

Minutes of a meeting of Bucklebury Parish Council
held at the Victory Room, Bucklebury on
Monday 13th March 2023 at 7.45pm

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

Two members of the public.

1 **Apologies.**

Apologies of absence were received from Cllr. P. Spours, Cllr. D. Southgate, Cllr. C. Willett 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.**

No issues were raised during the public session.

4 **Minutes of meetings of Bucklebury Parish Council.**

The minutes of the meeting of BPC held on Monday 13th February 2023 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by Cllr. Dickens.

5 **Chair's Report.**

5.1 **Fire Risk.**

The Clerk has been in touch with Berkshire Fire and Rescue about obtaining advice on any precautions which should be taken in the Meadows however, they do not offer advisory visits. It was agreed that Cllr. Willett would be asked to talk to a retired fire officer in the Village and ask if he would be willing to assist.

5.2 **Parish Council Elections.**

Cllr. Dickens reported that Cllr. Brims, Cllr. Clarke and Cllr. Hillerton will not be standing for re-election. There was a discussion about how to recruit additional candidates.

6 **Clerk's Report**

6.1 **May Elections.**

Nomination papers for all prospective councillors must be delivered by hand to WBC Market Street Offices between Friday 24th March and 4pm on Tuesday 4th April. Each prospective councillor needs to have a proposer and a seconder from within the ward they are standing for. The elector number of the proposer and seconder can be obtained from the Clerk or when handing the form in to WBC.

6.2 **Bank Signatories.**

Cheques are signed by two separate councillors. Of the current councillors, six are signatories, of these three are not standing for re-election.

It was agreed to add Cllr. Allum, Cllr. Morgan and Cllr. Teal to the bank mandate.

6.3 **Peaches Noticeboard.**

The Clerk is seeking quotes from a handyman for restoration of the noticeboard. It was agreed that Cllr. Allum would investigate steel support posts on which to mount the noticeboard.

6.4 **BPC Email Addresses.**

A proposal/options will be put before the council at the next meeting.

CW

HP

HP
JA

HP

Signed

Date
2023/14

- 6.5 Donation to the West Berkshire Foodbank.
In October 2022, BPC agreed to make a donation of £200 to the WB Foodbank. Donations from Cemetery Carols after the costs of the mulled wine had been deducted were added giving a total donation of £396.97 (*updated to £401.97 following an additional later donation*). The Clerk has spoken to the WB Foodbank and they are in the process of obtaining match funding through Greenham Common Trust and would prefer the donation to be made using that route.
- 6.6 The Oaks.
It was agreed that the next edition of The Oaks would be published in late May, after the elections have taken place.
- 7 **Planning.**
- 7.1 Planning applications which BPC has been consulted on by WBC:
- 7.1.1 **23/00383/HOUSE – Conygree, Carbinswood Lane.**
Installation of two Air Source Heat Pumps.
It was agreed that BPC has **no objection** to this application.
- 7.2 To receive planning decisions made by WBC:
- 7.2.1 **22/02852/HOUSE – Marywell, Chapel Row.**
Erection of three-bay garage with storage.
BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.
- 7.2.2 **22/02903/FUL – Mounts Mist, Harts Hill Road.**
Demolish existing bungalow and erection of a replacement dwelling and detached garage/car port with associated alterations.
BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **withdrawn**.
- 7.2.3 **23/00013/HOUSE – Hazelbank, Turners Green.**
Carport.
BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.
- 7.3 North East Thatcham (THA20) Working Group.
The representation submitted to WBC on behalf of BPC is available on the BPC website and goes into detail on the issues of environment, ecology and transport.
Cllr. Spours has written a note to go out on social media, once all of the invoices from consultants have been received.
It is understood that just under 800 responses were submitted to WBC on the Regulation 19 Consultation.
- 7.4 Enforcement – Vanners.
The enforcement case on the use of agricultural land as domestic land at Vanners has now been closed. The domestic land has been returned to agricultural land. Concern was raised about construction of a track from the access to the agricultural land opposite Vanners, to the site of the approved barn. A large number of enormous lorries have been using the Vanners track (restricted byway BUCK 20) believed to be delivering materials for the access track/new barn.
- 8 **District Council Business.**
WBC has set a budget based on a 4.99% increase in Council Tax, this includes a 2% increase for social services which accounts for approximately 55% of the budget. The WBC Enforcement team is understaffed, but is actively recruiting. Whilst enforcement is a discretionary service, there is no point to planning (a mandatory service) if there is no enforcement. An enforcement policy has recently been produced.
- 9 **Common Clearing – Saturday 25th March.**
Cllr. Clarke and Cllr. Hillerton will serve refreshments after Common Clearing.
Cllr. Clarke, Cllr. Hillerton, Cllr. Southgate and the Clerk will make cakes.
The Clerk will make arrangements for someone to go round later in the event and collect the rubbish sacks and any larger items.

