

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BUCKLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Held at All Saints Church Hall, Upper Bucklebury on Monday 12th July 2021 at 7.45pm.

PRESENT

Cllr. B. Dickens (Chairman); Cllr. J. Brims; Cllr. A. Hillerton; Cllr. D. Southgate; Cllr. F. MacCallum; Cllr. H. Cairns; Cllr. L. Clarke; Cllr. P. Spours; District Cllr. G. Pask; Mrs. H. Pratt (Clerk).

Mr. Andy Higgs (Head at Bucklebury Primary School).

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. R. Ranken, Cllr. Unamba-Oparah and Cllr. T. Slatford.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

D1. Register of Interests.

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

D2 Declarations of Interest in Agenda Items.

There were no declarations of interest in any agenda items.

PUBLIC SESSION

PS1. Bucklebury Primary School Update.

Mr. Higgs reported that he had been Head at Bucklebury Primary School for the past six years. He is supported by a very good staff who are all embedded in the “Bucklebury Way”. OFSTED carried out a Section A inspection two years ago and gave a very positive report.

As a result of COVID, the school was effectively closed in March 2020. There were no requests from parents for the school to provide care during the initial closure. Good investment in IT facilities in the school, partially funded for Friends of Bucklebury School, provided remote learning and enabled contact to be maintained even though the school was closed. The school was able to open towards the end of the summer term with the help of support staff for some year groups; all staff worked fantastically together. The autumn term ran relatively normally. In the spring of 2021, the school was closed again and video facilities supplemented the IT provision. The school opened fully in March 2021 and remains open. No support bubbles have been ‘out’ and the school successfully ran a sports day with a few spectators.

It is hoped that things will return to normal in the autumn term, after pupils and staff have all had a rest. As Chair of the Local Federation of Heads, Mr. Higgs commented that all pupils and staff are tired and in need of a break.

At the final staff meeting for the year, the next challenge for the school was discussed.

Questions were asked about how far behind pupils are thought to be as a result of COVID; the current year 6 are thought to be on target, but year groups lower down the school, and particularly year 1 have been more affected.

Approximately 50% of the pupils in each year group come from outside of the catchment area. The school currently has 112 pupils and a maximum capacity of 126. Year groups currently vary in size from 8 to 25.

MINUTES

M1. Bucklebury Parish Council Meeting Minutes – Monday 14th June 2021.

It was resolved that the minutes of the BPC meeting held on Monday 14th June 2021 were a true reflection of the meeting and they were signed by Cllr. Dickens.

CHAIRS REPORT.

CH1. Primary Health Care.

Signature

Date

Cllr. Dickens reported that he has had a conversation with Dr. Jimmy Lennox, principally about the NE Thatcham development proposal; representatives from the Chapel Row surgery and the Burdwood surgery are meeting with Bryan Lyttle (WBC Planning Policy).

From April 2022, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) will disappear and be replaced by BOB (a Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire Group) Integrated Care System. Dr. Lennox is keen to involve the community and BPC in the provision, but is unsure what exactly it will involve.

In West Berkshire, there is a trial using associate physicians rather than GPs. It is thought that associate physicians could take up to 65% of the GPs' workload.

There is some concern about how Chapel Row (and other) doctor's surgeries will operate after COVID, and how easy it will be for patients to see their GP.

CH2. Engagement with WBC.

Cllr. Dickens will attend a meeting with WBC about how they engage with the parishes and how they can improve their service. Concern over the lack of consultation on settlement boundary changes will be raised.

CLERKS REPORT.

CL1. Common Clearing – Saturday 24th July 2021.

The Oak Room is booked for the event. It was agreed that there will only be one skip which will be located at the Memorial Hall for this event. Ideally the skip will be delivered on Saturday morning and collected on Monday morning.

Cllr. Hillerton and Cllr. Clarke will organise and serve refreshments after the event.

Cllr. Clarke, Cllr. Southgate and Cllr. Hillerton will make cakes.

The Clerk will contact the Munro-Ashmans and enquire whether someone can drive round and collect sacks of litter during the second half of the event.

CL2. Carbinswood.

BPC has been contacted about 'Private' notices which have been erected in Carbinswood on a path which is being walked by local people. There is concern/fear that more areas which are not public rights of way, but have been walked for many years, may be completely closed off.

There needs to be evidence of use of paths for 20 years without permission having been given or removed at any time in order for a claim to be made for the path to become a right of way. In addition, some parcels of land have been registered under Section 31 of the Highways Act 1980, including Middlewood, which means that no new public rights of way can be claimed or designated on them.

CL3. CiLCA.

The Clerk has registered for CiLCA and has to the 31st May 2022 to complete the portfolio of required work. To date this has included looking at policies, as a result, the Communications Policy and Web Policy will be combined into a Media Policy and considered at the September BPC meeting. Other new policies and procedures to be considered at the September meeting will include a Complaints procedure, a Health & Safety Policy, a Home Working Policy, a Lone Working Policy, a Grievance & Disciplinary Policy and an Equality and Diversity Policy.

CL4. Parking at the Junction of Roundfield and Little Lane.

Enquiries have been made by a developer in the parish about whether any progress has been made with improving the parking provision for Sovereign tenants living in the bungalows at the junction of Roundfield and Little Lane, some of whom are parking on the grass.

It was noted that it is difficult to do anything without the full support of the residents of the bungalows.

PLANNING

Planning applications to be considered.

Signature

Date

- P1. 21/01357/HOUSE Oakbourne House, Chapel Row.
Single storey rear extension and outbuilding for garden storage.
It was agreed that BPC has **no objection** to this application.
- P2. 21/01690/HOUSE Briffons, Scotland Corner.
Proposed construction of a dressage arena (menage).
It was agreed that BPC has **no objection** to this application, but suggested that there should be a condition prohibiting lighting.
- P3. 21/01390/HOUSE Old Travellers Rest (Adjacent Parish).
Section 73 variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of approved 20/00852/HOUSE – Demolition of three unsafe timber outbuildings, construction of a replacement timber car port/garage, two single storey extensions to the rear of the building, single storey extension to the side of the building and alterations including modifications and replacement of windows.
On the grounds that this retrospective application does not reflect what has been built BPC agreed to **object** to this application.

Planning decisions made by WBC:

- P4. 21/01307/HOUSE 4 Briff Lane.
First floor dormer window to front of house.
BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.
- P5. 21/01214/HOUSE Oakbourne House, Chapel Row.
Conversion of loft space to form habitable room, incorporating 4 No. Velux roof lights to the rear, with window to rear gable, 1 No. roof lights to the front.
BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.
- P6. 21/00817/FUL Bucklebury Memorial Hall.
Insertion of external door to toilets.
BPC, as the applicant, had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.
- P7. 21/00304/CERTE The Scout Hut (Angel's Corner).
We seek a lawful development certificate for a storage container, wooden two cubicle toilet building and the associated cess pit.
BPC made **no comment** on this application which has been **approved** by WBC.

P10. Update from the Working Group on the Emerging Local Plan.

Cllr. MacCallum reported that, as of 12th July, donations of £4,370 had been received from 36 donors.

Clarity is being sought from the AONB who raised concerns when the site was submitted but have not objected to the proposal. It is hoped that someone from the AONB will be available to make a site visit to understand the impacts of the proposal.

Thatcham Town Council has now allocated £12,000 for the traffic survey work.

Weekly updates are being published on the Bucklebury Says No Facebook group, the BPC website, Twitter and Instagram. People are being encouraged to physically write to Laura Farris MP, so that she understands the local feeling. It is hoped that people will also write to Robert Jenrick (Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government) and Boris Johnson (Prime Minister).

It is understood that the Local Plan is unlikely to be delayed beyond October 2021.

Thatcham Town Council believe that the delay is because WBC think there are inconsistencies in their own policies.

Cllr. Spours and Julian Dobbins have met with Willie Hartley Russell. His team are looking at a long-term plan for the Common which is likely to consider the potential

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implications of the proposed NE Thatcham development. Cllr. Spours has spoken to Mr. Crookes at Englefield Estate; they are not currently doing anything about the proposals for NE Thatcham.

Posters about the opposition are being put up in Cold Ash and Midgham. Fliers are being delivered to individual homes.

Cllr. MacCallum has contacted CPRE to get some help with the environment aspect of the opposition. There has been a meeting with a landscape architect on a gratis basis which was very useful. Having worked on a number of similar cases he was of the opinion that an ecologist was preferable to a landscape architect. As a result, the ecologist recommendation is being pursued.

A group who fought (and won) on a similar proposal near Peterborough are keen to help the opposition group in any way they can.

The issue of education has been explored further by Claire Dallimore and it transpires that the developer will only contribute 50% of the cost of the secondary school, WBC need to purchase the site and it may not be developed until 2037.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

DC1. Members Bids.

District Cllr. Pask reported that the three members bids for BPC had been successful.

These bids will cover 50% of the costs of benches for the meadows, wildflower seeding in the Hockett Field and a SID.

DC2. CIL Bids.

Applications are now invited for grants for capital projects in excess of £10,000. The closing date for applications is the 31st August.

DC3. Oak Trees on The Avenue.

The oak trees on The Avenue which had been severely eaten by a mixture of winter moth and oak roller moth are now back in leaf. An ecologist from Alice Holt Forest has confirmed that this is not oak processionary moth. The moths have probably been in the trees for the last two to four years, but the weather conditions, this year, have enabled their populations to boom. In this country, preventative measures are not normally used, but on the continent, sticky bands are placed round the trunk to stop the females climbing up into the trees. The condition will be monitored.

The long-awaited tree report on the oak trees along The Avenue is due over the next three months.

DC4. Local Plan.

Cllr. MacCallum asked if WBC would tell parish councils the official date for the consultation on the Local Plan. It is understood that WBC will be in touch with parishes.

TOPICS

T1. Bucklebury Meadows and the Hockett Field.

Pete Cane will be cutting the hay on the Hockett field shortly and in the meadows a little later. It was reported that the small meadow is looking very good. The Clerk will organise a meeting of the Meadows committee.

The four benches already on order from TDP Limited are currently scheduled to arrive towards the end of August.

It was resolved to purchase two picnic tables from TDP Limited for the small meadow.

Half of the cost of these benches will come from the successful members bid application.

Flying model aircraft from the Hockett Field.

A member of the public has contacted BPC about flying radio-controlled model aircraft from the Hockett, having done so approximately thirty years ago. Cllr. Dickens proposed that this be allowed with some conditions. The proposal was seconded, but not carried. It was therefore agreed that BPC decline permission for radio-controlled model aircraft be flown from the Hockett Field.

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- T2. Cemetery and Chapel.
The headstone in the new Cemetery which had been laid flat for safety reasons has been returned to its original position. The Clerk will get it laid flat and attach a notice to it. A working party will be organised for a Saturday morning in the autumn.
- T3. Fred Dawson Playpark.
Cllr. Southgate was thanked for all of the exceptional work he has carried out on the playpark, rectifying the points which were raised in the RoSPA inspection. Cllr. Southgate has purchased the materials required to repair the chicane entrance to the BMX track.
CCTV – Cllr. Southgate has started getting quotes for an upgraded CCTV for the Memorial Hall carpark, BMX track and playpark. Thames Valley Police have given a mixed response when asked for guidance on specifications required for prosecutions. Cllr. Southgate needs to work with Mike Scholl to determine whether to extend the existing system, or install broadband and upgrade the system completely.
Cllr. Brims commented that the Victory Room and Recreation Ground committee are not pursuing installation of CCTV.
- T4. Wellbeing.
Coffee mornings will resume on Thursday 29th July in the Oak Room from 10.30am to 12 noon. The community bus will be available for anyone requiring transport.
- T5. Conservation Work.
The Conservation group had recently had a meeting and have another planned imminently. Debra Inston (WBC Conservation Officer) will be meeting with the group in early August to advise on the consultation.
- T6. Speeding.
Cllr. Southgate reported that he had contacted Graham Markham (WBC) and requested the data from the most recent installations of SID in the parish. As a result, it is understood that no data is available since July 2020.
A BPC SID (for which a members bid has been obtained to cover 50% of the cost), would enable us to download speed data and share it with who-ever we wish. Cllr. Southgate commented that it would be useful to get Peter Cane to make a tripod to support the SID, rather than attaching it to a post. The Clerk commented that a policy and risk assessment will have to be carried out for use of SID.
- T7. Recycling.
Cllr. Cairns reported that 113Kg of bottle tops have been recycled and there are a further 4Kg of tops to be cleaned.
It was noted that the clothes bank has been installed in the Memorial Hall.
- T8. Chapel Row Phone Box.
Cllr. Clarke reported that Angela and Jon Willis look after the Chapel Row phone box. The books have recently been sorted and thinned out, and it is understood to be looking good.

CORRESPONDENCE.

- C1. West Berkshire Flood Plan Strategy.
Cllr. Dickens commented that it is important that there is a linkage between our response to this strategy, the NE Thatcham proposal and the Thatcham Flood Forum. Cllr. MacCallum has been talking to Thatcham Flood Forum.
It was noted that there is information in the Plan about ditch ownership and responsibilities for clearing; it was agreed that it would be useful to include this in the next edition of The Oaks.
- C2. Consultation on Diversion of Bridleway Bucklebury 54A/Cold Ash 25A (Broadview Farm The Ridge).
It was agreed that BPC has no objection to this diversion.

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- C3. Boundary Commission Proposals for Parliamentary Constituencies.
BPC did comment on parliamentary constituencies proposals made in 2017. The proposed mid Berkshire constituency, with the exception of Tilehurst, is considered to be very rural. It was agreed that no observations would be made.
- C4. Platinum Jubilee Beacons.
Information has started coming out about beacons to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee in June 2022. Bucklebury has not had an official beacon on previous such occasions.

FINANCE

F1. Cheques to be signed by Councillors:

TDP Limited	£1,727.62	4 x Dale benches for the Meadows and the Hockett Field.
SSE Contracting Ltd.	£86.10	Streetlight maintenance.
Post Office Ltd.	£5.44	Streetlight electricity for June.
PCC Bucklebury	£36.00	Rent for All Saint's Hall.
CR Landscapes	£1,257.07	Cemetery maintenance & cutting of small meadow.
Bucklebury Memorial Hall	£420.00	Waste arrangements for litter in the play park.
The Alpha Xperience	£371.00	Printing of posters and fliers.
Salaries and Pension contributions	£684.52	For June 2021.

F5. To review current balances and financial position.

Lloyds Current Account balance after all cheques cleared and lodgements received:	£14,573.76	
Lloyds Current Account:	£19,483.76	On 18 th June 2021.
Lloyds Business Instant Account for meadows.	£35,446.98	On 20 th May 2021.
Scottish Widows Reserve Account:	£37,748.98	On 4 th April 2021.
Scottish Widows Gilroy Account:	£4,579.81	On 4 th April 2021.

REPORTS FROM MEETINGS.

RP1. Victory Room.

Cllr. Brims reported that the frame for the extension is now up and the steels for the roof were put in on Friday. The project has been delayed slightly by the weather. The partitioning has been put up in the old hall and the first fix will begin on Monday.

RP2. West Berkshire Climate Forum (23/6/2021).

Cllr. Cairns reported that WBC is keen for parishes to join the Greening Campaign which has four phases, each costing £50.00.

Bucklebury is already a member of the West Berkshire Green Exchange.

ROUND TABLE COMMENTS.

RT1. The Oaks.

The next edition of The Oaks will be distributed at the beginning of October.

RT2. WBC Governance and Ethics Committee.

Cllr Southgate reported that he is a member of the WBC Governance and Ethics Committee.

The meeting closed at 9.58pm.

Future Meetings:

Bucklebury Planning Committee: Monday 26th July 2021 at 7.45pm All Saints Hall.

Bucklebury Parish Council meeting: Monday 9th August 2021 at 7.45pm All Saints Hall.

Signature

Date