

WEST BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

The Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 26th October 2021 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room, West Buckland Village Hall.

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

In attendance: County Cllr J Thorne, Mr C Brossard, Citizens UK and Taunton Area Cycling Campaign, 5 members of the public and the Clerk, Mrs J Larcombe.

93/10/21. To accept apologies for absence. Apologies were received from District Cllr R Habgood.

94/10/21. Disclosure of interest in items on the agenda. There were no disclosures.

95/10/21. 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. Mr Brossard, a member of the project group and Citizens UK, attended the meeting to speak about the proposal as the route will go through the parish. Five years ago work started to look at how people could travel to work on this route other than using a car and there has been a lot of work on the feasibility of the project. The current work focus is on agreeing whether the route should follow the north or south side of the A38. It is thought that a cycle route could increase cycle journeys from 50 – 100 per day to 600 – 1000. The action team want to work together with everyone and he asked the Parish Council to pledge some support for the proposal and, if possible, to have a cycling champion. There are two committees, a project team and an action team. The project team consists of officers from SCC and SWT, a Sustrans representative, councillors from Wellington and a major stakeholder in Sheppy's cider and they are forwarding the project by focussing on all pre-construction actions such as mapping and contacting landowners. The action team consisting of volunteers from Citizens Somerset and Taunton Area Cycling Campaign are working to build support for the project through the parish councils along the route, schools in Wellington and Taunton, Taunton & Bridgwater College and Musgrove Hospital. Working in partnership there are lots of funding streams that can be accessed. The pressure needs to be kept on the powers that be to get this project delivered.

Cllr Mitton said in principle he was all in favour of more environmentally friendly ways of travelling but felt there were major difficulties with the route along the A38 and coming out of Wellington where there is roundabout after roundabout. He noted another entrance is likely to be opened up on Chelston roundabout. It was explained that there will be a crossover to the route on the north side of the A38 by the Blackbrook Garden Centre and garage and it is hoped to use the back roads to get into Wellington. The feasibility of the route by the Blackbird Inn is being looked into.

Cllr Silverlight asked if the Blackbird Inn planning application been factored in to plans and it was confirmed that the project team were talking to SWT.

Cllr Ms Drury asked if they were aware of plans for the House of Somerset as they have plans for a cycleway so that people can cycle from the site on Foxmoor Business Park into Wellington. As Mr Brossard wasn't aware it was suggested that he talked to the developers.

A member of the public referred to plans for a crossing by the garden centre and garage and pointed out that it was the worst accident point on the A38. Mr Brossard said that was why it was important to talk to everyone.

Cllr Bellamy said this was an exciting scheme. He referred to the £6million cost and said the right people needed to be kept in touch with. He suggested wilding the verges and volunteered to be a cycling champion for West Buckland. His offer was accepted.

Cllr Silverlight referred to the housing development taking place on the edge of Wellington and asked whether the developers would be putting in a cycle path that would link to the proposed cycle route. He was told that work will have taken place to develop a safe cycle route that avoided the mistakes made in other developments. Mr Brossard offered to get information on this to Cllr Silverlight.

Mr Brossard left the meeting.

96/10/21. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 28/09/21 as an accurate record. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and duly signed by the Chair.

97/10/21. Matters arising from the minutes not covered by the agenda. There were no matters arising.

98/10/21. Democratic Period. The members of the public present spoke about their concerns and objections to planning application 46/21/0032. A letter of objection from a member of the public who couldn't attend the meeting was read to the meeting. The main points raised were:

- The application was full of inaccuracies and was misleading
- Inappropriate location. No pub, restaurant or shop close by and people staying at the campsite would have to leave the site to access them.
- Detrimental impact on the landscape as it would be seen from the Church and the M5
- Traffic issues. The site is accessed along a busy narrow road which is used by pedestrians, cyclists and horses. There have been near misses and more traffic will increase the risk of accidents. The entrances to the site are too small and it would be difficult for larger vehicles to turn into the site. Visibility is poor when leaving the site.
- Close proximity to residential properties and direct line of site to windows. Loss of privacy.
- Environmental concerns ie increased noise and smells. No waste storage and inadequate details about foul waste disposal.
- The site is close to residential properties and there will be no one on site to manage it.
- The effect on wildlife
- It wouldn't create jobs or increase prosperity.

