

WEST BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

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The minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 24th September 2024 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room, at West Buckland Village Hall.

Present: Cllr's C Silverlight, Ms S Drury and S Bellamy.

In attendance: Gideon Amos MP and the Clerk, Mrs J Larcombe.

48/09/24. To receive apologies for absence. Apologies were accepted from Cllr A Paul, Apologies were received from Cllr S Wakefield, Somerset Council.

49/09/24. Disclosure of interest in items on the agenda. No disclosure of interests.

50/09/24. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 27/08/24 as an accurate record of the meeting. With a small amendment to add the word project in 38/08/24 the minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and they were duly signed by the Chair.

51/09/24. Matters arising from the minutes not covered by the agenda (for information only). There were no matters arising.

52/09/24. To continue to discuss broadband issues in the parish. Cllr Ms Drury reported that she had attended a BT roadshow about digital phone lines at Morrisons, Taunton. BT say they are looking at other options for 'hard to reach' properties but they don't know what they are going to do. She has joined the BDUK Facebook group and has found out that Lincolnshire are doing wonderful things to deliver superfast broadband to everyone in that county. Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) are doing more for Devon than they are for Somerset, where it appears that nothing is being done.

The broadband issues in the parish were explained to the MP. He has received other emails about parishes experiencing similar problems and will write to the Minister for Digital and Broadband.

53/09/24. Democratic Period. No members of the public present. Mr Amos said he had nothing specifically for West Buckland but was attending to keep in touch as the MP. Following his election in July he is still trying to get one or two members of staff on board. A more strategic issue like broadband will get his attention and he will take it forward. He has already had emails about the safety of the Heatherton Park A38 junction and also about the cycle schemes between Wellington and

Taunton. Of the two schemes he thought the one along the A38 is the more likely to go ahead. He has been appointed to be a Liberal Democrat spokesperson on housing and planning in parliament and wants to strengthen protection for green spaces. He said Somerset Council needed to get a Local Plan in place. He has responded to the National Planning Policy Framework Consultation.

54/09/24. Reports

a) Somerset Council. No report.

b) Any other reports. Cllr Bellamy reported from the Wellington and Wiveliscombe LCN meeting held the previous evening.

The Public and Community Transport Working Group Chair provided an update on the work taking place in the group and proposed recommendations to Wellington and Wiveliscombe LCN on changes to the no 25 bus service from Taunton to Wiveliscombe and the slinky bus for passing to Buses of Somerset and to Somerset Council's Executive Lead Member and Lead Officer. These were agreed. Resources will be provided to promote the slinky service.

Fodo Higginson, SALC Community Health and Wellbeing Officer gave a presentation on the Community Health and Wellbeing Programme, Cllr Bellamy will try and make contact with the Village Agent that covers West Buckland.

It was reported at the meeting that the Avon and Somerset Police grant for SIDs is open again.

There was discussion on the priorities and areas of focus for the next twelve months.

55/09/24. Planning:

a) To consider any planning applications received by the Parish Council prior to the meeting. No applications received.

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

c) Any other planning matters. No other planning matters.

56/09/24. Highways.

a) To note any required work to be reported to SC. The weight limit signpost at the top of Sawyers Hill has been knocked and the sign has fallen down the post. The replacement of the faded white lining has started but the road markings at Budgett's Cross by Thomas Bros and the markings at each end of Buckland Farm Road have not been done.

b) To receive an update on outstanding highways work (Kerb at Dyers Close and drainage in Silver Street. No update.

c) To agree the letter to residents with a survey with options for trying to reduce speed. Parish councillors considered the letter/survey drafted by the Somerset Councillors and were concerned that they were asking for the views of parishioners without explaining that all of the financial implications of reducing speed would fall to the Parish Council and could result in a large increase to the precept for at least one year and an increase to the amount of Council Tax residents would pay. It was felt that if the Somerset Councillors wanted to be seen as the ones pushing options for reducing speed they should find some funding. The feedback on the draft survey from the councillors present was that as the Parish Council has already been discussing purchasing SIDs it needed to be a joint survey from both the Parish Council and the Somerset Councillors. They also thought the survey should be available more widely than just the village; there

should be an electronic version as well as a paper version; it needs to clearly state the financial implications and it needs to explain the timeframe should it be decided to increase the area of the 20mph speed limit. The draft will be shared with Cllr Mrs Moore and Cllr Paul and they will be asked for their comments. Having discussed the purchase of Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) councillors agreed that SIDs are an important mechanism for regulating speeding within the village and they could be used as an interim measure. Costings will be obtained and the purchase of SIDs will be discussed further at the next meeting. The possibility of a grant from Avon and Somerset Police towards the cost of purchasing SIDs will be looked into.

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

57/09/24. Finance:

a) To agree and authorise any payments. It was resolved to make the following payments: Mrs J Larcombe - £326.44 Clerk's salary for September and expenses (Payment ref: 2425/32)

H M Revenue & Customs - £37.80 PAYE for September (Payment ref: 2425/33)

Invoices are due from N D Richards and Countrywide Grounds Maintenance and it was agreed the invoices would be paid when received, subject to being checked by the Clerk. A bank service charge of £18.00 will be paid from the account on 30th September.

A transfer will be made from the Instant Access Account to the Current Account to bring the balance back to £1,000.00.

Since the last meeting the following payment has been made: Countrywide Grounds Maintenance Ltd - £135.17 playing field & play area grass cutting (Payment ref: 2425/31)

b) To note any receipts since the last meeting and the bank accounts balances. Since the last meeting there has been the following receipt:

Hydra EVC Ltd - £63.94, income from the EV charging point.

The current account balance is £1063.94 and the Instant Access Account balance is £23,681.76

c) To approve the payment of the Churchyard Grant. It was resolved to give West Buckland PCC a grant of £1,300.00 towards the upkeep of the churchyard (Payment ref: 2425/34).

d) To approve the payment of a grant to the Citizens Advice Bureau. A grant of £100.00 to Citizens Advice Somerset was approved (Payment ref: 2425/35)

58/09/24. Playing Field:

a) Any points to note from the annual and regular inspections. The Clerk reported that she had contacted Wadham Fencing, who had installed the fencing and gates around the play equipment, about the problem with the pedestrian gate. They had taken some time to reply and were unable to do anything for several weeks. The Clerk had contacted Mr Greenslade and he agreed to try one more time to adjust the closer. Should that not work he will try and find a supplier for a replacement gate that can be adjusted from the top. A replacement gate could cost £800 to £1000 but it would have to be replaced if that was the only solution. There were no other points from the regular inspections.

Cllr Bellamy has repaired the bench by the basketball post and there are no outstanding points from the annual inspection.

b) Any other playing field matters. None.

59/09/24. Footpaths: any footpath matters. No footpath matters.

60/09/24. To note the painting of the fingerpost sign in the centre of the village and the top of the railings around the war memorial. Cllr Silverlight and Cllr Ms Drury have painted the fingerpost sign and the top of the war memorial railings. They also cleared the moss from the concrete. Before and after photos have been shared on Facebook.

61/009/24. Correspondence. There was no further correspondence.

62/09/24. Any urgent business at the Chairman's discretion (Not for Decisions). No urgent business.

63/09/24. To note the date of the next meeting. The next meeting will be held on 29th October 2024.

Signed:
Chair

Date: