

Minutes of the Annual meeting of Bucklebury Parish Council
held in the Oak Room, Upper Bucklebury on
Monday 15th May 2023 at 7.45pm

Present: Cllr. J. Allum; Cllr. B. Dickens; Cllr. M. Morgan; Cllr. P. Spours; Cllr. P. Teal; Cllr. C. Willett; District Cllr. C. Read; Mrs. H. Pratt (Clerk).
Seventeen members of the public.

1 **Election of a Chairman.**

Cllr. Spours proposed that Cllr. Dickens be the Chairman of Bucklebury Parish Council (BPC). This was seconded by Cllr. Teal and unanimously agreed.
Cllr. Dickens signed his Declaration of Office as Chairman of the BPC.

2 **Election of a Vice Chairman.**

Cllr. Dickens proposed that Cllr. Southgate be the Vice Chairman of BPC. This was seconded by Cllr. Allum and unanimously agreed.

3 **Apologies.**

Apologies of absence were received from Cllr. D. Southgate.

4 **Declarations of Interest.**

4.1 **Register of Interests.**

Register of Interest forms were distributed to councillors for completion.

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

There were no declarations of interest in any agenda items.

5 **Public Session.**

5.1 **Bucklebury Community Bus.**

The Bucklebury Community Bus charity was formed in 2016 as a result of WBC withdrawing transport to Kennet School for pupils from Upper Bucklebury. Parents are currently charged £77 per child, per term. The charity aims to cover the running costs of the bus and build up sufficient funds to replace the bus in approximately 10 years' time. It was requested that BPC support the Community Bus with £500 a year for the next 10 years. Questions were asked about how this would be further supplemented in order to purchase a new bus. In principle the request was agreed.

5.2 **Planning application 23/00938/HOUSE for Westfield Stables, Tylers Lane.**

This item is minuted under the Planning section of these minutes.

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

The minutes of the meeting of BPC held on Monday 17th April 2023 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by Cllr. Dickens.

7 **Vacancies on BPC and possible co-options.**

Cllr. Dickens reported that Lindy Clarke is willing to be co-opted to BPC for one year.

Cllr. Teal therefore proposed that Lindy Clarke be co-opted on to BPC; this was seconded by Cllr. Morgan and unanimously agreed.

Three further vacancies remain on BPC. Three parishioners have either been approached or shown a potential interest in these positions.

8 **Appointments and Responsibilities.**

It was agreed that all members of BPC would be members of the Planning Committee, who would determine the Chairman of that committee at the first meeting.

It was agreed that further appointments and responsibilities would be deferred until after a discussion about the structure of BPC.

9 **Corporate Documents and Asset Register.**

9.1 **Standing Orders.**

The Standing Orders were reviewed against the model Standing Orders and no updates were considered necessary.

Signed

Date

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9.2	<u>Financial Regulations.</u> The Financial Regulations were reviewed against the model Financial Regulations and no updates were considered necessary.	
9.3	<u>Risk Assessment.</u> The Risk Assessment was reviewed and no updates were considered necessary.	
9.4	<u>Code of Conduct.</u> The Clerk advised that the current Code of Conduct predates the last model Code of Conduct which was produced in response to the Civility and Respect pledge. The Clerk will explore options with a view to a revised Code of Conduct being adopted at the next meeting.	HP
9.5	<u>Asset Register.</u> It was agreed that the Clerk would add the CCTV, the two new benches and the defibrillator at the Memorial Hall to the Asset register for the year ending 31 st March 2023. The defibrillator in the Slade will be added to the Asset register for the year ending 31 st March 2024.	HP
10	<u>Insurance Arrangements.</u> The Clerk reported that the insurance is currently under a fixed term three-year agreement, which terminates on 6/5/2024, with Pen Underwriting Ltd, via Arthur J Gallagher Insurance Brokers Limited.	
11	<u>Dates for meetings for the coming year.</u> Full meetings of BPC for the coming year will be held on the second Monday of each month, commencing at 7.45pm in the Committee Room at the Victory Room. Planning meetings will be held on the fourth Monday of the month commencing at 7.45pm in the Committee Room at the Victory Room, however, the August Planning meeting will be on 29 th August (due to the bank holiday) and there will be no Planning meeting in December.	
12	<u>Chair's Report.</u>	
12.1	<u>New District Councillor.</u> Cllr. Dickens congratulated District Cllr. Chris Read on his election and welcomed him to BPC. Cllr. Dickens has already met with District Cllr. Read and raised the following issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antisocial behaviour (arson in the play park). • The condition of the roads and in particular: the flooding of Carbinswood and the resulting pot holes, pot holes in general, the inability of maintenance crews to repair issues immediately next to those they have been tasked to do including pothole repairs and painting of road markings, filthy road signs and ultimately getting better value for money. • Local Plan; it is understood that the route forwards may not be as straight forwards as had been thought. 	
13	<u>Clerk's Report</u>	
13.1	<u>Annual Assembly.</u> The Clerk reminded those present that Annual Assembly will be on Friday 19 th May at 7.45pm in the Victory Room. Cllr. Clarke and her husband will be serving refreshments. In addition to Inspector Alan Hawket, it is hoped that a representative from Chapel Row Surgery can give an update. It was noted that the two young men distributing prescriptions at the dispensary had done really well during and following the pandemic.	
13.2	<u>Timescales for The Oaks.</u> Articles have been requested for the next edition of The Oaks by Sunday 21 st May.	HP
13.3	<u>BPC SID License.</u> The signed and sealed SID license has now been received from WBC.	
13.4	<u>Chapel Row Bus Shelter Roof.</u> A quote to repair the bus shelter roof was approved. However, before the work can take place the vegetation growing from behind the bus shelter needs to be cut back. Cllr.	

Signed

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Allum will have a look at the work required and the Clerk will obtain a quote for the work.

14 **Planning.**

14.1 **Planning applications which BPC has been consulted on by WBC:**

14.1.1 **23/00938/FUL – Westfield Stables, Tylers Lane.**

Conversion of redundant stable to form one dwelling, car parking, landscaping and associated works.

The stable building is an equestrian prefab erected approximately 10 years ago on a limited foundation. It is not believed to meet the structural requirement of Policy C4. The proposed conversion to a 2-bed roomed bungalow with open plan living and bi-fold doors will cause additional light pollution. The associated paddock has agricultural use and is not equestrian.

The meeting was **closed** for members of the public to speak.

The following issues were raised:

- Prior to the stables being erected the site was a low land meadow.
- When the meadows became overgrazed, permission was sought for stables.
- The original application submitted, was submitted with a view to conversion.
- The site is a biodiversity opportunity area within the NWD AONB.
- The stables were granted permission with a large number of conditions to be in line with ENV 29, the principles of which are to maintain the dark skies and increase the biodiversity.
- There are “priority species” known to be resident near the site.
- The conditions on the original application specify 5 swallow boxes; there are only 2.
- Natural drainage on the site is known to be a problem.
- The current application does not include a change of use.
- There is an existing condition that there should be no field shelter on the agricultural land.
- The access is owned by Bucklebury Estate and shared with an access to Picton Farm land. Bucklebury Estate is unlikely to give permission for the surface of the access to be changed in order for it to comply with WBC Highways conditions.
- The applicants purchased the land for equine use and subsequently changed their minds.
- Concern was raised about the precedent such an application might set, if approved, for other stable buildings.
- All of the letters objecting to the current application are from local people; none of the letters in support of the application are known to be local.

The meeting was **reopened**.

It was unanimously agreed that BPC **objects** to this application.

14.1.2 **23/00813/FUL & 23/00814/LBC – Brockhurst School.**

Remodelling of the existing class rooms (within the existing converted stables) at Brockhurst and Marlston House Schools to include the introduction of new window and doorway openings, co-join neighbouring rooms and relocate existing wc provision.

It was unanimously agreed that BPC **supports** this application.

14.1.3 **23/00562/FUL – Oak Acre House.**

28 panels mounted via a ground mounted racking system. The panels will be pitched at 25 degrees with the highest part of the panel sitting ~2m off the surface of the ground. The proposed panels are ‘all black’ in finish to improve the aesthetic and also make the installation less visually obtrusive. The installation is expected to generate in the region of 11,202 kWh/year which will offset circa 2,201 kgCO₂/year (based on MCS approved carbon intensity values).

It was agreed that this application would be considered at the Planning Committee meeting on Tuesday 30th May.

14.1.4 **23/00878/HOUSE – Cyntra, The Slade.**

Proposed two storey side extension and storm porch and internal alterations.

It was unanimously agreed that BPC has **no objection** to this application.

14.2 To receive planning decisions made by WBC:

14.2.1 **21/01815/FULMAJ – 5 – 10 Paradise Way.**

Demolition of 6 no. dwellings and ancillary structure, and the erection of 10 no. new affordable homes composed of two and three bed houses, all with associated access, parking, amenity and landscaping.

BPC **objected** to this application which has been **approved** following a legal agreement between Sovereign Housing Association and WBC.

14.2.2 **23/00194/HOUSE – Thatchers, Chapel Row.**

New shed and LPD installation.

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

14.2.3 **23/00383/HOUSE – Conygree, Carbinswood Lane.**

Installation of two Air Source Heat Pumps.

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

14.2.4 **23/00566/HOUSE – Baydon, Little Lane.**

Single storey front extension and internal alterations.

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

14.2.5 **23/00537/HOUSE – River Barn, Marlston.**

Garage with storage over.

BPC **objected** to this application which has been **withdrawn**.

14.3 Adjacent Parish Applications.

The following applications have been registered within 200m of the parish boundary.

14.3.1 **23/00996/FUL – Hunts Cottage, Midgham Green (Midgham PC).**

Creation of manege and erection of equestrian store.

It was agreed that Cllr. Willet would look at this application and consider its impact on Bucklebury parish before leading on it at the Planning Committee meeting.

14.3.2 **23/00872/HOUSE – White Oaks, The Ridge.**

Single storey extension.

It was agreed that BPC would not consider this application.

14.3.3 **23/01020/HOUSE & 23/01021/LBC – Watroak, Midgham Green (Midgham PC).**

Two storey side extension with insertion of new rooflight into existing roof and alterations to garden landscaping.

It was agreed that Cllr. Willett would consider this application and lead on it at the Planning Committee meeting.

14.4 Local Plan.

Whilst there was no update on the Local Plan, Cllr. Spours sought approval to ask Andrew Black (the Planning Consultant) for information on the different options open to WBC, given that the Local Plan has been submitted to the Planning Inspector.

15 **District Council Business.**

District Cllr. Read reported that committees have not yet been formed under the new council. The first full council meeting is on 25th May. Cllr. Lee Dillion is the new leader of WBC.

The Local Plan has been assigned to Planning Inspector William Fieldhouse. The new Council plan to pause the Local Plan for 3 months with the intention of revising the NE Thatcham site. The current intention is to place 1,500 homes elsewhere, including the Colthrop site, 500 on brown field sites in central Newbury and new homes in rural villages in the AONB where parishes want them. The Council does not want to go back

to the beginning of developing a local plan with a call for sites because any resulting plan could take up to 5 years to be delivered.

It is expected that the revised Local Plan will be more relaxed about new 0% carbon homes in the countryside.

The new Council are aiming that all dangerous potholes are fixed within 72 hours of being reported. Work is being done to explore why much of the remedial work doesn't last. However, the Council needs to be careful not to increase the cost of the Volker contract.

The new Council aims to encourage more households to use green bins. In order to do this, it is hoped that those less able to afford green bins in social housing will have a reduced, or zero charge for green bins.

It is hoped to get assessments carried out earlier for those requiring social care.

Research is being carried out to try and understand why the number of Special Educational Needs (SEN) children has increased by 100% in West Berkshire. This increase has not been seen in neighbouring areas.