Another member of the public said his daughter had moved into a property in Frogs Lane in December 2019 and had experienced problems with flooding soon after, and on and off since then. The Clerk had shared the email she had received from Gwyn Hughes with him and he was surprised when he saw that Mr Hughes had claimed there had only been 6 reports that the road was flooded and that there was no risk to residential properties. He alone had reported the flooding a number of times and he had a video showing water being pumped away to stop it

getting into the property.

Cllr Silverlight reminded the members of the public to make representations to SWT. Cllr Thorne told them that if the planning officer was looking to approve the application they would not be able to do so if 4 or more members of the public and the Parish Council objected as it would need to go to committee. It was suggested that the members of the public should complain individually as an objection letter in the names of more than one person is only counted as

one.

99/10/21. Update on broadband issues. Cllr Thorne's comments about rural broadband in his report were noted. Lynda Sudlow, who spoke at the public meeting on broadband, is leaving Airband and a replacement is being recruited for her role. Cllr Ms Drury said Airband's planning didn't work by telephone exchange, it used roads. She has notified them of a lot of properties they had missed. She encouraged interested people to register on the Airband site.

100/10/21. Planning:

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

46/21/0029/CLA Notification for prior approval for the installation of 1 18 metre high Phase 8 monopole C/W wraparound cabinet at base and associated ancillary works on land at West Buckland Road, Wellington.

Comment: West Buckland Parish Council has reservations about the close proximity of this mast to The Blackdown Childrens Day Nursery and Wellesley Hospital.

46/21/0030 Erection of a single storey extension to the rear of 20 Dyers Close, West Buckland. No comment.

46/21/0032 Change of use of land from agricultural to sui generis (campsite) on land at Stable View, Calways Lane, West Buckland.

Cllr Ms Drury said she shared most of the concerns about Calways Lane and access and egress. She hadn't been able to access the application online when she had looked earlier in the day but was concerned about the lack of facilities and vehicles turning in and out of the site. Cllr Mitton said he shared Cllr Ms Drury's concerns and had had a close shave himself when driving along Calways Lane. He hadn't seen a comment from Highways but was concerned that a visitor wouldn't be aware of the dangers on this road which has a 60mph speed limit. He felt this proposal would be a blot on the landscape at the edge of the AONB. As the Parish Paths Liaison Officer he had looked at the footpath to check it was behind the campsite, which it is. The campsite does affect the view from the footpath but in planning terms there is no right to a view. Cllr Nutt said he couldn't understand why anyone would want to put a campsite close to Fusion College where the residents are responsible for a number of the incidents on the monthly Police Report. Cllr Bellamy questioned the planning status of Belle View Campsite. The Clerk explained that the owners were allowed to use it as a camp site for 56 days a year, a figure that had been increased from 28 days this year.

Comment: West Buckland Parish Council recommend refusal for the following reasons.

- Highways concerns. Access to the site is unsuitable for larger caravans and campervans because it is via Calways Lane, a busy, narrow, bendy rural road with a 60mph speed limit. This lane is used as a rat run to the

M5 and A38 by motorists as well as being well used by cyclists, pedestrians and horses and there have been a lot of near miss accidents. Visitors are unlikely to be aware of the dangers on this road. The entrance to the site is concealed and narrow and will be difficult for larger vehicles to negotiate. This includes the vehicle to empty the proposed cesspit. There is an inadequate visibility splay for vehicles exiting the site.

- There are no facilities on the site, or in close proximity to the site, and campers will need to leave the site to visit shops, pubs, restaurants and tourism facilities.
- Impact on the landscape. This elevated site will be highly visible from the M5, West Buckland Church and Gerbstone Lane and will be a blot on the landscape which is on the edge of an AONB.
- Overlooking and loss of privacy to Calways Cottages. The site is very close to Calways Cottages and the pitches will have a direct line of sight into the properties.
- Noise, disturbance and smells resulting from the proposed development. The site is close to several residential properties and there will be no one on site to manage it.
- Inadequate details about foul waste disposal and how this will be used in conjunction with toilet facilities, showers and sanitation.
- No evidence that the impact on the environment has been considered.

07/21/0021 Neighbouring parish application Replacement and relocation of greenhouse at Middle Stoford, Stoford Land, West Buckland. No comment.

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

46/21/0017 Conversion of an outbuilding into an annexe at Chelston Manor, Chelston Road, Wellington. Decision: conditional approval granted.

46/21/0018/LB Conversion of an outbuilding into an annexe at Chelston Manor, Chelston Road, Wellington. Decision: conditional approval granted.

c) Any other planning matters. There were no other planning matters.

The members of the public left the meeting.

101/10/21. Highways.

a) To note any required work to be reported to SCC. It was reported that the surface of Calways Lane is breaking up. This is a heavily used road and it will be reported to Highways.

b) To receive an update on any outstanding highways work. Flooding in Silver Street, by Frogs Lane. Following the Clerk's email letter of complaint to Highways in which Cllr David Fothergill, Leader of SCC, and Cllr John Woodman, SCC Cabinet member for transport were included there has finally been a reply from Gwyn Hughes, Assistant Highways Service Manager. He said that historically, Silver Street has been widened in places and there has been some re-alignment of the highway, so it is difficult to know exactly the course of the drainage system and how the visible gullies are connected. Since his last email, the area Highways Superintendent (AHS) has undertaken a number of additional actions to try to resolve the highway flooding, including jetting, replacing a number of seized gully lids and a site meeting to better understand where the drainage system outfalls. What they do know is that when the highway floods, it does recede slowly so they are hoping there is an outfall which only needs to be

jetted out to restore full flow. During the last site meeting the AHS found a gully set deep in the verge outside number 3 Silver Street that they weren't aware of. The lid is seized, so they have works planned during the upcoming half term week to replace the gully lid and dig in a new grip to the gully. They are hoping that when they remove the old lid, it will give them some clues on where the outfall location might be. If this is not successful, then they will have to plan and install a new outfall system, which will most probably take a course north along Silver Street and join into a system on the outskirts of the village (Meadow Bank), where they know there is a viable outfall. If this is the case, then the earliest they could plan and install this system would be the 2023-24 financial year, as all of next year's schemes have been committed. Mr Hughes said he had checked their reporting system and the flooding issue outside the Village Hall was first reported in February 2020, there being a total of 6 complaints since then. On each occasion, they have attended and found there is no threat of flooding to residential housing and the AHS has carried out a reactive intervention to try to alleviate the situation. They are not aware what event has materially affected the outfall on this drainage system since 2020, it could be a farmer digging his field, or works by another utility. It could be that with the increased frequency of heavy and prolonged rainfall events, the outfall is longer able to cope with the increased volumes of water. He appreciated the Parish Council's frustrations, but as an organisation that has had to adhere with new rules in relation to safe working resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, they are at least 6 months behind on their minor depot schemes. Added to this, due to the school in West Buckland, they can only get a permit to work along Silver Street during school holidays, so they have had to wait their turn to book in their works. Cllr Ms Drury said she had complained three times herself and Frogs Lane residents have also complained. She felt the time frame was too long and not enough. The Clerk said she had not seen this work included in the roadworks and traffic restrictions alert for this week, only the work at Dyers Close. Cllr Thorne said he wasn't getting a response from Highways.

It was noted that Willowbrook Nurseries had been flooded during a recent spell of heavy rain.

b) Update on requests to Highways for a speed check, dropped kerb and 40 mph speed limit request. Kate Brown has still not replied about when the speed check will be carried out or whether she has driven the route where the 40mph speed limit is requested. Work has started on the dropped kerb at Dyers Close and it is hoped that the one requested for Silver Street/Frogs Lane will also be done.

c) Update on fingerpost sign refurbishment. The small fingerpost sign at Chelston has been painted. The next signs to be painted will be the ones at Ham and Steart Barton and the one at Crossways will be left for now.

e) Update on any work carried out to alleviate the flooding risk at Park Bridge, Sawyers Hill. The watercourse at the bottom of Sawyers Hill has been cleared on the motorway side of Park Bridge but not the other side.

f) Any other highways matters. Cllr Bellamy reported that cars are parking on the chevron markings beside the school. He will report this.

102/10/21. To note any reports from:

a) County Cllr. Cllr Thorne's written report was circulated prior to the meeting.

Following the murder of Sir David Amess MP he spoke about the abuse that he had received as a councillor.

b) District Cllr. Although Cllr Habgood was not able to attend the meeting he had emailed the Clerk to say that the grass cutting and grounds maintenance problems at Ham and Lee Park have been resolved and a new maintenance plan has been put in place.

SWT was asked to create a parished area for Taunton but councillors have gone against officer and QC advice by creating a mini District Council/new super council which will take in the parishes around Taunton a Community Government review will be necessary but this cannot be done by May 2022 when elections for the new Somerset Council will be held.

c) Police. A Police Report from PCSO Hallett was circulated on 20th October. He reported that in the last 28 days the overall number of calls to AW053 (Wellington town centre beat) were 259, 7 of these calls were to West Buckland, These consisted of 3 calls to the care home, 2 road related, 1 contact record and 1 domestic. PCSO Hallett also circulated the Wellington Neighbourhood Policing Team Newsletter for September/October 2021. As of 10th November PCSO Hallett will be working in a new role for 3 months.

d) Emergency preparedness training for Somerset residents. Cllr Mitton reported that there had been four Zoom sessions. He had attended two and watched the recordings of the other two and it was mostly about flooding. There was information about looking after volunteers but nothing about recruiting them and it seemed that they were expecting Covid-19 volunteers to continue helping. Emergency plans can be produced for parishes and other emergencies can be responded to in a similar way to flooding. Emergency Plans don't have to be limited to parish boundaries. Cllr Ms Drury suggested contacting Avon & Somerset Emergency Planning to see what they have got in their local plan that would affect the parish.

f) Any other reports. Cllr Mitton reported that SCC had held a conference at Sedgemoor Livestock Centre as part of their planning for the new unitary council. He had also attended an advisory board meeting. This board will oversee the community boards and Town and Parish Councils. There will be 15 – 20 Local Community Networks throughout Somerset and they will be a committee of the new council with direct responsibility to it. They will include Unitary Councillors, the Police, Health, Town and Parish Councils and community groups and the Council is talking about how to devolve responsibilities down to these boards. There were speakers from Wiltshire at the Sedgemoor conference who talked about where networks were working well and they gave examples of highways, older people improvements and dementia friendly. Others were not so successful and this was where decisions were made for communities and were pushed through as being the best for the community. When that happens, people disengage. Cllr Thorne said they wouldn't be able to enact a decision unless the majority of unitary councillors were in favour. Cllr Ms Drury said that every parish councillor did this voluntarily and if responsibilities start getting devolved down to them then they as volunteers will be leaving. In Cornwall town and parish council precepts have gone up 150% since they became a unitary authority. One named councillor from each parish will be expected to be part of the community network but Cllr Mitton said he couldn't see that happening. He will be attending the next area board meeting at the end of November.

Taunton is the only area of Somerset without a town or parish council and parishing this area has been strongly resisted in the past. A working group of

eight District Councillors looked at creating a town council for the unparished area and late in the discussion it was suggested that other parishes might want to join in. Against advice it was decided by a small majority to consult with surrounding parishes. The idea of consulting was not even on the Council agenda. It might take too long now to create a town council for Taunton in time for elections. The latest information is that there will be eighty councillors for the new Somerset Council and divisions will need to be reorganised.

