



# Buckland & Chipping Parish Council

Clerk: Colin Marks

Cedar Beth-El, 17 Park Lane, Puckeridge SG11 1RL

Tel: 01920 821684

email: clerk.bucklandandchippingpc@gmail.com

## MINUTES OF BUCKLAND & CHIPPING PARISH COUNCIL MEETING No. 316

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2022, 7.30pm, St Andrew's Church, Buckland

Cllr Jeff Kenyon (Chair) (JK)\*

Cllr Penny Newman (PN)\*

Cllr Aubrey Holt (AH)

Cllr Robert Arkle

Cllr Jennifer Makewell (JM)

Cllr Helen Dauris\*

\* Denotes present

Also attending: 7 members of the public, Cllr Jeff Jones, Cllr Stan Bull, Henry Moore of the CCT, Mark Wilkinson of FORQ

Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to Buckland & Chipping Parish Council

### ACTION

The Chairman opened the Meeting at 7.30 pm

#### 316.01 Apologies for absence

Councillors: Cllr Aubrey Holt and Cllr Robert Arkle: Holiday. **Accepted**

Other apologies: None

#### 316.02 Declarations of Interest and dispensation requests

Interests: Cllr Jeff Kenyon declared an interest because event expenses were to be approved for reimbursement.

Dispensations: None requested

#### 316.03 Approval of Minutes

**RESOLVED: that the Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 315, held on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022 be approved subject to the time being corrected for the Suspension for Public Comments.** The Chairman signed the Minutes.

#### 316.04 Police Report

No report received

#### 316.05 Friends of the Rib and Quin (FORQ) Report

Mark Wilkinson gave a brief but passionate presentation of the general problems besetting our rivers, but particularly those affecting the rare chalk streams in this, the driest and most densely populated, part of the country.

He explained that FORQ is a community based organisation dedicated to improving the plight of these local chalk streams, which are in crisis due to years of over abstraction and pollution. The objectives are to raise awareness of these important and rare river environments, to benchmark and monitor the river landscape, wildlife and biodiversity through citizen science projects and to campaign, with other river groups to reduce and stop the over abstraction of the chalk aquifer which has been depleting this environment for decades.

Just recently a pollution incident killed hundreds of fish in the River Rib. Pollution comes from chemicals released into the streams, mainly through untreated sewage. Very high phosphate levels have been recorded that are off the scale. Affinity Water takes 66% of its water from underground, which has caused streams to dry-up completely for parts of the year and therefore river life, both animal and vegetable, cannot be sustained.

The FORQ website gives lots of details and opens opportunities for members of the public to become aware and also to help monitor and keep reports updated.

The Chairman thanked Mark Wilkinson for his report and it was **RESOLVED to support FORQ, details to be agreed at the November Council meeting.**

Clerk

#### 316.06 Finance

##### 1. Accounts: 1<sup>st</sup> July – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022

	£
<b>Opening cashbook balance 1 July</b>	<b>22,713.08</b>
Income to 31 August	577.51
Expenditure to 31 August	<u>449.49</u>
<b>Cashbook balance 31 August</b>	<b>21,363.15</b>
Unpresented cheque R Arkle 04/07/22	30.40
<b>Reconciled bank balance at 31 August</b>	<b><u>21,393.55</u></b>

**RESOLVED: To approve the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022 accounts statement**

**2. RESOLVED: To approve the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022 cashbook and bank reconciliation.** Cllr Helen Dauris signed the reconciliation statement. Clerk

**3. Summer event: to ratify expenditure**

The Clerk presented the rationale for the unbudgeted summer event expenditure. It was explained that the expenditure had come from the £1,000 contingency reserves supported by a projected year-end balance of approximately £8,400. The expenditure justified as being an opportunity to contribute to the well-being of the community. The total cost of the Jubilee and Summer events was £705.58, offset by a grant of £500 for Jubilee leaving a net cost of £205.58. In order for the expenditure to be ratified, the Clerk was asked to provide a full breakdown of the costs of the two (Jubilee and Summer) events. **RESOLVED: To ratify expenditure subject to breakdown of costs being produced.**

Clerk

**4. Budget vs Actual performance to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022**

The Clerk provided an itemised statement of the budget vs actual performance to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022. Summary:

Income Budget £11,250; Income to date £8,242.

Net expenditure budget £11,200; net expenditure to date £5,634

There is an unused £50 petty cash float.

The income and expenditure are both within budget

Clerk

It was unanimously **RESOLVED to accept the financial performance statement.**

**5. Approval / ratification and signing of cheques for payment**

*All expenditure made under the General Power of Competence*

Chq	Payee	Item	£	VAT incl
1096	Clerk reimburse	Prontaprint event flyer	42.50	
1097	M Webb	Bus shelters July/August 4 of 6	80.00	
1098	S Hall	Buckland litter pick Aug/Sept 5 of 6	190.00	
1099	Dale Holt	Chipping litter pick Aug/Sept 3 of 6	190.00	
1100	Clerk C Marks	Expenses August/September	35.45	
1101	Clerk reimburse	Prontaprint Newsletter September	56.00	
1102	Clerk C Marks	Salary July-September	437.38	
1103	HMRC	PAYE 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter July-Sept	109.40	
1104	J Kenyon reimburse	Event buns	24.00	
1105	Clerk reimburse	Microsoft365 annual licence	79.99	
1106	R Arkle reimburse	Event food	73.84	
1107	Clerk reimburse	Printer paper	3.50	
1108	Clerk reimburse	stamps	5.44	
1109	Frank Cooper & Son	Grasscutting payment #3	816.00	136.00
1110	J Kenyon reimburse	Event food	24.00	
		<b>Recoverable VAT included</b>		<b>136.00</b>

**RESOLVED: to approve the payments as listed.**

Clerk

**6. Audit: Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2021/22**

Update report: PKF Littlejohn have accepted the Parish Council's exemption status and the audit has been closed. Therefore, there will not be an external audit fee.

**7. Precept 2023/24 consideration.** It was agreed to defer this to the next meeting but to note that a Coronation event will probably be in order.

**8. Citizens Advice donation request. RESOLVED: To make a grant of £50.**

Clerk

**9. EHC/NHC Litterpicking grant policy.** It was noted that the EHC Executive will, in all probability, not give a litterpicking grant from April 2023, the cost being included in new litterbin contractors' tenders. It was agreed that the Parish Council should advise EHC that they would prefer the status quo to be retained. *Clerk's note: it was subsequently discovered that the comments deadline had passed.*

Clerk

### 316.07 PLANNING

#### New Planning Applications:

**3/22/1587/FUL Flint Cottage, Buckland:** Demolish storage buildings; erect 3-bed dwelling.

*The Parish Council objected to this application on 13<sup>th</sup> September.*

#### Decision Notices

None

#### Other planning matters and late applications received

Noted: The Hertfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Draft Plan Consultation has been extended from 22 July to 31 October 2022. It was also noted that Stanstead Abbots Parish Council has submitted a strong objection. The Clerk was asked to circulate the letter objection to members.

Clerk

**316.08 Correspondence** – noted as per the agenda, for information only:

- Parishioner: request for info re The Countryman ACV status
- Citizens Advice Service: request for donation
- EHC: New parish litterpicking grant arrangements and consultation (316.06.9)

### 316.09 Parish matters

#### 1. Highways

- The poor state of the footway between Buckland and Chipping was raised again. Cllr Jeff Jones reiterated that it was considered to be accessible and was scheduled to for 2023/24.
- A parishioner raised the poor condition of the A10 road surface in Buckland. Cllr Jeff Jones said all faults should be reported on the HCC Highways Fault system which would trigger an inspection and remedial action if it was consider necessary.

#### 2. St Andrew's Church and Churchyard

1. Matters raised with the CCT update: Henry Moore said that projects need to be organised and funded by groups, such as the recently formed Friends of St Andrew's (FOSA). No lottery funding is available and projects will be down to the parishes. Parishioners are suggesting social and money raising events, which is the best way to get funding. It was noted that a group of residents are prepared to form an events committee to take this forward. FOSA
2. Lighting improvements: To be considered by the FOSA. FOSA
3. Church war memorials cleaning/refurbishment: To be considered by the FOSA. FOSA
4. Maintenance of the bridleway to the church: Contractor Frank Cooper to be chased to do. Clerk  
The Clerk to get the contractor to make another cut to the churchyard grass asap. Clerk
5. Churchyard eco-toilet: Henry Moore's cost effective suggestions to be considered at the November Council meeting. Clerk

#### 3. Water Wheel land maintenance

Frank Cooper and Son Ltd to be chased on regular maintenance.

Clerk

#### 4. Queen's Green Canopy initiative

Cllr Aubrey Holt is drawing up a tree planting plan for discussion at the November meeting. The trees have been ordered.

AH

**5. Buckland phone box contents:** Cllr Aubrey Holt to provide an update.

AH

**6. Parish Information boards (Buckland in particular):** Tony Spearman has drawn up a proposal of

JK

how to repair/strengthen the information board legs.

**7. Buckland bus shelter (southbound) damage to glass.** The Clerk to speak to the glass company that repaired it last time. **Clerk**

**8. The Countryman ACV moratorium update**

Cllr Jeff Jones reported that a working group of six parishioners had been formed last week to consider a community bid. Although the pub is being marked as a residential property for £1m it was noted that it is, in fact a public house. Various options are being explored with experienced organisations on how to proceed with a realistic community bid. The deadline is 16<sup>th</sup> December.