16 **Bucklebury Meadows and Hockett Field.**

Quotes are being sought for a replacement post on the kissing gate between the two main meadows. Work is also being considered around the kissing gate between the main meadow and the smaller meadow where the ground is low lying and often very wet.

17 **Cemetery and Chapel.**

The Clerk will circulate another doodle poll to identify a date for a working party to tidy up some of the graves in the Cemetery.

A former member of the council is willing to remain on the Burial Board, if it would be helpful.

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

One of the toddler swings was found broken on the 29th April and it has now been removed. It appeared to have been broken as the result of someone much too heavy for it messing around. Both toddler swings were showing signs of wear. It was agreed to spend up to £500 on replacement parts.

The RoSPA report mentions the surface multiple times.

No issues have been identified on the bike track. Only the grass on the edge of the track has been cut, ensuring that the grass in the gulleys grows long, deterring track users from making short cuts. The barriers need to be removed and the blue ones stored.

19 **Wellbeing.**

19.1 **Defibrillators.**

The Clerk is waiting for a list of dates (on Fridays) when the community first responder is available to run training sessions.

19.2 **Coffee mornings.**

Coffee mornings have been booked from May through until December 2023.

The next coffee morning will be on Thursday 25th May.

Any volunteers to help put the tables up and tidy up at the end would be welcomed.

20 **Environment.**

20.1 **Conservation Area Appraisal.**

A draft version of the Bucklebury Conservation Area Appraisal has been received from Debra Inston (WBC) and is formally out for consultation until the end of June. A copy has been placed on the BPC website. Any comments should be sent to Cllr. Clarke

20.2 **Highways.**

20.2.1 **Speeding**

The signed and sealed license has now been received from WBC.

20.3 **The Common.**

Cllr. Allum reported that there has been a meeting of the Bucklebury Commoners' Association. He will circulate the minutes of this meeting.

PT

HP

HP

LC

JA

Signed

Date

2023/29

21 **Finances.**

21.1 **Payments to be authorised by Councillors:**

YES Engineering Group Ltd	£3,600.00	Traffic consultancy for THA20.
Bucklebury Memorial Hall	£115.00	Grass cutting.
Triangle Management Company Ltd.	£101.09	Memorial Hall Dog bin emptying – April/May/June 2023.
West Berkshire District Council	£117.04	Bucklebury Meadows Dog bin emptying – April/May/June 2023.
Hampshire Association of Local Councils	£501.37	BALC membership.
Playsafety Ltd	£184.20	RoSPA inspections.
Externiture Ltd	£462.41	Repairs to Broad Lane Bus shelter.
CPRE	£100.00	Membership.
GLEAM	£15.00	Membership.
Arthur J Gallagher Insurance Broker	£1,135.33	Insurance
Expenses, Salaries, Pensions & PAYE for April 2023	£1030.73	

21.2 **Funds received since 14th April 2023:**

First half of the precept: £22,500.00

21.3 **To review current balances.**

Lloyds Current Account balance after all cheques cleared and lodgements received:	£27,830.23	
Lloyds Current Account:	£21,145.43	On 20 th April 2023.
Lloyds Business Instant Account for meadows:	£32,414.10	On 20 th April 2023.
Scottish Widows Reserve Account:	£32,868.17	On 4 th April 2023.
Scottish Widows Gilroy Account:	£4,596.47	On 4 th April 2022.

22 **Round Table Comments.**

22.1 **Verge Cutting.**

It was reported that the cow parsley is out of control and many verges which are sight lines need to be cut.

22.2 **Email addresses.**

The Clerk was reminded about the need for BPC specific email addresses.

22.3 **Planning Training.**

The Clerk was reminded about the aim of organising some planning training for councillors from a WBC planning officer.

HP

HP

The meeting concluded at 9.30pm.

Date of next meetings:

BPC meeting: Monday 12th June 2023 at 7.45pm – The Victory Room

Signed

Date
2023/30