Cllr Thorne left the meeting.

103/10/21. Finance:

a) To agree and authorise any payments. It was resolved to agree the following payments: Mrs J Larcombe - £313.00 Clerk's salary and expenses (Payment ref: 2122/25)

Nigel Richards - £195.00 Grass cutting War Memorial, Church Drive, Peacocks Close and Silver St Green. Trimming footpaths (Payment ref: 2122/26).

Somerset West & Taunton Council - £732.60 Cutting playing field and play area and emptying dog bin 01.07.21 – 30.09.21 (Payment ref: 2122/27).

West Buckland Village Hall Trust - £45.25 room hire May – September (Payment ref: 2122/28)

b) To note the receipt of the Parish Grant 2021-22 from SW&T and CIL Funding. £1,705.00 Parish Grant 2021-22 has been received. This is £800 Churchyard Grant, £735.00 playing field grant and £150.00 footpath grant. A CIL payment of £849.10 has been received. This is the 1st of 2 instalments from planning application 46/18/0005 Morrishes Farm.

c) To note the bank account balance. On 26.10.21 the Current account balance was £8,075.05 and the Instant Access account balance was £21,686.98.

d) To agree to pay a grant of £1250 to West Buckland PCC. It was agreed to pay a grant of £1,250.00 towards the upkeep of the Churchyard for 2021-22 (Payment ref: 2122/29).

e) To agree to pay a grant of £100 to Taunton & District CAB. It was agreed to pay a grant of £100 towards the provision of services and support to West Buckland residents (payment ref: 2122/30).

f) To agree the amount of the donation to the Royal British Legion. The Remembrance wreath is still in a good condition and will be used again this year. It was agreed to give the RBL a donation of £50.00 (Payment ref: 2122/31).

g) To compare receipts and payments against budget for the first half of 2021-22. The report was circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Miss Drury asked whether any of the CIL funds needed to be spent very soon and the Clerk confirmed they did not.

104/10/21. Playing Field:

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

b) To discuss options for replacing the litter bin in the playing field. SWT has quoted £500 to replace the litter bin in the play area with a bin that has a section for waste and another for cans and plastic. The cost of emptying the new bin weekly will be £6 + VAT per collection. It was agreed to accept both quotes. The new bin will be sited so that it can easily be used by people using the playing field and the play area and the bin in the play area will be removed. The Parish

Council will not take any responsibility for emptying the bin outside of the village hall and that will be confirmed with the committee.

c) Update on planting commemorative tree/s for the Platinum Jubilee. It was agreed to purchase a Acer Campestre Queen Elizabeth. This is the same as was planted for the Diamond Jubilee. West Buckland WI are considering which type of tree that they would like to plant.

d) To discuss planting fruit trees in the playing field. There was further discussion on planting fruit trees in the playing field and it was suggested that consideration should be given to planting a copse of trees in one are rather than planting around the edges. There will be further discussion at the next meeting.

e) Update on consultations. No update.

105/10/21. Footpaths: to discuss any footpath matters. Cllr Mitton will soon be meeting with the Footpath Warden. The surface at Footpath 14/32 at Ruggin has been further damaged by a recent heavy deluge of rain.

106/10/21. Arrangements for Remembrance Sunday. There will be a short service at the War Memorial at 10.45am on 14th November. Cllr Silverlight will read out the names of those from the parish that died in WW1 and 2. The Council has made a donation to the Royal British Legion and the Remembrance wreath, which is still in a good condition, will be laid again this year.

107/10/21. Correspondence. There was no further correspondence.

108/10/21. Any urgent business at the Chairman's discretion. There was no urgent business.

109/10/21. Date and arrangements for the next meeting. The next meeting will be held on 30th November 2021 in the Committee Room at West Buckland Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm.

Signed
Chair

Date