsidy from the service previously. Cllr Silverlight asked if SCC might subsidise the service in future and Cllr Henley said he was not ruling that out. Cllr Ms Wakefield said SCC needed to be seen to be doing something before they would get government funding. Cllr Henley said he would not be asking First Bus to add a lot of miles as

a result of diverting through West Buckland. More bus use is expected as a result of the housing development in Wellington. Cllr Ms Drury suggested the bus could turn left at Worlds End and go around the Chelston roundabout rather than turning right on what is a dangerous junction.

Cllr Ms Wakefield asked the Parish Council to agree their priorities and Cllr Silverlight said the A38 junction at Worlds End had always been a high priority. Lots of residents will not use this junction to join the A38. The Clerk reminded Cllr Henley that he had tried to pursue improvements to this junction under the Small Improvement Scheme when he was previously ward councillor. Cllr Ms Wakefield felt that Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) helped to keep speeds down. Both County Cllrs agreed they would support 20 mph speed limits in the village. Cllr Silverlight explained the difficulties the Parish Council were having trying to get a decision on a request for a 40mph speed limit from where the 30 mph limit ends on the road to Blackmoor. It was explained that there are a massive number of vacancies in highways which is causing delays.

Cllr Ms Drury gave a synopsis of the broadband issues in the parish and explained there was a scheme for Ruggin which was fully funded and shovel ready when it was pulled. Despite numerous emails to Rebecca Pow MP and Matt Burrow, CDS, she has got nowhere. The Airband scheme for C13 and 14 only includes properties that are adjacent to the roads. Airband didn't even know that other premises, including farms, existed. There are a considerable number of properties in hard to reach areas in the parish that will be left with nothing when copper goes. They are only being offered 4G which has very limited success and isn't a solution to the problem. When there are a lot of people in the Taunton Deane Service Station using 4G on their phones it is completely unusable. She lost a job because she couldn't deliver online training.

The County Cllrs left the meeting.

Cllr Bellamy noted some things that he felt were the Parish Council's priorities. The Clerk said that in this instance the priorities that the County Cllrs wanted to know about were things that the County Council had responsibility for.

**b) District Councillor.** No report.

#### **58/07/22. Planning:**

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

**22/46/0008** Creation of wetland with associated development including construction of an in-take/out-take to Haywards Water, earthworks and landscaping and excavation of land in field southeast of Park Lane, Hockholler, West Buckland.

Cllr Silverlight explained that the point of the application was to reduce phosphate levels going into the River Tone, which would have a beneficial impact on the environment. Councillors were concerned that they were not qualified to make an informed comment given the complexity of the information in the application. Comment: West Buckland Parish Council note the application and are in favour of a Biodiversity Net Gain but councillors are aware this is part of a bigger picture that they are not qualified to comment on.

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

**c) Any other planning matters.** The Clerk was asked to find out from Planning Enforcement what was happening about case E/0120/46/22, a possible breach of planning control at Buckland Farm.

**59/07/22. Highways.**

**a) To note any required work to be reported to SCC.** Although some potholes have been repaired at Calways Lane more substantial repairs to the surface are still required. The signs are now in the ditch. The Clerk was asked to find out when the work will be carried out.

**b) To receive an update on any outstanding highways work.** No update.

**c) Update on speed check.** In an email on 18<sup>th</sup> July Kate Brown told the Clerk that she now had the speed data and would send an update for this meeting. Despite a reminder she has not provided the update. The Clerk will ask again for the information.

**d) Any other highways matters.** No other highways matters.

**60/07/22. Finance:**

**a) To agree and authorise any payments.** It was resolved to make the following payments: Nigel Richards - £210.00 grass cutting in village and cutting back vegetation on footpaths (Payment ref: 2223/14)

Mrs J Larcombe - £344.53 Clerk's salary and expenses (Payment ref: 2223/15)

**b) To note any receipts since the last meeting and the bank account balances.** No receipts since the last meeting.

Current account balance: £1,000.00. Instant Access account balance: £28,806.83.

**c) To receive bank reconciliations at 30.06.22.** The bank reconciliation and bank statements were signed by the Chair.

**d) To receive report on actual versus budget for Quarter 1 2022.** The report was noted. Although reserves seem high, general reserves are only £8,098.13.

**61/07/22. Update from Cllr Nutt on applying for funding for an EV charging point. To discuss how the other 50% of the cost will be funded if an application is made to SWT.** Cllr Nutt explained the annual cost would be £90 and that would include the SIM card. 2.9% commission would be charged on each transaction. The Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee will each contribute 50% of the balance of the cost of installing the EV charging point after the match funded grant from SWT has been received. It was agreed to accept the quote from A & E Electrical. Cllr Nutt and the Clerk will apply for the grant. Cllr's Silverlight, Bellamy and Nutt will attend the next Village Hall Committee meeting.

**62/07/22. Playing Field:**

**a) Any points to note from the regular inspection.** The damage to the surfacing in front of the swings needs attention. The Clerk suggested checking whether the length of the surfacing could be safely reduced and the damaged area cut out and reinstated to grass. Enquiries will be made.

**b) Ordering of new signs.** The existing signs have the name and phone numbers of the previous chair. Two new signs will be ordered as 2 part signs. One part will have the phone number and email address of the Clerk as the contact and this part could be replaced if the Clerk changes.

**63/07/22. Footpaths: to discuss any footpath matters.** No footpath matters.

**64/07/22. Correspondence.** Mr Richards has reported that he is finding dog poo on the grass around the war memorial when he arrives to cut it.  
Cllr Bellamy reported that he had attended the school fete and had spoken to Mr Mann, Headteacher, about the possibility of teachers applying to be co-opted onto the Parish Council. The Clerk will email the school administrator with the link to the application form on the website at the start of the autumn term.

**65/07/22. Any urgent business at the Chairman's discretion (Not for Decisions).** No urgent business.

**66/07/22. Date of the next meeting.** The next meeting will be held on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2022. Cllr Bellamy gave his apologies.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm

Signed:  
Chair

Date: