

Minutes of a meeting of Bucklebury Parish Council
held at the Victory Room, Bucklebury on
Monday 9th January 2023 at 7.45pm

Present: Cllr. B. Dickens (Chairman); Cllr. J. Brims; Cllr. J. Allum; Cllr. A. Hillerton; Cllr. M. Morgan; Cllr. D. Southgate; Cllr. L. Clarke; Cllr. P. Spours; District Cllr. G. Pask; Mrs. H. Pratt (Clerk).

One member of the public.

1 **Apologies.**

Apologies of absence were received from Cllr. P. Teal and Cllr. J. Munro-Ashman.

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.**

There were no points raised during the public session.

4 **Minutes of the meeting of Bucklebury Parish Council held on Monday 12th December 2022.**

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 12th December 2022 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by Cllr. Dickens.

5 **Chair's Report.**

5.1 **Report from Zoom meeting held on Thursday 5th January 2023.**

Cllr. Dickens explained the background to the Zoom meeting on the 5th January. Cllr. Dickens had been approached by Lee Dillion, through the Liberal Democrat candidate for Bucklebury, about speaking to Bucklebury parishioners on the impacts of the proposed NE Thatcham development. After discussions with Cllr. Spours and Cllr. Brims, it was agreed that the meeting could go ahead and that Cllr. Dickens would chair the meeting in order to ensure that it was politically neutral. It was then pointed out that this arrangement might be misinterpreted and impartial, as a result, all connections with BPC were withdrawn with the exception of using the BPC Zoom facility and the Clerk facilitating the meeting.

The resulting meeting was chaired by District Cllr. Jeff Brooks and generally stayed clear of politics. There was an attendance of approximately 76.

A further meeting run by Bucklebury people for Bucklebury people is being planned.

Questions were asked about whether the full council should have been referred to and kept informed.

District Cllr. Pask commented that he had been told of the meeting after it had all been arranged; he contacted Sarah Clark (WBC legal officer) for legal advice. She referred councillors to Section 2 of the Local Government Act 1986 on the prohibition of political publicity.

5.2 **Resignation of Robin Ranken.**

The resignation of Robin Ranken (representing the east ward covering Bucklebury Village and Chapel Row) has been received. His work on projects whilst on BPC has been very much appreciated.

6 **Clerk's Report**

6.1 **Replacement Benches for the Play Park and triangle at Chapel Row.**

Replacement benches for the Fred Dawson play park and the triangle at Chapel Row have been ordered from TDP Ltd and are scheduled for delivery to New Barn Farm on the 16th January 2023. Cllr. Southgate will remove the existing picnic bench from the playpark. Cllr. Allum, Cllr. Munro-Ashman and Cllr. Southgate will assess what needs to be done in order to install the new benches once they have arrived.

Signed

Date
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6.2 Co-option of a new councillor.

The resignation of Robin Ranken was received within six months of a Parish Council election, and therefore, parishioners do not have the right to request a by-election. The space will be filled at the Parish Council election on the 4th May 2023. BPC may co-opt a candidate to fill the vacancy until the elections in May. Possible co-option will be on the agenda for the February BPC meeting.

6.3 Dates for meetings in 2023.

BPC meetings are held on the second Monday of the month and planning meetings are on the 4th Monday of the month. However, the second Monday of April is Easter Monday, so the April BPC meeting will be held on Monday 17th April and there will be no planning meeting. NALC has advised that Annual meetings of councils should take place between the 10th and 25th May. It was suggested that the Annual BPC meeting takes place on Monday 15th May and there be no planning meeting in May.

6.4 Annual Parish Assembly.

It was agreed that the Annual Parish Assembly would be held in the Victory Room on Friday 19th May.

After a discussion on various different speakers, it was agreed that Inspector Al Hawkett be asked to be the key speaker on policing in the area.

7 Planning.

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

No planning applications had been received for consultation.

7.2 To receive planning decisions made by WBC:

7.2.1 **22/02572/HOUSE – Vanners.**

Revised retrospective application for a change of use of land from temporary site compound (formerly agricultural use) to incidental residential use.

BPC **objected** to this application which has been **refused** by WBC.

