



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. 318

Wednesday 4th January 2023, 7.30pm, The Manor House, Buntingford

Cllr Jeff Kenyon (Chair) (JK)*

Cllr Helen Dauris (HD)*

Cllr Aubrey Holt (AH)*

Cllr Jennifer Makewell (JM)*

Cllr Robert Arkle*

Cllr Penny Newman (PN)*

* Denotes present

Also attending: Cllr Jeff Jones, Cllr Stan Bull, Police Sgt Terry Alcock, PCSO Paul Dearman, Henry Moore of the CCT, 1 member of the public

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

ACTION

The Chairman opened the Meeting at 7.30 pm

318.01 Apologies for absence

Councillors: None – all present

Other apologies: None

318.02 Declarations of Interest and dispensation requests

Interests: None declared

Dispensations: None requested

318.03 Approval of Minutes

Cllr Helen Dauris asked that the Minutes be amended to include the following wording in the public comments section (following agenda item 317.11):

“Mr Henry Moore informed the Council that he was leaving the CCT in March”.

RESOLVED: that the amendment be added (by hand) and that the Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 317, held on 14th November 2022 be approved as amended.

Clerk

The Clerk said the amendment will be recorded in the January Minutes. The Chairman signed the Minutes.

JK

318.04 Police Report

The following report was received:

4 Crimes reported since last meeting (12th Nov 2022 to 2nd Jan 2023):

3 x violence against the person*

1 x criminal damage

*Category ranges from assaults with or without injury, threats, harassment and malicious communications. These 3 reports involved parties living in the same household as each other.

OWL

General East Herts messages:

Scam and rogue trader alerts

Police and Crime Commissioner’s Budget survey

Buckland & Chipping specific messages: None

What we’ve been doing

Local Neighbourhood Policing Priorities December 2022 to March 2023:

- Rural commercial burglaries: Proactive work to reduce commercial burglaries in rural areas.
- Poaching: Proactive work to reduce poaching and hunting offences.
- Deterring fly tipping: Reduce fly tipping in rural communities through high visibility presence and proactive work with partner agencies.

Upcoming events:

Next priority setting meeting: 8th March 2023

Sgt Alcock talked through this report and made further comments:

The Parish is generally a safe place and the recorded crimes relate to one location.

Fly tipping is an increasing problem and he said anyone seeing this activity should immediately phone the police, especially if the vehicle registration number can be identified. It should also be reported online.

Editor

It was noted that speeding on the A10 is not recorded on the crime report. Sgt Alcock said this tended to be seasonal problem, especially where related to motor bikes.

Scams, rogue trader etc advice and notifications are noted on OWL and via Neighbourhood Watch. It was agreed to add this information to the next parish Newsletter.

Editor

It was agreed that it would be good for someone from the Parish Council to attend the next Priority Meeting on 8th March, although no one was nominated to do so.

ALL

The police will endeavour to attend Council meetings as duties permit.

The Chairman thanked the police for attending and the police left the meeting at 7.57pm.

318.05 Finance

1. Accounts: 1st November – 31st December 2022

	£
Opening cashbook balance 1st November	23,778.15
Income to 31 December	0.00
Expenditure to 31 December	<u>3,365.55</u>
Cashbook balance 31 December	20,412.60
Unpresented cheques	0.00
Reconciled bank balance at 31st December	<u>20,412.60</u>

RESOLVED: To approve the 31st December 2022 accounts statement

2. RESOLVED: To approve the 31st December 2022 cashbook and bank reconciliation.

Clerk

The Clerk reported that F Cooper & Sons have been chased for their works diary to identify the dates they attended the churchyard to cut the grass. The works manager is currently abroad, returning in January. The Clerk said he would pursue this again shortly.

Clerk

3. Budget vs Actual performance to 15th December 2022

The Clerk provided an itemised statement of the budget vs actual performance to 15th December 2022. Summary:

Income Budget £11,250; Income to date £12,782, including £618 VAT reclaim for 2021/22.