HP

LC
AH
DS
HP

Signed

Date
2023/15

	WBC are delivering six road warning signs to be deployed along the main road. These have been made up for BPC at WBC's expense on the basis that BPC stores them and that they are available for any other parish who may wish to use them. It was agreed that they be stored in the Chapel.	
	The Clerk will contact the Chairman of the Memorial Hall Committee about the very loose paving slabs in front of the hall which are a significant trip hazard.	HP
10	<u>Bucklebury Meadows and Hockett Field.</u> The WBC tree officer has inspected the split oak tree on land adjoining the meadows and suggested that crown pruning it by 1.5m all round will encourage the split to heal. The owner is awaiting the advice of tree surgeons. The gate post between the small and large meadow has been replaced. Now this has been done, both of the five bar gates between the meadows will be locked. There was a discussion about use of the meadows money for managing the meadows in perpetuity. It was suggested that at some stage in the future the surface around the other kissing gates may need a layer of scalplings. It was reported that on the 4 th March, the two lads who are believed to have started the fire in August 2022 were seen at the picnic benches with cigarettes and accelerant. Questions were asked about whether or not this was reported to the Police and whether it was reported via 101 or over email to the PCSO.	
11	<u>Cemetery and Chapel.</u> The Clerk will organise a date for a working party.	HP
12	<u>Fred Dawson Playpark and the BMX Track.</u> Cllr. Hillerton reported that there were no major issues with the playpark or the BMX track. Cllr. Hillerton has cut back the low branches which were on the fence. The barriers in the BMX track need to be moved to block off the short cut from the starting mound. It was agreed that this would be inspected at Common Clearing.	
13	<u>Wellbeing.</u>	
13.1	<u>Defibrillators.</u> The Peaches defibrillator is still with CU Medical who are investigating the fault. The defibrillator and cabinet for the Slade will be ordered this week.	HP
13.2	<u>Coffee mornings.</u> At the February coffee morning there were over 20 people seen enjoying the company of others. The next coffee morning will be on the 30 th March 2023 at 10.30am in The Oak Room. More help is needed setting up the event from just after 10am. Cllr. Morgan agreed to help.	AH HP MM
14	<u>Environment.</u>	
14.1	<u>Conservation Area Appraisal.</u> The WBC Conservation officer, Debra Inston, has returned her comments on the appraisal. There is a meeting scheduled to take place this week. Once the revised copy is ready, there will be a consultation and it will be available to members of the public via the BPC website.	
14.2	<u>Highways.</u>	
14.2.1	<u>License Application for the BPC SID.</u> The license for the BPC owned SID to be used in the parish was approved by BPC. The license was signed by Cllr. Dickens and Cllr. Brims, and will be sent to WBC for completion.	HP
14.2.2	<u>Speeding in the Parish.</u> Both of the fixed SIDs were reported to WBC. The Broad Lane fixed SID is now working, however the Chapel Row SID remains broken.	
14.2.3	<u>Grit bins.</u> Cllr. Southgate has asked councillors to check grit bins near them and to advise him if they need refilling.	

14.3 Recycling in the Parish.

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

The Memorial Hall has accepted a need for a clothes bank and is investigating one provided by a charity rather than a commercial one, which makes a payment to local charities.

14.4 New Benches in the Playpark and on the triangle at Chapel Row.

Cllr. Allum and Cllr. Munro-Ashman have installed the new benches; one in the Fred Dawson play area and one on the triangle at Chapel Row. The bench at Chapel Row is mounted on a concrete plinth which is not level. Consideration needs to be given to levelling up the slab or breaking it up and obtaining a soft mounting kit. It was agreed to wait for comments from users of the bench and what they might prefer. Having removed the original bench at Chapel Row, there are two surplus bench ends, which could be utilised if replacement planks are purchased.

14.5 Where to put the repaired Picnic Bench.

Cllr. Southgate has repaired the picnic bench which was removed from the Play Park. Whilst it did encourage litter in the play area, it was agreed to be the best place for it.

14.6 Update on Works on the Common.

Part of a new cycle path has been created from opposite the Memorial Hall, across Byles Green and towards Cemetery Road. Short lengths of fencing and gates have been placed across byway access points, so that the concrete blocks and Heras fencing, on byways with TROs, are replaced with gates which can be locked shut. A narrower opening exists to the side of each gate for legal users of the byways.

