

WEST BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

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The Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 30th August 2022 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room, West Buckland Village Hall.

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

In attendance: County Cllrs R Henley, Mr D Mitton – Parish Paths Liaison Officer, one member of the public and the Clerk, Mrs J Larcombe.

67/08/22. To accept apologies for absence. Apologies were accepted from Cllr Bellamy. Apologies were received from Cllr Ms Wakefield and PCSO Bramley.

68/08/22. Disclosure of interest in items on the agenda. There were no disclosures.

69/08/22. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 26/07/22 as an accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and were duly signed by the Chair.

70/08/22. Matters arising from the minutes not covered by the agenda. No matters arising.

71/08/22. Update on broadband issues. Cllr Ms Drury gave an update on her recent email correspondence with Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) regarding the way forward to improve connectivity to her property. The replies contained incorrect information about the withdrawal of the Gigabit voucher scheme for properties in her area and they are claiming the community pulled the scheme. This has left her frustrated and believing that CDS have no interest in 'Connecting' her to anything. She still has not had a reply from Rebecca Pow MP. The Clerk reported that she had contacted the Airband Community Liaison Officer to invite him to a Parish Council meeting to answer questions about their plans for the area but he is unable to do that until November. Cllr Ms Drury was doubtful that anything would change.

72/08/22. Reports

a) County Councillor. Cllr Henley reported that when he had been elected, he had been surprised at how little information there was about the formation of Local Community Networks (LCN), especially as they will be committees of Somerset Council. A LGC consultation is due to start very soon and it will run until mid-October. He said he was concerned about the size of some of the proposed LCNs.

Through its Council Tax Support Scheme SCC is proposing to reduce Council Tax by 100% for those most in need. Cllr Silverlight asked if this was part of the consultation. Cllr Henley said he supported the proposal and would comment if there is a chance to comment on this. Somerset doesn't have the best of bus services and in some places there is no service at all. SCC only received funding of £11million from the Bus Back Better Scheme which is nowhere near enough to implement the changes it was proposing. Cllr Henley is still trying to get a bus service provided for West Buckland and in September he will be asking parishioners for their priorities, in preparation for the new Somerset Council. In the town area of Taunton there is a flat fare of £1. Cllr Silverlight said that he came from London and is envious of the bus fares there. The Taunton Park and Ride service will have a flat rate fare of £1 when charges come back. Cllr Drury noted that someone had told her that it had cost them £24 for 3 return bus fares from Wellington to Taunton.

Cllr Nutt asked who would decide which LCN a parish would go into as he had noticed the Exmoor LCN was made up of 19 parishes. Cllr Henley said that would be part of the consultation process. There needs to be some central approach and a decision also needs to be made about how many town/parish councillors will be on them and the voting rights. It was recognised that the LCNs will evolve and might be different after a few years. The boundaries and independence of parishes need to be respected. The LCNs could be important on framing the Council's policies.

Cllr Henley left the meeting.

b) District Councillor. No report

c) Police. PCSO Bramley had sent his apologies for the meeting and reported that since the last parish council meeting there has been no crime in the village reported to police. There was one report of ASB and one road related offence dealt with by officers in August. The beat team have been very busy at this peak time of year and have been dealing with a large number of incidents in and around Wellington. He will forward the sergeant's report for the Wellington beats.

73/08/22. Democratic Period. Further to an email to the Parish Council about planning application 46/22/11, a neighbour spoke about omissions in the application. He said he had nothing against the application in principle but was concerned that it doesn't mention the Agricultural Occupancy Condition (AOC) on the property, which has been sold separately from the farmland. He has made the planning officer aware of the AOC, which was one of several conditions imposed when the application to build the property was approved in the late 1970's. An AOC should have implications for the size and style of the dwelling proposed. He also explained that the entrance to the property would be changing and said he was concerned about how much hedgerow would be lost as a result. He felt no regard had been given to wildlife as the hedgerow was full of dormice.

74/08/22. Planning:

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

46/22/0010 Erection of a single storey extension to the front of The Old Barn, Morrishes Farm, West Buckland. No comment.

46/22/0011 Demolition of bungalow and erection of 1 No. dwelling and garage at

Catsbear Farm, Ruggin Road, West Buckland. Comment: West Buckland Parish Council recommend refusal for the following reasons:

- The proposed dwelling is too large for the site and its purpose as an agricultural workers dwelling. There is a significant increase in size from the existing dwelling which was approved with a condition for an occupancy linked to agriculture, under planning policy with limits for floor sizes. The application does not mention the AOC.
- Concern about the design/appearance and proposed materials on a site in a Special Landscape Area and adjacent to an AONB
- The application does not include a renewable energy source.
- There is a pond 150 metres from the proposed dwelling.

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

46/22/0009/AGN. Application to determine if prior approval is required for excavations or deposits of waste material reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture on 2 agricultural fields south and east of Park Lane, Hockholler. Decision of planning permission required, not AGN.

