

Minutes of a meeting of Bucklebury Parish Council

held at the Victory Room, Bucklebury on

Monday 12th December 2022 at 7.45pm

Present: Cllr. J. Brims (Chairman of meeting); Cllr. J. Allum; Cllr. A. Hillerton; Cllr. M. Morgan; Cllr. P. Teal; Cllr. D. Southgate; Cllr. R. Ranken; Cllr. J. Munro-Ashman; District Cllr. G. Pask; Mrs. H. Pratt (Clerk).

Three members of the public.

1 **Apologies.**

Apologies of absence were received from Cllr. B. Dickens, Cllr. L. Clarke and Cllr. P. Spours.

2 **Declarations of Interest.**

2.1 **Register of Interests.**

Councillors were reminded to advise the Clerk of any changes needed to their declarations of interest.

2.2 **Declarations of Interest in Agenda Items.**

There were no declarations of interest in any agenda items.

3 **Public Session.**

The minutes of the discussion on planning application 22/02903/FUL for Mount Mist are documented under the Planning section of these minutes

4 **Minutes of the meeting of Bucklebury Parish Council held on Monday 14th November 2022.**

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 14th November 2022 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by Cllr. Brims.

5 **Chair's Report.**

There was no report from the Chair.

6 **Clerk's Report**

6.1 **Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA).**

The Clerk has been awarded the CiLCA qualification and BPC now has a fully qualified Clerk.

6.2 **Bucklebury Recreation Ground and Bucklebury Playing Field Charities.**

The financial figures for the two charities have been updated to the 31st March 2022. The trustees have also been updated to refer to the corporate body Bucklebury Parish Council, rather than individual councillors.

6.3 **Replacement Benches for the Play Park and green at Chapel Row.**

A WBC Member's bid application was submitted for replacement benches, based on prices from TDP (who supplied the other benches around the parish). It was agreed that once confirmation of the bid is received, the Clerk go ahead and order these benches.

6.4 **WBC Members Bids.**

In addition to the WBC Member's bid for the benches, a bid was placed for the defibrillator and cabinet to be installed in The Slade.

6.5 **The Oaks.**

The next copy of The Oaks will be published and delivered to all houses in the parish towards the end of January/early February. The copy deadline will be mid-January.

7 **Planning.**

7.1 **Planning applications which BPC has been consulted on by WBC.**

7.1.1 **22/02852/HOUSE – Marywell.**

Erection of three-bay garage with storage.

It was agreed that BPC has **no objection** to this application subject to the garage remaining ancillary to Marywell.

7.1.2 **22/02797/HOUSE – Tylers Lane Cottage.**

Removal of existing garage and replacement with proposed three bay oak famed garage.

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Whilst two hedges need to be removed and the replacement garage is a 71% increase in size on the existing garage, BPC agreed (with one abstention) to **no objection** to this application.

7.1.3 **22/02903/FUL – Mount Mist, Harts Hill Road.**

Demolish existing bungalow and erection of a replacement dwelling and detached garage/car port with associated alterations.

The bungalow to be replaced is a small 1950s bungalow.

The meeting was **closed** for the applicant to speak.

The site is the applicant's home. The proposed garage is on the site of a larger former workshop.

The meeting was **reopened**.

BPC agreed **no objection** to this application, subject to the garage remaining ancillary to the replacement dwelling.

7.2 To receive planning decisions made by WBC:

7.2.1 **22/02159/FULD – Red Hill House, Briff Lane.**

Proposed new extension, door surround and dormer windows, pool and pool house. Part change of use from equestrian to residential.

BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **withdrawn**.

7.2.2 **22/02340/HOUSE – Kennel Barn, The Slade.**

Single storey rear extension. Insertion of rooflights to front and rear elevations. Insulation and render to existing brick elevation.

BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **refused** by WBC.

7.2.3 **22/02453/HOUSE – Chapel Row House.**

Extensions and alterations to existing house.

BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.

7.3 Adjacent Parish Applications.

There are no new applications in any adjacent parishes.

