

BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting held at 8pm in the Reading Room on Monday 13th March 2023.

Present:

Cllrs Cox, Horden, Husband (Chair), Jones, and Steed.

In attendance

Surrey County Council (SCC) Cllr Helyn Clack, Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) Cllrs Paul Potter and Simon Budd and the Clerk.

1. Apologies for Absence

(235) Council noted apologies from Cllr Pryor.

2. Declarations of Interest

(236) None.

3. Requests for Dispensations

(237) None.

4. Minutes

(238) Council **resolved** to approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th January 2023 and to adopt the Minutes of a Meeting of its Staffing Committee held on 14th December 2022. The minutes were duly signed by the Chair as a correct record.

5. Planning

Planning Applications

(239) Council noted an update from the Clerk on two applications, for each of which the consultation period had closed prior to this meeting:

- (i) MO/2022/2055: Works to existing garage : Replacement of existing timber staircase with metal spiral staircase, replace french door with new pivot door and install two new heritage type roof lights in front pitch at Grange Lodge, Rectory Lane, Buckland, RH3 7BH. Decision taken, following consultation with Cllrs Bourke, Cox, Jones and Pryor, not to submit any comment; and
- (ii) MO/2022/2101: Pollard one Willow tree by approximately 3 metres to previous points of reduction at Buckland Cop, Old Road, Buckland, RH3 7DU. Decision taken, following consultation with Cllrs Bourke, Cox, Husband, Jones, and Pryor, not to submit any comment.

(240) Council **resolved** not to comment on the following application:

- (i) MO/2023/0243: Reduce top of Weeping Willow tree to old pollard points and reduce and reshape side by 3 metres at Street Farm House, Rectory Lane, Buckland, RH3 7BH.

Planning Notifications

(241) Council acknowledged the following Local Planning Authority planning notifications:

- (i) MO/2022/1107: Erection of new dwelling by utilising and extending existing double garage and store and demolishing existing barn, garage, and out-buildings on Land adjacent to Yew Tree Cottage, Reigate Road, Buckland, RH3 7BG. Approved with conditions;
- (ii) MO/2022/1802: Replace existing conservatory and extension with the erection of a single storey rear extension at Buckland Cop, Old Road, Buckland, RH3 7DY. Approved with conditions.
- (iii) MO/2021/1863: Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposed development in respect of a single storey rear extension at Vine Lodge, Old Road, Buckland, Betchworth, Surrey, RH3 7DZ. Appeal allowed.
- (iv) MO/2023/0038: Certificate of Lawfulness for the proposed development in respect of the repair/replacement of existing roof tiles, improvement of roof insulation, and repointing of existing chimney at Cop End, Old Road, Buckland, RH3 7DU. Application registered.

Planning Enforcement

- (242) Council noted MVDC had responded to an enquiry as to the status of enforcement action being taken against Karcher Cleaning, for the persistent unauthorised use of the hard standing around the unit for the storage of materials, to advise:
- (i) MVDC is aware of the ongoing breach;
 - (ii) that following a further site visit this matter had now been referred to MVDC's legal team for prosecution;
 - (iii) a further update will be provided when there is something to report.

Planning Policy

- (243) Council noted MVDC had announced a pause in the examination process of a new Local Plan for Mole Valley, initially until the first scheduled meeting of MVDC after the May elections, in its hope the Government will introduce changes to national planning policy, changes that are currently the subject of a public consultation.
- (244) Council noted:
- (i) receipt of a listing of the assessments, undertaken by Surrey County Council, regarding locally listed sites for Buckland proposed for inclusion in a MVDC Local Heritage List;
 - (ii) the information included assessments for both those sites recommended for listing, as well as the limited few which were rejected; and
 - (iii) MVDC currently propose to include the Local Heritage List as an appendix to the new Local Plan.

6. Highways, Rights of Way, Airspace and Trains

Highways

- (245) Council **resolved** to add its weight to the positive feedback received from several residents that had expressed their appreciation for a job well done by the team from Clover Grounds Maintenance. A total of fifteen man days had been invested to clear the build-up of seasonal debris from the A25 roadside footways. **Action:** Clerk to relay Council's thanks to Jake Burley for his team's hard work and commitment.
- (246) Council noted:
- (i) the wearing course along the section of footway between the western boundary of the Pheasant and the driveway to Park Cottage has disintegrated exposing the underlying aggregate base;
 - (ii) without the protection of the wearing course weeds will root in the surface of this section and clearance by hand is no longer practical or cost effective; as can be seen on the section of footway on the north side of the A25 between Lawrence Lane and Tapwood Lane; and
 - (iii) when Cllr Bourke attended workshops held during the preparation of a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Mole Valley, no strategic upgrade of the section of A25 footways to the east of Betchworth roundabout was being programmed within the ten-year term of the plan;
 - (iv) the Clerk had contacted SCC Cllr Clack (HC) to request guidance as to what actions are open to Council to help secure the footway repairs that Council believes are now overdue.

Council agreed to suspend Standing Orders

HC advised Council engineers, having inspected the footways last week, do agree that the section between the western boundary of the Pheasant and the driveway to Park Cottage needs work and assured Council options for funding that work are being actively considered.

Standing Orders resumed

Action: Clerk to approach HC for an update in advance of the next meeting.

Airspace

(247) Council noted:

- (i) Cllr Cox had, following her attendance at a virtual engagement session on Monday 30th January 2023, about the first of three rounds of options appraisal GAL must undertake to support the development of the Airspace Change Proposal, circulated an update;
- (ii) Concern expressed by Cllr Cox about the volume of technical information being presented, at rapid speed, during the workshops with a lack of information targeted at a layperson that a parish council could rely upon to communicate with its residents.

Council agreed to suspend Standing Orders

HC asked Council to consider sharing the concerns being expressed with Gatcom and provided contact details to the Clerk.

Standing Orders resumed

(248) Council **resolved** to:

- (i) contact Gatcom to share its concerns and ask for a more considered approach to be adopted by the airport communications team ahead of stage 2 consultations to be launched later this year; and
- (ii) accept Cllr Cox's offer to maintain a watching brief.

Action: Clerk, with support from Cllr Cox.

Trains

(249) Council noted receipt of minutes of a recent meeting of the North Downs Railway Community Rail Partnership had advised that with passenger numbers yet to recover to pre-pandemic levels the timing for increasing the frequency of trains between Reading and Gatwick remains uncertain.

7. Events and Amenities

Annual Parish Meeting

(250) Council noted the Annual Parish Meeting, held in the Reading Room on Monday 6th March had been attended by 43 residents and 5 members of the public.

(251) Council noted SCC Cllr Helyn Clack's Annual Report, that is usually appended to the minutes, had since been published and circulated via the village email group.

(252) Council **resolved** to record a vote of thanks to guest speaker Dominic Sanders who had provided an estate update and used the opportunity to announce plans to invite village residents to "drinks and nibbles" at Buckland Park Lake towards the end of the summer.

Volunteer Activity

(253) Council **resolved** to hold two volunteer events from 10am – noon on Saturday 15th April and Saturday 22nd April 2023. **Actions:** Clerk to ask for dates to be listed in April parish magazine. Cllr Jones to coordinate litter picking and prepare risk assessment for 15th April. Cllr Steed and the Clerk to liaise re coordinating event centred on clearing around the young trees in the verge to the footpath between Old Road and Bromley field on 22nd April and prepare risk assessment. All Cllrs to encourage residents to participate.

Bus Shelter

(254) Council **resolved** to write to express its appreciation for the excellent work recently completed by Affordable Roofing, the local contractor who had recently installed a new cedar shingle roof on the bus shelter opposite the village shop. **Action:** Clerk.

(255) Council **resolved** to approve the purchase of a brass plaque, for a cost of £150.00, to be installed on the bus shelter to record the decision taken last year to dedicate the work to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. **Action:** Clerk to raise payment upon receipt of appropriate invoice

8. Finance and Risk Management

(256) Council noted:

- (i) budget schedules, updated to reflect the decisions taken at the January 2023 meeting had been circulated to Cllrs since that meeting;
- (ii) a year-to-date cash book, analysis of current year expenditure against budget, refreshed budget and asset register assessment had been circulated prior to this meeting;
- (iii) the risk assessment schedule had recently been reviewed as part of the Review of effectiveness at the November meeting; and
- (iv) the schedule of reserves had been updated to reflect the full utilisation of the opening CIL reserve during the 2022/23 financial year.

Council **resolved** to adopt:

- (i) the budget schedules dated 13th March 2023;
- (ii) asset register, updated to include the bus shelter;
- (iii) risk assessment (unchanged) and asset valuations (included on the asset register) listing to support insurance renewal.

The Chair signed and dated the same.

(257) Council, having considered the schedule and quote obtained from Zurich Insurance, and noted the cover was comparable to the current cover arranged through Gallagher and comparative provided by BHIB **resolved** to approve the terms of an insurance policy, arranged with Zurich Insurance to commence 31st May 2023 at a premium of £300.00. **Action:** Clerk.

(258) Council noted the 3 yearly requirement to complete a re-declaration of compliance to the Pensions Regulator had been met with a re-declaration date of 17th January 2023. **Action:** Chair to issue letter to Clerk to be appended to the contract of employment to acknowledge the exchange of information between employer and employee and increase in holiday entitlement that shall apply, on a pro rata basis, from 1st April 2023 (consistent with nationally agreed terms and conditions).

(259) Council **resolved** to:

- (i) approve a grant of £336.00, to allow the volunteer webmaster to settle the Design Lynx annual charge for domain hosting, web space, disk space and bandwidth for bucklandsurrey.net for the year commencing 1st April 2023; and
- (ii) extend its current subscription to Zoom for a further year.