Work on the cycle path, fencing and gates has currently stopped as complaints have been made to WBC.

15 **Finances.**

15.1 Cheques to be signed by Councillors:

Bucklebury Memorial Hall	£77.00	Rent for 3 Coffee mornings, Common Clearing and 1 meeting.
C.R. Landscapes Ltd	£300.00	Replacement of gatepost in the Meadows.
The Alpha Xperience	£610.50	Printing of 895 flyers encouraging Reg 19 engagement.
NatureBureau Ltd	£240.00	Additional ecology work on Reg 19.
YES Engineering Group Ltd	£3,600.00	Traffic consultancy for Reg 19.
Salaries and pension contributions	£1,167.59	February 2023 salaries, pension contributions and expenses.

15.2 Funds received since 9th January 2023:

Cemetery Memorial permit:	£120.00
Donation to THA20:	£1.00

15.3 Transfer of funds from the Lloyds Meadows Account to the Current Account.

A balance of £3,124.00 will be transferred from the Meadows account to the Current account, this being the amount spent on the Meadows in this financial year.

15.4 To review current balances.

Lloyds Current Account balance after all cheques cleared and lodgements received:			£8,083.27
Lloyds Current Account:	£12,852.94	On 20 th February 2023.	
Lloyds Business Instant Account for meadows:	£35,500.45	On 20 th February 2023.	
Scottish Widows Reserve Account:	£32,752.35	On 7 th April 2022.	
Scottish Widows Gilroy Account:	£4,580.27	On 7 th April 2022.	

Signed

Date
2023/17

- 16 **Reports.**
- 16.1 **Patient Participation Group (PPG).**
 Cllr. Dickens reported that the PPG is looking for younger people to join the group.
 The next COVID vaccination programme for over 75s will begin in April.
 The NHS has agreed that by 31st October 2023, all patients will be able to access their records via an app.
 The Chapel Row Surgery is part of a four practice group including the Boathouse Surgery in Pangbourne, the Mortimer Surgery and the Theale Medical Centre.
 There is an NHS urgent care centre in the Reading Broad Street Mall which is open from 8am to 8pm. The NHS is developing a more cohesive way to manage the service it provides, using the same budget, including doctors' surgeries, the ambulance services and specialists.
 As of February 2023, the Mere Oak park and ride service to the Royal Berkshire Hospital has reopened, following its closure due to COVID.
- 16.2 **Burdens Heath Streetlighting.**
 Letters (or email) have been received from three households on Burdens Heath objecting to the removal of the streetlights and the way in which it was carried out. One household has sent a subsequent letter mainly on the basis that it is felt that BPC should take note of the decisions made in the late 1980s when Burdens Heath moved from Thatcham Town into Bucklebury Parish. No council is beholden to decisions made by a former council and it was agreed that the decision would not be revisited.
- 16.3 **Victory Room AGM.**
 The AGM of the Victory Room was held in February. Finances are healthy with a 76% increase in revenue on previous years. Lettings have made a profit of £3,000 and £2,000 has been made on events after donations have been made. Bookings are now taken over the website. There will be an increase in rates of 6% to cover the increasing cost of electricity. The rate for children's parties will increase by 20%.
 Planned projects include the patio area to the west of the hall, acoustic panels in the main hall and redecorating the Remembrance Room.
 Events planned for this year include the Bucklebury Beer Fest on the 26th August and a quiz night on 17th November.
- 17 **Round Table Comments.**
- 17.1 **Traffic Survey around the Harts Hill/Burdens Heath Triangle.**
 Questions were asked about whether there is any news on the survey. GP
- 17.2 **Tree Preservation Orders on THA20 land (bridleway THAT 3).**
 TPOs were requested on two oak trees on the bridleway from Long Grove to Thatcham in February 2022. Although the Clerk has requested an update from WBC, no information has been forthcoming. GP
- 17.3 **Burdens Heath.**
 Cllr. Morgan commented that he fully supported the removal of the streetlights from Burdens Heath. He questioned whether there could be gates (on the verge), or something similar, as you enter Burdens Heath from Cold Ash which might help to slow traffic down.
- 18 **The meeting concluded at 9.15pm.**
Date of next meetings:
Next BPC meeting: Monday 17th April 2023 at 7.45pm - Victory Room.
Annual Parish Meeting: Friday 19th May 2023 at 7.45pm – Victory Room.