The decision was noted. There was concern that there might be activities on this site which the owners don't have permission for. These will be reported to planning enforcement.

c) Update on Planning Enforcement case E/0120/46/22. The Planning Enforcement Officer has reported that he has visited the site and given planning advice to the owners. The structures placed on the land would usually require planning permission. The owners are liaising with the certifying body who accredited the site to ensure that the structures are easily moveable and temporary in nature, thus avoiding the need for planning permission. The Planning Enforcement Officer will be following this up to ensure compliance.

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

75/08/22. Highways

a) To note any required work to be reported to SCC. The '20' and 'Slow' markings on the road surface as you come into the village have disappeared and need repainting.

b) To receive an update on any outstanding highways work. Further work to complete the lowering of the kerb at Dyers Close is still outstanding. The replacement of a section of drainage in Silver Street and joining it into an existing system in the vicinity of Meadow Bank is not expected to happen until the 2023-24 financial year.

Bollards have been put on Calways Lane to try and prevent vehicles driving into the ditch.

c) Update on speed check. Kate Brown has queried the plans that were returned to her regarding the requested 40mph limit. It was confirmed that Mole Hill is the last property in Blackmoor, as you go up Buckland Hill.

d) To report damage to fingerpost sign on Buckland Hill. One of the arms of the fingerpost sign at Blackmoor FP10 28434734 was lopped off when vegetation around it was cut by a flail hedge trimmer. Cllr Silverlight reported this to Highways as the hedge trimmer was carrying out the work on a contract for them. The matter has now passed to Kate Brown. A new arm will need to be cast and the Parish Council would like an agreement that the contractor will pay for this.

e) Parish Council priorities. This was deferred until the County Councillor

consultation in the parish.

f) Any other highway matters. No other highways matters.

76/08/22. Footpaths: It was agreed to move this item forward on the agenda.

a) Application for diversions on Footpaths WG14/1, WG14/2 and WG3/3 which cross into West Buckland. Mr Mitton, Parish Paths Liaison Officer, told councillors that in practice footpath WG14/1 doesn't exist because Network Rail closed the crossing. Mr Mitton said that he had looked at this diversion application in depth and he suggested that to make this a meaningful diversion the PPOs for West Buckland, Nynehead and Bradford-on-Tone need to get together with a representative from the Environment Agency to discuss the way forward. Cllr Mitton will be inspecting a path per week and will report back to the Council by Christmas.

b) Any other footpath matters. No other footpath matters.

Mr Mitton left the meeting.

77/08/22. Finance:

a) To agree and authorise any payments. It was resolved to make the following payment: Mrs J Larcombe - £344.53 Clerk's salary and expenses for August (Payment ref: 2223/16).

There was no invoice for grass cutting for August due to the drought.

Since the last meeting the following payments have been made:

Mr N Richards - £210.00 grass cutting for July and cutting back vegetation on Footpaths (Payment ref: 2223/14)

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

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

The current account balance is £1,000.00 and the Instant Access Account balance is £28,252.30

£344.53 will be transferred from the Instant Access Account to the Current Account.

c) Option to opt out of the SAAA central external auditor appointment arrangement. It was agreed to remain part of the SAAA central external auditor appointment arrangement.

78/08/22. Update on application for funding for an EV charging point. The final details for the application form were confirmed and the application will be submitted asap.

79/08/22. Playing Field:

a) Any points to note from the regular inspections. An area of the rubber surfacing in front of the swings is continuing to break up while the Council is obtaining quotes for replacement. A dip in the ground is appearing in front of the first pedestrian gate into the play area and this will need to be filled before it becomes a trip hazard.

b) To discuss the cost of replacing the surfacing under the swings and whether this is the best option and best value for money. Quotes for replacement surfacing have been received and as these have been between £4,000 and £6,000 councillors questioned whether it would be value for money to replace the surfacing around swings which are so old. Councillors agreed that it

would be better to replace both the surfacing and the swings. The Clerk has started to obtain itemised quotes to replace the swings. The replacement will include a basket/bird nest swing.

b) Ordering of trees for autumn planting. Cllr Ms Drury reported that she had been trying to contact Adams Apples to discuss ordering the fruit trees that will be planted in the bottom corner of the playing field. The trees that will be ordered are 2 eating apples (1 early variety and 1 mid/late variety, 1 cooking apple, 1 pear tree and 1 plum tree. Stakes and tree guards will be included in the order.

80/08/22. Correspondence. Since the last meeting there has been a query regarding whether the Parish Council or Village Hall Committee own the car park between the village hall and the play area. The Clerk reported she had looked into this and previous minutes evidence that the Parish Council gave the land to the Village Hall Committee for car parking as this was required before TDBC approved a planning application for improvements to the village hall. Councillors agreed they would like to improve the relationship between the Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee and an annual meeting between the 2 organisations was suggested. The Clerk will contact the Chair of the Village Hall Committee.

81/08/22. Any urgent business at the Chairman's discretion (Not for Decisions). No urgent business.

82/08/22. Date of the next meeting. The next meeting will be held on 27th September 2022. (Nb: Two apologies were received from councillors and the meeting was postponed until 6th October as it wouldn't have been quorate).

The meeting closed at 9.40pm

Signed:
Chair

Date: