

# Minutes of a meeting of Bucklebury Parish Council

held at the Victory Room, Bucklebury on

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2022 at 7.45pm

- 1 **Present (in the Victory Room):** Cllr. B. Dickens (Chairman); Cllr. J. Brims; Cllr. P. Spours; Cllr. D. Southgate; Cllr. L. Clarke; Cllr. J. Allum; Cllr. R. Ranken; Cllr. P. Teal; Mrs. H. Pratt (Clerk).
- 1.1 **Present via Zoom:** Cllr. A. Hillerton; Cllr. H. Cairns.
- 1.2 **Apologies.**  
Apologies of absence were received from Cllr. Unamba-Oparah and District Cllr. Pask.
- 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**
- 3.1 **St. Martin's Club.**  
Rob Samson, the present Chairman of St. Martin's Club was invited to attend this meeting, but had a prior commitment. There will be an AGM on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April when the current committee of four members will all be standing down. Potential new committee members have put themselves forwards and will be elected at the AGM to take the group forwards. Cllr. Allum will attend on behalf of BPC.
- 4 **Minutes of the January Parish Council Meetings.**
- 4.1 **Minutes of meeting on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 7.00pm.**  
The minutes of the face-to-face meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 7pm were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by Cllr. Dickens.
- 4.2 **Minutes of the meeting on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 8.00pm.**  
The minutes of the virtual meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 8pm were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by Cllr. Dickens.
- 5 **Chair's Report.**
- 5.1 **Verge Cutting.**  
WBC has a policy to cut verges twice between the end of September and March each year, and actively encourages wild flower verges. However, Cllr. Ranken has observed WBC contractors cutting verges in June and July when they are full of beautiful wild flowers. Cllr. Dickens will contact Arthur Cullen, head of Countryside at WBC and clarify the situation.
- 6 **Clerk's Report**
- 6.1 **Annual Parish Assmby.**  
The Bucklebury Annual Parish Assembly will take place on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at 7.45pm in the Victory Room. The speaker will be Chris Boulton CEO of Greenham Trust.
- 6.2 **Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA).**  
As a result of the CiLCA course which the Clerk is undertaking, revised Financial Regulations and Standing Orders will be put forwards for approval at the BPC meeting in March.
- 6.3 **West Berkshire Heritage Forum AGM – 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2022.**  
Cllr. Clarke and Cllr. Southgate will both attend the West Berkshire Heritage Forum AGM on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February.
- 6.4 **Emergency Plan.**  
WBC has contacted parishes asking about the status of Emergency Plans. The existing Emergency Plan is very out of date. Cllr. Clarke and the Clerk will review the existing plan.
- 7 **Planning.**
- 7.1 **Planning applications to be considered:**  
No applications have been received from WBC since the Planning meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

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7.2 **To receive planning decisions received from WBC:**

- 7.2.1 21/03056/HOUSE Glebe Cottage, Bucklebury.  
*Detached greenhouse.*  
BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.
- 7.2.2 21/03010/HOUSE The Old Cottage, The Avenue.  
& 21/03011/LBC2 *Single storey rear extensions.*  
BPC had **no objection** to these applications which have been **withdrawn**.
- 7.2.3 21/02921/HOUSE Corner Croft, Hatch Lane.  
*Proposed front extension and new roof to original part of property with conversion of roof space. Single storey side extension with new entrance, porch and associated alterations.*  
BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.

7.3 **Donnington Alms Houses.**

Cllr. Spours raised planning application 21/03174/FULD for the conversion of two garages/stores at Donnington Close into an additional alms house. This application was supported by BPC. Donnington Close residents have contacted Cllr. Spours because they are unhappy at not being consulted about the application. The proposed parking spaces for the new alms house are already in use (this has been noted by WBC highways), and the “redundant” building is currently used by some of the residents as a laundry. It was agreed that BPC would add to the observations sent to WBC that support for the application is dependent upon laundry provision being provided for residents elsewhere.

7.4 **Adjacent Parish Applications.**

Concern was raised that BPC is not consulted by WBC on all applications which are within the 200m buffer zone of the parish boundary, this includes some applications which might have a bearing on the parish.

It was agreed that the Clerk would contact WBC and ask that BPC be consulted on all applications within the 200m buffer zone. The clerk will circulate information about such applications to all members of the council and then, in consultation with Cllr. Brims, determine whether or not BPC should make any observations on them.

7.5 **Emerging Local Plan.**

Cllr. Dickens and Cllr. Spours attended a meeting of Thatcham Town Council (TTC) at which officers from WBC went through the process which will be used for the Local Plan. When the next draft of the Local Plan is issued, there will be the standard six-week consultation time. Under questioning, the officers didn't have any answers on traffic or schools, which were not considered anything directly to do with planning. Whilst it was stated that all sites were options, there appeared to be emphasis put on the THA20 as if it had already been chosen. Whilst newly appointed senior officers were reportedly looking at the proposals with “fresh eyes”, questions were continually being deferred to Bryan Lyttle.

The combination of development proposals at Colthrop, Siege Cross and Henwick Park can be viewed as an alternative to THA20. District Cllr. Pask is encouraging WBC to consider the Colthrop site as it is a sustainable, partially a brown field site and has the benefit of a bridge over the railway, river and canal. Cllr. Simon Pike(TTC) has noted that the new NPPF gives a higher status to land within the setting of the AONB which would include the land proposed for THA20. It was also noted that it was EU regulations which determined the DEPZ. If the DEPZ was based on National Policy there could be more flexibility with the Grazeley site. However, the MOD has approved the EU regulations.

8 **District Council Business.**

There was no District Councillor's report.

9 **Platinum Jubilee Celebrations.**

There will be celebratory events in Hatch Close, the Village, The Slade, Berry's Road and at the Farm Park. The Farm Park is planning four days of events which will include a bar, BBQ and big screen. Tickets will be limited to 500 on each day and cost in the region of £14/£15. The Farm Park events will finish by 6pm/6.30pm each evening.

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There are discussions about a walk to the Coronation Oak and recording those who go and where they have walked from. *Subsequent to the meeting, the Oak succumbed to the storm on 18<sup>th</sup> February*).

The Cottage Inn are thinking of holding an event with a live band and BBQ on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup>.

9.1 **West Berkshire Council Civic Tree Planting Ceremony.**

Members of BPC have been invited to a WBC Civic Tree Planting Ceremony to mark the Jubilee at Chapel Row Green on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> March. Anyone who wishes to attend was asked to contact the Clerk.

10 **Parish Council Website.**

Cllr. Ranken and Cllr. Hillerton have looked at the current website and reported that whilst it is not the best, it is good and that Mr. Pratt, the webmaster, does a brilliant job. HugoFox is a company who host websites for over 400 parish councils and community groups including Compton Parish Council (comptonparishcouncil.org). They provide a framework for websites to be created and managed without the need for technical knowledge. The basic package provided is free.

The website should be the “go to” place for parishioners to find information. BPC needs to be able to see how many genuine visits (“hits”) the site is getting and two or three people need to be able to update the site in addition to the Clerk.

Cllr. Hillerton and Cllr. Ranken were thanked for the information supplied and asked to pursue the option further for the next meeting.

11 **Meadows and Hockett Field.**

The Meadows committee met on the 1<sup>st</sup> February and welcomed three residents of Broad Lane whose properties back onto the small meadows. Since the meeting Cllr. Hillerton, Cllr. Teal and the Clerk have had a site meeting and inspected the Morton’s Lane entrance to the large meadow and the track from Broad Lane. Cllr. Teal has discussed the project with Cllr. Southgate and has written a specification of what needs to be done. The Clerk will send this to contractors for quotes. The entrance track from Broad Lane, was considered to be satisfactory as was the barrier at the end of the track next to the pavement onto Broad Lane.

Cllr. Hillerton has met with a small group of parishioners who are interested in creating a small community orchard in the small meadow. They are currently finding out how other community orchards are set up and managed with an intention of being ready to plant next Autumn/Winter, by which time some grant funding will hopefully have been obtained for the project.

12 **Cemetery and Chapel.**

Concern was raised by the Clerk about some more significant cracks in the wall around the old part of the Cemetery. Cllr. Allum agreed to make a site visit with the Clerk and inspect them.

13 **Fred Dawson Playpark and the BMX Track**

13.1 **Inspections.**

The BMX track has required a lot of attention since the last meeting. The surface has been very soft due to the bad weather and ditches have been eroded into the surface over the humps which could be very dangerous if a wheel became stuck. As a result, the track has been closed and had to undergo more repairs.

Owing to the amount of time spent on the BMX track, the disclaimer notice for the playpark has taken a back seat.

Cllr. Hillerton asked if someone else could inspect the area from the 20<sup>th</sup> February to the 1<sup>st</sup> March; Cllr. Cairns agreed to do this. *Subsequent to the meeting, Cllr. Dickens agreed to take on this responsibility.*

13.2 **CCTV at the Memorial Hall.**

Cllr. Southgate reported that he had looked at the possibility of upgrading the CCTV at the Memorial Hall so that there was a better view of the playpark and the BMX track, and so that perpetrators of any vandalism or nefarious activities might be identified by the Police. It was noted that the images need to be of very good quality to be able to identify people. Cllr. Southgate reported that some CCTV systems have alarms on them that can be used to alert a mobile phone that activities are taking place. However, there is some question over whether the Memorial Hall trustees plant to maintain the internet facilities.

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Cllr. Unamba-Oparah is exploring the use of CCTV for the Victory Room and Recreation Ground, it was suggested that he be asked to consider the Memorial Hall in his research.

14 **Wellbeing Coffee mornings.**

A successful coffee morning was held in January. The next one will be on 24<sup>th</sup> February at 10.30am.

15 **Environment.**

15.1 **Avenue of Oaks from Chapel Row to Bucklebury Manor.**

Cllr. Allum reported that research is ongoing about who owns the land running from Chapel Row to Bucklebury Manor where the Avenue would be planted. Bucklebury Estate are currently clarifying the extent of manorial waste. It is estimated that approximately 70 trees may be required for the project plus compost and guards.

It has been identified that there are a significant number of trees missing on the main avenue.

15.2 **Defibrillators.**

The Clerk will order a cabinet and defibrillator for the Memorial Hall at a cost of £1,820. Bucklebury Tennis Club has agreed to make a donation to help fund it.

15.3 **Conservation Area Appraisal.**

The Conservation Area working group has met with Debra Inston (WBC Conservation officer) and will be producing the final report shortly. This draft will be circulated for consultation.

15.4 **Speeding.**

The Clerk will contact the suppliers of the BPC SID about training.

15.5 **Recycling.**

Cllr. Cairns reported that a further 7Kg of bottle tops have been sorted and are ready to be recycled.

16 **Finances.**

16.1 **Cheques signed by Councillors since the last meeting:**

Post Office Ltd £5.79 Streetlights 2/12/2021 to 4/1/2022.

Greenham Trust Ltd £100.00 WB CAB donation (match funded).

16.2 **Cheques to be signed by Councillors:**

Shelly Ashman International Ltd £300.00 Cutting of meadows hedges.

Triangle Management Company Ltd £100.80 Dog bin emptying at the Memorial Hall.

Post Office Ltd £27.65 Streetlights 5/1/2022 – 1/2/2022.

Information Commission £40.00 Registration.

1<sup>st</sup> Bucklebury Guides £200.00 Donation for hi-vis jackets.

Salaries, pension contributions and expenses £780.60 January 2022 salaries, pension contributions and 1 years Zoom license.

16.3 **To review current balances and financial position.**

Lloyds Current Account balance after all cheques cleared and lodgements received: £15,101.84

Llyods Current Account: £16,214.27 On 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

Lloyds Business Instant Account for meadows: £35,449.04 On 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

Scottish Widows Reserve Account: £37,748.98 On 4<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

Scottish Widows Gilroy Account: £4,579.81 On 4<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

16.4 **Grants.**

It was agreed to make a donation to West Berkshire Council for libraries of £1,850.00 and a donation of £250 to Bucklebury Tennis Club for coaching year 5 pupil from Bucklebury Primary School.

17 **Reports from other meetings:**

17.1 **Victory Room AGM.**

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All of the trustees willing to stand were reappointed. This leaves two positions vacant. Since the AGM two people have come forwards and expressed an interest in the positions. The projected revenue from the modernised hall is £8,000 to £9,000 per year; in the past the revenue has never exceeded £5,000.

17.2 **WBC Library Review.**

Cllr. Dickens attended the WBC Library Review and asked whether there is help for the small number of parishioners who aren't on the internet at home, use the library for internet access and are likely to need help/support. Often there is only one volunteer, who is issuing books. The current team are determined to take the library service forwards into the future.

17.3 **Chapel Row Patient Participation Group, the Patient Panel and Patient Voice.**

Cllr. Dickens commented that the Chapel Row Doctors Surgery and the Boathouse Surgery in Pangbourne cover both parts of West Berkshire and West Reading.

At an interesting talk given by Professor Ian Jones, Cllr. Dickens learnt that the Covid death rate is below the five year average for flu at this time of year, and that the omicron variant only affects the upper respiratory tract, whereas the alpha, beta and delta variants all reach the lungs and therefore potentially result in long term damage.

David Dean from the Pharmacy Committee in BOB (Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire) area commented that patients of surgeries without a pharmacy struggle with all sorts of issues with prescriptions getting lost on route to pharmacies and it is a constant aggravation. Patients of the Chapel Row Surgery are very fortunate to benefit from the onsite pharmacy.

17.4 **WBC Ethics and Governance Committee.**

Cllr. Southgate reported that at a recent meeting there was an interesting debate where officers proposed that they were not going to share all information with elected councillors.

18 **Round Table Comments.**

18.1 **Gulley at Mount Pleasant.**

Cllr. Teal reported that the gulley at Mount Pleasant is still blocked. There are a number of drains along Broad Lane and Little Lane which are also blocked.

WBC has responded to the reports that an inspection has been carried out, that remedial/cleansing work has to be prioritised on a risk-based approach and work will be included on a forward programme of works.

18.2 **Parking at the junction of Budens Heath and Harts Hill Road.**

It was reported that whilst the parking situation improved for a short period of time, it has now reverted back to the original situation.

18.3 **Motorbikes on the Common.**

A number of parishioners would like motorbikes to be completely banned on the Common and questioned whether a parish referendum might be an option. GLEAM (Green Lanes Environmental Action Movement), have carried out a huge amount of work to prevent 4x4s and motorbikes on land in other AONBs and National Parks.

18.4 **Common Clearing.**

The Clerk was reminded to try and obtain some traffic warning signs to slow traffic down in areas where litter picking is taking place. Talking to the PCSO was also suggested.

18.5 **Streetlights.**

Given the obsolete streetlights and the escalating costs of electricity it was agreed that the Clerk would obtain a quote for deinstallation of the streetlights for consideration at the March BPC meeting.

19 **The meeting concluded at 9.50pm**

**Date of next meetings:**

**Next Planning meeting: Monday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022 at 7.45pm in the Victory Room.**

**Next BPC meeting: Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 7.45pm in the Victory Room.**