**9. Buckland Common/Back Lane maintenance**

Being incorporated into Frank Cooper's contract. **Clerk**

**10. Buckland Litterpicker**

It was noted that Sue Hall is stepping down from the end of the year. She has done a great job for which the Council is very grateful. However, a new volunteer has come forward in the person of Buckland resident, Naomi Longcroft. **RESOLVED: That Naomi Longcroft be offered to take over the Buckland litterpicking contract on the current terms.** **Clerk**

The Parish litterpicking contract beyond April 2023 to be considered in light of the anticipated EHC decision to withdraw its annual grant. **Council**

**316.10 Events**

**1. Summer event report, 4<sup>th</sup> September**

The event was well attended and was a success.

**2. Bonfire and Fireworks Night, Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

A budget of £500 was agreed. Cllr Jeff Jones agreed to support with a grant of £350. It was agreed that Cllrs Jeff Kenyon, Robert Arkle and Aubrey Holt will help organise and run the event. Cllr Rob Arkle to organise a flyer as previously. Copy to Clerk for printing 21<sup>st</sup> October; printed copies for distribution by 27<sup>th</sup> October. **JK/RA/AH/RA/Clerk**

**3. Coronation event 2023**

This could be combined with the 2023 Summer event. It is also being considered whether to combine with other local parishes of Reed and Barkway to create a larger joint event. A lot of ideas were put forward and it was agreed to form a parish working group to take the ideas forward. Interested volunteers gave their names to the Chairman after the meeting. **JK**

**316.11 County and District Councillor reports**

District Councillor Stan Bull:

East Herts Planning is still struggling to keep up with planning demands due to a shortage of fully trained planning officers. Following the covid lockdown some officers are continuing to work from home and some applications are having to be farmed out. It is also the case that new officers, once trained, then move on to other locations. Development Control Management are looking at ways to address the problems and a planning fast track might be implemented for householders.

County Cllr Jeff Jones:

Both County and District are under severe financial pressures. District will have to find £2m savings. Some proposals to meet the shortfall will include increased car park charges, the end of free parking time, and charges being brought in for weekends, including Sundays. Charges will rise by 20%. The introduction of a flat Sunday rate is estimated to bring in about £500k.

County has a shortfall of £26m this year and £62m next year. Some savings will be made by revamping and streamlining administration. A new Buntingford recycling centre has been mothballed for the foreseeable future. It was also mentioned that Gigaclear are busily laying full fibre broadband throughout the area, but the quality of their reinstating of footways is not always satisfactory and is being monitored. It was also reported that the new health centre will be located at the former Nevetts site in Buntingford, which is a good decision.

**316.12 Urgent matters received too late for the agenda.**

- It was agreed to order 6 bags of HCC winter salt for delivery to the A10/Barkway junction. **Clerk**
- A Chipping resident asked that dog walkers using the FP003 north of Chipping clean up their dog mess. Neighbours regularly have to clear up other people's dog mess along the hedge line to properties in The Square. Sometimes the mess bagged and left when there is a bin 200 yards

along the field. It was requested that this be mentioned in the next Parish Newsletter. Any other ideas to help stop this would be appreciated. Possibly EHC notices about dog fouling could be employed.

Clerk

**Suspension of meeting for Public Comments:**

The meeting was suspended at 9.15pm

A question was raised about how many dog bins are in Buckland. The Council's asset map identifies that there are two.

It was noted that a number of deer are again being killed on the A10. There was a discussion on whether reflector posts previously installed in places are helpful or effective. The deer herds ought to be culled but it is not clear who would be responsible for that.

The meeting was called to order at 9.25pm

**316.13 Items for future agendas**

Chipping Milestone restoration and possible move to more appropriate location

JK

Emergency Plan update (Cllr J Kenyon)

JK

Public Rights of Way FP and definitive Map: update (Cllr J Kenyon/Nicholas Maddex)

JK

Clearance of the footway south of Buckland – not anticipated until 2023/24

**316.14 Date of next Parish Council Meeting:**

7.30pm Monday 14<sup>th</sup> November, The Manor House, Buntingford (TBC).

Clerk/JK

The following dates were agreed for the Winter/Spring 2023 meetings. The date of the May 2023 meeting will be determined by the election date.

Clerk

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> January. Venue TBC

Clerk/JK

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March. Venue TBC

Clerk/JK

**316.15 November Newsletter**

1. Editor: Cllr Rob Arkle

JK

2. Deadlines: (i) Final copy to editor: 25<sup>th</sup> October

ALL

(ii) Ok press for printing to Clerk: 27<sup>th</sup> October

RA

(iii) 140 Printed copies by 3rd November (Printed by Prontaprint)

Clerk

(iv) Distribution: By 4<sup>th</sup> November

JK/PN

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.34pm.

Signed.....Dated.....