7.4 North East Thatcham (THA20) Working Group.

Cllr. Spours submitted the following updates prior to the meeting:

- WBC passed a motion to proceed with Local Plan review notwithstanding gaps.
- The meeting on 2nd December went well with approximately 100 attendees. The attendees gave a clear mandate to continue opposition.
- District Cllr. Pask is encouraging WBC to consider the statement made by Michael Gove resulting in part, from lobbying by Laura Farris.
- The public Zoom meeting with Laura Farris has been postponed because she is ill.
- The need to give people information, which they can use in objections.
- Cllr Spours will be attending a meeting of Thatcham Town Council on the 13th December focusing on THA20 with representatives of WBC present.

8 **Budget.**

A draft budget was circulated prior to the meeting showing an expenditure of £37,735.53, excluding the meadows which is an additional £800. This includes election expenses of £2,500, and a further £5,000 to be ring fenced for the play area. The budget includes funding to return to three copies of The Oaks each year. The VAT expenditure should be offset by the reclaimed VAT from the previous year. It was noted that there is no estimate to the level of funds needed for improvements to the Fred Dawson Play Park. Currently, spending is exceeding precept by approximately £6,000. If BPC needs to have a fighting fund to oppose the Local Plan, the precept could be increased for one year and then be reduced in the subsequent year.

9 **District Council Business.**

9.1 Local Plan.

District Cllr. Pask commented upon three issues for Bucklebury in the draft Local Plan: the volume of traffic, the enhanced access to the AONB via a, so called, country park, and the lack of a defined gap between Thatcham and Upper Bucklebury.

Michael Gove, the housing minister, recently made a statement of intent that development should be on brown field sites and not green fields, and communities should be able to decide where

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houses go rather than having government figures imposed upon them. However, it will take time for this to become policy.

Objectors need to give maximum input to the Regulation 19 consultation which will then be passed to the inspector. It should be noted that WBC has pushed back and obtained a reduced housing number for West Berkshire.

9.2 Food Waste.

The first month of the food waste collection has yielded 173 tonnes of food waste across West Berkshire.

9.3 WBC Budget for 2023/24.

The WBC budget is currently being prepared. There is some uncertainty on the increase in council tax and the government settlement.

10 Parish Council Website.

The new website will be live by the end of the year.

11 Bucklebury Meadows and Hockett Field.

11.1 Replacement fence post:

It was agreed to accept the quote for the replacement gatepost between the small meadow and the middle meadow which has rotted.

11.2 West Berkshire Countryside Society (WBCS) Walk around meadows.

The walk around the meadows with members of the WBCS raised more questions than it answered. BPC needs to determine how it wants to manage the holly which is growing in the hedge between the small and the middle meadows; the hedge is very wide and will require specialist equipment to cut. Cllr. Munro-Ashman volunteered to inspect the hedge.

It was agreed that the strip of ground between the field and the hedges would be cut on alternate years, in order to provide wildlife habitat but yet prevent the hedge from spreading into the meadows.

A working party is required to remove the debris in the corner of the small meadow resulting from the fire.

12 Cemetery and Chapel.

12.1 To confirm arrangements for Cemetery Carols (Monday 19th December).

Arrangements for Cemetery Carols are in place. The Chapel will be decorated from 9.30am on Monday 19th December and tidied up at 9.30am on Tuesday 20th. A number of councillors and friends have agreed to make mince pies for the event.

13 Fred Dawson Playpark and the BMX Track.

13.1 Update on inspections on the play areas.

No new issues have been identified with the play areas

13.2 CCTV at the Memorial Hall.

The Clerk, Cllr. Hillerton and Cllr. Southgate attended a training session on the app for the CCTV at the Memorial Hall.

14 Wellbeing.

14.1 Defibrillators.

The defibrillators have been checked regarding the device recall. The Blade Bone defibrillator doesn't need to be recalled, but the Peaches one has been collected. The company doing the recall have found a fault on the Peaches defibrillator, so have sent out a loan defibrillator whilst it is being investigated.

14.1.1 Training.

It is aimed to organise the training for the new year.

14.2 Coffee mornings.

The next coffee morning will be on the 29th December 2022 at 10.30am in The Oak Room.

15 Environment.

15.1 Conservation Area Appraisal.

The Conservation area appraisal has been with WBC since April and is being reviewed.

15.2 Highways.

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15.2.1 **Speeding in the Parish.**

Ten people have now been trained to use the SID. The license has been signed by BPC, and now needs to be signed by WBC who need to give final approval for use of the device.

Cllr. Southgate asked District Cllr. Pask about the figures WBC obtained for the last use of the Black Cat device in the parish.

15.2.2 **Grit bins.**

Cllr. Southgate will inspect all of the grit bins in the parish. It is suspected that a number may need to be levelled up.

15.3 Recycling in the Parish.

15.3.1 **Clothes Bank at the Memorial Hall.**

There was no update on the clothes bank at the Memorial Hall.

15.4 Vision for Bucklebury Common.

Four ponds have now been restored: two in The Slade, Chapel Row Pond and the pond in St. Saviour's wood. The second pond in The Slade is supposed to be split in half, with one half being for wild life and the other for dogs.

16 **Finances.**

16.1 Cheques signed by Councillors since the last meeting:

West Berkshire Countryside Society	£500.00	Membership and donation for works in the parish.
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16.2 Cheques to be signed by Councillors:

C.R. Landscapes Ltd.	£2,167.40	Cemetery maintenance and cutting the small meadow.
Bucklebury Memorial Hall	£107.50	Rent for meetings and coffee mornings.
NatureBureau Ltd	£180.00	Remainder of ecology work for THA20.
Salaries and pension contributions	£956.99	November 2022 salaries, pension contributions and expenses.

16.3 Funds received since 10th October 2022:

Bucklebury Tennis Club (for Memorial Hall defibrillator):	£300.00
Cemetery (reservation of a cremation plot):	£200.00

16.4 To review current balances and financial position on the 10th October 2022.

Lloyds Current Account balance after all cheques cleared and lodgements received:	£15,875.36	
Lloyds Current Account:	£25,217.97	On 18 th November 2022.
Lloyds Business Instant Account for meadows:	£35,459.10	On 18 th November 2022.
Scottish Widows Reserve Account:	£32,752.35	On 7 th April 2022.
Scottish Widows Gilroy Account:	£4,580.27	On 7 th April 2022.

17 **Correspondence.**

17.1 West Berkshire Community Champions.

The closing date for Community Champion nominations is 3rd January 2023.

17.2 Fully Funded Electric Charging Points.

A company offering fully funded installation of electric charging points to community venues have contacted that parish council and offered to attend a meeting to give a summary of the way the facility operates.

17.3 Bucklebury Tennis Club.

The Tennis Club has recently obtained a renewed maintenance quote for the floodlights covering the next four years which is double the previous contract. As a result, BPC has been asked to make a grant of up to £2,000 for each of the next four years.

It was suggested that the Tennis Club explore the option of grant funding to change the type of lights which should reduce the cost of the maintenance contract.

Signed

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18 **Reports.**

18.1 **Planning Enforcement Training.**

The Clerk and Cllr. Allum have attended Zoom planning enforcement training sessions, given by the senior WBC planning enforcement officer. Essentially there are four years to enforce planning developments, ten years to enforce usage issues and issues with listed buildings are not limited by time. Determination of which reported cases to pursue is at the discretion of the officer. It should be noted that whilst planning is not discretionary, enforcement is.

19 **Clerk's Employment.**

19.1 **Amendments to the Clerk's Contract.**

The proposed changes to the Clerk's Contract were unanimously agreed.

19.2 **To approve the LGA Pay Award.**

It was unanimously agreed to award the Clerk the latest LGA pay award which is back dated to April 2022.

20 **Round Table Comments.**

20.1 **Bucklebury Community Bus.**

Cllr. Hillerton reported that three new trustees have been found to take the charity forwards.

20.2 **Vehicular incursions on the Common.**

The latest list of vehicle incursions on the Common has been sent to the PCSO.

20.3 **Traffic Assessment.**

District Cllr. Pask was asked to chase up the highway safety assessment around the Harts Hill/Burdens Heath triangle.

20.4 **The Avenue.**

Cllr. Allum is trying to organise a meeting with Paul Hendry (WBC Countryside) about the oak trees on the Avenue.

21 **The meeting concluded at 9.30pm.**

Date of next meetings:

Next Planning meeting: Monday 23rd January 2023 at 7.45pm – Victory Room.

Next BPC meeting: Monday 9th January 2023 at 7.45pm - Victory Room.