7.3 Planning applications taken to appeal.

An appeal has been lodged for planning application 22/01442/FULD for Middle Wood, Hatch Lane. This application was for the erection of a dwelling with associated parking and landscaping. BPC had **no objection** to the application which was **refused** by WBC.

7.4 Adjacent Parish Applications.

There are no new applications in any adjacent parishes.

7.5 Other Planning Matters: Bucklebury Farm.

It has come to the attention of a number of councillors that The Lodge at Bucklebury Farm, which was restricted to use as agricultural workers accommodation in association with the farm, has been advertised for hire as a conference space. Cllr. Spours will have a conversation with the manager of the farm.

7.6 North East Thatcham (THA20) Working Group.

The Regulation 19 consultation on the Local Plan was scheduled to begin on 6th January 2023, but this was stopped at the last minute and no new date has been published. It is expected to be 20th January 2023. The core members of the Working Group have met with Andrew Black (Planning Consultant) and Paul Gorriup (Ecological Consultant) to go through the tasks which need to be completed. The majority of documents for the Regulation 19 consultation are available on the WBC website, but they are subject to change until the official consultation begins. Andrew Black will be writing the official response from BPC.

The Working Group will be sending out information outlining reasons for people to object to the proposals on a weekly or twice weekly basis, with the intention of encouraging as many people as possible to object.

BPC is likely to recruit a traffic consultant to assess the impact of traffic on Bucklebury parish. The latest version of the plans include access to the new development from Harts Hill, on which there will be no highway improvements. The plans produced note that there will be an unquantified increase in traffic through villages.

The draft response to the Local Plan needs to be approved by BPC. This will happen at an Extra Ordinary meeting to take place on Monday 6th February at 7.45pm. It is anticipated that this report should be complete and ready for submission to WBC by the 10th February.

It is anticipated that costs, still to be incurred, to oppose the Local Plan will be between £13,000 and £15,000. This includes Regulation 19 response from Andrew Black, a traffic consultant and representation at the Public Inquiry.

8 **Finances for FY23/24.**

8.1 **Budget for FY23/24.**

Costs for the Regulation 19 consultation opposition are expected to be a further £6,000 in this financial year, taking the total, this year, to £7,780. Costs for the consultation for FY23/24 are budgeted at £13,000 which will take the budgeted expenditure to £47,424.

There is an allowance for an increase of 10% in the Clerk's salary; this is independent of BPC, and determined by the Local Government Association.

There is to be no increase to the ring-fenced sum for improvements to the Fred Dawson play area which stands at £10,000.

It was unanimously agreed to approve the budget proposed.

8.2 **Precept for FY23/24.**

After much discussion, it was proposed to increase the precept from £27,000 to £45,000 for one year only in order to cover the costs of the opposition to the Local Plan. This was proposed by Cllr. Southgate, seconded by Cllr. Hillerton and unanimously agreed.

9 **District Council Business.**

9.1 **Regulation 19 Consultation.**

The consultation was postponed due to severe illness over Christmas and the New Year resulting in the necessary documents not being loaded onto the website.

9.2 **Council Strategy Consultation.**

This consultation begins on the 13th January and ends on the 26th February 2023.

9.3 **District Parish Conference.**

A hybrid District Parish Conference will take place on Tuesday 31st January at 6.30pm.

9.4 **Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB) Integrated Care Board.**

BOB has a survey running until the 29th January 2023.

9.5 **Potholes.**

Councillors were encouraged to report potholes to WBC. There is a new reporting route on the website which includes the opportunity to upload a photograph of the pothole.

The bad pothole on the Thatcham level crossing was raised to WBC, however, it is the responsibility of Network Rail to fix. The response from WBC was unhelpful, implying that it was up to the reporter to contact Network Rail; WBC has reported it.

9.6 **Trees on Public Rights of Ways (PROWs).**

Cllr. Spours commented that reports of trees blocking PROWs are being swiftly dealt with.

10 **Parish Council Website.**

The Clerk circulated a link to the new website today. It is planned to make the new website live within the next week.

Information on the Regulation 19 consultation needs to be added to the new website in consultation with members of the Working Group.

11 **Bucklebury Meadows and Hockett Field.**

11.1 **Fire Survey.**

The Clerk will be organising a survey on the Meadows hopefully to take place in early March.

11.2 **Trees.**

The Clerk has been in contact with a tree surgeon about felling some of the ash trees in the meadows and some other tree work.

11.3 **Hockett Field Work.**

Signage at the Hockett Field and wild flower seeding need to be pursued.

Signed

Date
2023/3

12 **Cemetery and Chapel.**

12.1 **Cemetery Carols.**

Cemetery Carols raised £196.97 for the West Berkshire Foodbank, after the cost of mulled wine. The WB Foodbank will have match funding set up via Greenham Common Trust very shortly. A payment to be match funded by Greenham and consisting of the donations raised at Cemetery Carols and the £200 agreed at the October 2022 BPC meeting will be raised at the February BPC meeting.

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

There is a small group of mums who are interesting in raising funds to replace some of the equipment in the play park.

The bike track has suffered from erosion, resulting from use during prolonged wet weather and is therefore likely to need more money spent on it in the coming year.

14 **Wellbeing.**

14.1 **Defibrillators.**

The Peaches defibrillator is still with CU Medical who are investigating the fault.

14.1.1 **Purchase of defib for The Slade.**

It was agreed that the Clerk should order the defibrillator and cabinet for installation in The Slade. Half of the cost of this will be covered by a WBC Member's Bid.

14.2 **Coffee mornings.**

The next coffee morning will be on the 26th January 2023 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.**

15.2.1 **Speeding in the Parish.**

Cllr. Southgate has received in-depth training on the SID from the supplier. Nine parishioners have been trained in use of the device.

15.2.2 **Grit bins.**

Cllr. Southgate reported that all of the grit bins are essentially full, with the exception of the one at Bucklebury Farm Park which is empty. The grit bins in Byles Green, Paradise Way and Berry's Road need to be emptied, levelled up on paving slabs and refilled in order to get the lids to fit properly and prevent water from filling them.

15.3 **Recycling in the Parish.**

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

The Memorial Hall Committee need to discuss the clothes bank remaining in its current position; there has been no Memorial Hall Meeting since the last BPC meeting.

15.4 **Vision for Bucklebury Common.**

Cllr. Allum reported that there are plans to reconstitute the Bucklebury Commoners Association (BCA). BCA was originally set up in 1965 and was independent of the Lord of the Manor. There is a meeting on the 18th January to elect a new committee and discuss the new proposed constitution. Concern was raised about the independence of the BCA from the Lord of the Manor.

16 **Finances.**

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

TDP Limited	£1,034.60	Benches for the Fred Dawson Play Park and the triangle at Chapel Row.
Information Commissioner	£40.00	Information Commissioners Office annual fee.
Salaries and pension contributions	£2,242.01	December 2022 salaries, pension contributions, backpay to April 2022 and expenses.

16.2 **Funds received since 10th October 2022:**

Donations from Cemetery Carols	£290.18
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16.3 **To review current balances and financial.**

Signed

Date
2023/4

Lloyds Current Account balance after all cheques cleared and lodgements received:	£12,948.13	
Lloyds Current Account:	£21,156.73	On 20 th December 2022.
Lloyds Business Instant Account for meadows:	£35,467.21	On 20 th December 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 **District Parish Conference – Tuesday 31st January.**

The Parish Conference will be a hybrid meeting; anyone interested should contact the Clerk.

18 **Reports.**

No meetings have taken place since the December BPC meeting.

19 **Clerk's Employment.**

19.1 **Clerk's uplift in Spinal Column Points (SCP) in respect of the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA).**

It was unanimously agreed that the Clerk should be paid against SCP 28, rather than SCP27, now that she has achieved the CiLCA qualification.

The Clerk was congratulated on this achievement.

20 **Round Table Comments.**

20.1 **Erica Tipton (BEM).**

Cllr. Dickens reported that he had written and congratulated Erica Tipton on being awarded the British Empire Medal for services to charities and the community.

21 **The meeting concluded at 9.50pm.**

Date of next meetings:

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

Extra Ordinary meeting: Monday 6th February 2023 at 7.45pm – Victory Room.

Next BPC meeting: Monday 13th February 2023 at 7.45pm - Victory Room.