Net expenditure budget £11,200; net expenditure to date £10,673

There is an unused £50 petty cash float.

The expenditure is within budget, but it was noted that additional to the VAT reclaim, the EHC litter picking grant exceeded the income budget by £314. The currently projected year-end bank balance at 31st March 2023 is £18,876 plus £574 VAT to be reclaimed after year-end. An anticipated surplus of £51 at the year-end, excluding the VAT reclaim.

Clerk

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

4. Budget and Precept, 2023/24, and 3-year plan

The Clerk provided a detailed budget proposal for 2023/24, including a 3-year plan to 2025/26.

The budget proposal included retaining the litter pickers at the Parish Council's expense, EHDC withdrawing the litter picking grant from April 2023. It also proposed increasing the Precept by £500 to £9,500 in 2023/24, and a further £500 per annum for 2024/25 and 2025/26, to be reviewed annually.

RESOLVED: To accept the 2023/24 budget as proposed, including £2,280 for litterpicking, and then to review annually.

Clerk

RESOLVED: To set the 2023/24 Precept at £9,500. The Chairman, Clerk, and two councillors signed the EHDC Precept form.

Clerk

5. 1 Approval / ratification and signing of cheques for payment

All expenditure made under the General Power of Competence

Chq	Payee	Item	£	VAT incl
1124	Buntingford TC	Room hire 14/11/22	17.50	-
1125	Clerk C Marks	Expenses December/January	35.34	-
1126	Clerk reimburse	Prontaprint Newsletter January	56.00	-
1127	M Webb	Bus shelters Nov/Dec 6 of 6	80.00	-
1128	Naomi Longcroft	Buckland litter pick Dec/Jan 1 of 6	190.00	-
1129	Dale Holt	Chipping litter pick Dec/Jan 5 of 6	190.00	-
		Recoverable VAT included		0.00

RESOLVED: to approve the payments as listed.

Clerk

The Clerk reported that Barclays Bank have restricted the Council's bank account even though all the information they have asked for was provided to them on 13th December. The telephone number the bank has given for responses is permanently unmanned. The Clerk said he had visited the Bishop's Stortford branch but they said they were unable to help and the matter could only be resolved with the team in Leicester. Barclays said they may have to close the account if the matter is not resolved. Cllr Jeff Jones said he had experienced this and cited a business account that had been closed, causing a lot of problems. Cllr Stan Bull said he also knew of the problem where hours had been spent trying to make contact with Barclays.

The Clerk said the Parish Council simply could not afford to lose its banking facility since it has financial obligations that must be fulfilled. He advised that the Council move its accounts to Unity Trust Bank, as other councils have done. UTB cater for the public sector and internet banking is easy to operate. The charge £18 per quarter to service an account. It was agreed that the Clerk set up asap a new account with UTB, with the current Barclays signatories remaining.

Clerk

5. 2 Clerk's claim for extra hours

It was **RESOLVED: That in the public interest, the public be excluded under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 for the discussion of this item and that it should be deferred to the end of the meeting.**

318.06 Parish Clerk vacancy

The Clerk will be leaving the Council at the end of February. The Chairman said he had made a number of enquiries for a replacement but without success to date. The vacancy is being advertised with HAPTC. Councillors were urged to consider anyone who might be willing to accept the post.

ALL

318.07 PLANNING

1. New Planning Applications

None received

2. Decision Notices

3/22/1751/HH 5 Brookside, Chipping: Single storey rear extension. *Decision awaited*

3/22/1587/FUL Flint Cottage, Buckland: Demolish storage buildings; erect 3-bed dwelling.
The Parish Council objected to this application. Decision awaited

3. Other planning matters and late applications received

No late applications received.

It was noted that in order to save costs, yellow notices are no longer being put up by EHC Planning. The Parish Council agreed to produce a pro forma for giving information to neighbours to ensure there is an awareness of planning proposals. The Chairman agreed to create the pro forma.

JK

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

- EHDC: Draft polling scheme consultation for May 2023 (318.09.10)
- EHDC: Invitation to Holocaust Memorial Day event, 26th January
- Barclays: Parish Council information request for bank records (318.05.5.1)
- The Pensions Regulator: Re-declaration deadline 29th June 2023

318.09 Parish matters

1. Highways

1. It was noted that the M11 diversions are causing a lot of damage to the A10. Cllr Jeff Jones said a lot of the problems are due to the recent exceptionally cold weather. Large potholes should be reported on the HCC Highways Fault system and Cllr Jones said if he were to be copied in, he would follow up the reports. **ALL**

2. St Andrew's Church and Churchyard

1. Matters raised with the CCT, including lighting, update: Henry Moore said matters would be progressed, but reminded the Council that resolution of the problems would be through a community initiative, not undertaken by the CCT. If the Parish Council will provide quotes for the lighting, Henry said he would progress approval with the CCT (bearing in mind that he will be leaving the CCT in March). **FOSA**

Henry acknowledged with thanks the £114 Carol Concert donation to the CCT and other donations of some £600 received by the CCT during the fiscal year.

Henry Moore also raised a concern that candle wax had caused some damage to the church stonework at the carol service. He reminded everyone that open flames, including candles, are strictly not allowed in CCT buildings because of fire risk and other potential damage.

2. Church war memorials cleaning/refurbishment: Ditto the comments at 2.1 above regarding the matters being undertaken through community initiative. **FOSA**

3. Maintenance of the track to the church update: Chairman Jeff Kenyon reported he had spoken to J W Salmon about quoting for this and said they were interested in providing a quote for the full grasscutting contract. **JK**
Cllr Jeff Jones said he would give the Clerk the contact details of the contractor recently appointed by Buntingford Town Council. **Clerk**

4. Churchyard eco-toilet, with appropriate wheelchair access. Update: It was agreed that this should be tackled by the next Council following the May elections, the ideal meeting to raise it being the Annual Meeting of the Parish Electorate to gauge public opinion. It was questioned what the legal requirements might be. Henry Moore confirmed that other CCT churches have allowed such toilets in their churchyards. He was asked to provide some examples of where this has happened. **JK/HM**

5. Request for a storage shed in the churchyard: Ditto comments at 2.4 above. **JK/HM**

3. Water Wheel land maintenance

Frank Cooper & Sons have still not responded to the request for a quote to include this on the works schedule. **Clerk**

4. Buckland Common/Back Lane access by Moat Corner

Ditto comment at item 3 above. **JK**

5. Queen's Green Canopy initiative

Cllr Aubrey Holt reported that the recent very cold weather had prevented the planned planting taking place in December and that planting has been pushed back a month or two. A few saplings will be held back for parents and children to be invited to participate, this to be noted in the March Newsletter. **AH**
Editor

6. Buckland phone box contents

Cllr Penny Newman agreed to bring a folder of items to the March meeting to see what information can be included. **PN**

7. Parish Information boards (Buckland in particular) and church signpost

Chairman Jeff Kenyon said this in hand with Mr Tony Spearman. **JK**

8. Buckland bus shelter (southbound) damage to glass

The Clerk said the glass company who did the work previously we not able to do so again. They recommended another contractor, Roger Bradford, who has agreed to undertake the repair. **Clerk**

9. The Countryman ACV moratorium update

1. Cllr Aubrey Holt gave an update of the current position. The STC working group will meet again on 12th January to review the next step. It was acknowledged that the Parish Council paying the cost of the business survey was invaluable.

2. RESOLVED: To ratify the £1,800 payment made to MJD Hughes Ltd for the business survey.

10. EHDC draft Polling Scheme, May 2023 consultation

Cllr Jeff Jones said he had responded to the consultation and pointed out that The Countryman can no longer be considered a secure location for a polling station since it is on the market for development and is the object of a community ACV bid. He opined that St Andrew's Church offered the best alternative, or possibly Buckland Barns. Henry Moore confirmed that there is a precedent for CCT churches being used as polling stations, although accessibility in inclement weather was acknowledged. **RESOLVED: That the Clerk make similar comments to the consultation before the 20th January deadline.**

Clerk

318.10 Events

2023 Events

1. Risk assessments, regulations and insurance requirements for future events

Cllr Jen Makewell she had all the necessary certificates to run such events and therefore there shouldn't be any problems in the Parish Council fulfilling its safety obligations.

2. Coronation event 2023. Working Group update:

It was proposed that the date be Monday 8th May. This to be confirmed at the March Council meeting, including finalising the details and venue.

Working Group

3. Late Summer event, 9th September 2023

Details to be further considered at the March Council meeting, including confirmation of the venue.

Working Group

The Clerk cautioned against the Working Groups being referred to as committees.

4. Fireworks & Bonfire night, November 2023

To be considered again at the March Council meeting.

ALL

318.11 County and District Councillor reports

Cllr Stan Bull reported the difficult EHC budget issues have been resolved and the 2023/24 budget agreed.

He also reported that EHC Planning are still experiencing problems caused by the inability to retain trained staff, which is resulting in the protracted processing of planning applications.

Cllr Jeff Jones confirmed that the County Locality Budget will continue, albeit at a possibly reduced level. The budget challenges have been huge but internal savings have resulted in an HCC balanced budget being achieved for 2023/24..Cllr Jones also reported that Herts Lynx has been very successful and use of the service is growing monthly. An additional service was added for the month of December which proved to be popular. A £2 fare cap will operate from 1st January to 31st March 2023. He asked that a reminder of the service be included in the next Parish Newsletter.

Editor

318.12 Urgent matters received too late for the agenda.

- None raised

Suspension of meeting for Public Comments:

The meeting was suspended at 9.47pm

- Jeff Jones, speaking as a parishioner, said he was concerned that the HCC bags of winter salt were delivered to Buckland but no arrangement was made to transfer half of them to Chipping. Consequently the Chipping salt bin was empty in the icy weather in December. Furthermore, the Buckland bags were moved away from the delivery site at the A10/Barkway Road junction, presumably by a member of the public, leaving none for its proper purpose of gritting public rights of way. He reminded the Parish Council that the salt was not supplied for personal use and asked that this be noted in the parish Newsletter.
- Mr Jones also noted that Buckland Common Pond has now become completely overgrown and was bone dry in the summer, acknowledged to be due to the drought. He asked that the growth around the pond be cut back hard now and that it then received further attention a couple of times during the year.

JK

Editor

The meeting was called to order at 10.00pm

318.13 Items for future agendas

- To consider May 4th Parish Council elections (March Council meeting)
- Financial Risk Assessment Review (May Annual Council meeting)
- Chipping Milestone restoration and possible move to more appropriate location
- Emergency Plan update (Cllr J Kenyon)
- Public Rights of Way FP and definitive Map: update (Cllr J Kenyon/Nicholas Maddex)
- Clearance of the footway south of Buckland – not anticipated until 2023/24

JK/Clerk
JK/Clerk
JK
JK
JK

318.05 5.2 Deferred item: Clerk’s additional hours

10.05pm: The public were excluded for the discussion and left the room, as did the Clerk.

RESOLVED: To pay the Clerk and for an additional 10 hours work undertaken during the year at the current SPC rate. To be included in the salary payment in February.

10.10pm: The Clerk returned to the meeting

318.14 Date of next Parish Council Meetings:

1. 7.30pm Monday 13th March 2023, The Manor House, Buntingford (TBC).
2. The date of the May 2023 meetings will be determined by the election date.

Clerk/JK

318.15 January Newsletter

1. Editor: Cllr Aubrey Holt
2. Deadlines: (i) Final copy to editor: 20th February
(ii) Ok press for printing: 27th February
(iii) 140 Printed copies: By 2nd March (Printed by Prontaprint)
(iv) Distribution: By 3rd March

AH
ALL
AH
RA/PN

There being no further business, the Chairman apologised that the meeting had run so late, thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10.25pm.

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