Action: Clerk to arrange payments upon receipt of appropriate paperwork.

Account Payments and Receipts

(260) Council noted payments to Affordable Roofing of £2,604.00 including £434.00 Vat and £1,668.00 including £278.00 Vat had been issued in accordance with minute 2022/23:215.

(261) Council noted a payment for £30.00, to the Surrey Hills Society, had been issued in accordance with minute 2022/23:220.

(262) Council noted a claim for a repayment of the Vat incurred between the 1st March 2022 and 28th February 2023 had been submitted to HMRC.

(263) Council **resolved** to approve the following payments:

- (i) Greenbarnes Limited £264.77 including £44.13 Vat, Materials to repair noticeboards;
- (ii) HMRC £82.07, PAYE liability re: February salary payment;
- (iii) Pixham Business Supplies £40.65 including £6.77 Vat, Toner cartridges;
- (iv) St Mary's Buckland Reading Room £60.00, Hall hire : 13th January 2023, 6th March 2023, and 13th March 2023;
- (v) Buckland Parochial Church Council £130.00, Contribution towards the cost of electricity re: floodlights to the church;

- (vi) Clover Ground Maintenance £3,510.00 including £585.00 Vat, Works to A25 footways;
 - (vii) HMRC £81.87, PAYE liability re: March salary payment.
 - (viii) Sheena Boyce £67.79, Reimbursement council expenses £68.19, PAYE adj -£0.40.
- (264) Council noted receipt of a £37.50 donation, raised through the sale of walk booklets into the Council's bank account since 9th January 2023.

9. Formalities

- (265) Council **resolved** to continue its membership of National Association of Local Councils (NALC) for 2023/24 and to approve a payment of £198.79, comprising £35.85 to NALC and £162.94 to Surrey ALC Limited, its Surrey Branch. **Action:** Clerk to raise payment upon receipt of appropriate invoice from Surrey ALC.
- (266) Council **resolved** to ratify the response issued to requests for donations from Age UK Surrey and the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance that had advised "With the parish council's only source of funding being the element of council tax levied on Buckland residents the parish council does not operate a grants policy."

Elections

- (267) Council noted:
- (i) information relating to the forthcoming parish council elections;
 - (ii) advice on the conduct of councillors and council during the pre-election period; and
 - (iii) electoral commission publicity relating the requirement for Voter ID at polling stations;
- had been circulated to Councillors and relevant information included in parish updates.
- (268) Council noted the Chair had:
- (i) provided an article on the forthcoming elections for inclusion in the March parish magazine, an article that had also been circulated via the village email group; and
 - (ii) taken the opportunity provided by the Annual Parish Meeting to highlight the opportunity for residents to put their names forward to become a parish councillor.
- (269) Council noted:
- (i) MVDC Electoral Services had advised a statement of persons nominated will be published no later than Wednesday 5th April, at which point it will become clear whether the election will be contested;
 - (ii) the term of office of current Councillors will end on Tuesday 9th May at which point the newly elected Parish Councillors will take office.
 - (iii) the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council is scheduled to be held in the Reading Room at 8pm on Monday 22nd May 2023.

Boundary Commission Review of Surrey County Council Divisions

- (270) Council noted:
- (i) the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) had launched a consultation, with a May 8th closing date, to invite suggestions for new divisional boundaries for Surrey County Council;
 - (ii) 6 county councillors will represent Mole Valley District; and
 - (iii) as MVDC has 13 wards, any divisional pattern will require one or more wards to be split between different divisions.
- (271) Council resolved to submit a response, drawing upon the response submitted to the recent LGBCE review of MVDC wards, to ask for;
- (i) the 3Bs of Buckland, Betchworth and Brockham to be allocated to the same division;
 - (ii) for the 3Bs to be allocated to a division wholly focused on rural parishes;
 - (iii) consideration being given to keeping the newly formed ward of 4B's and H (formerly the 3Bs and Boxhill and Headley wards) intact, consistent with the wish for potential synergies between the 5 communities to be optimised.

Surrey Hills Boundary Review : Consultation on Draft Proposals

- (272) Council noted Natural England had launched a consultation on proposed extensions to the boundaries of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (SH AONB). Council resolved to express its support for the proposal to include the settlement of Buckland within the SH AONB whilst suggesting some amendments to the boundary that would make the SH AONB proposed boundaries more consistent. **Action:** Clerk to:
- (i) submit consultation response; and
 - (ii) issue a parish update to encourage residents to review the draft proposals and express any views they might have to Natural England before the closing date of 13th June 2023.

Buckland Parochial Charity

- (273) Council noted a copy of Buckland Parochial Charity's draft accounts for the year to 31st December 2022 had been circulated in advance of the meeting and presented to the 2023 Annual Parish Meeting.
- (274) Council noted:
- (i) when Council met on 25th April 2019, Amanda Oakes-Smith, Debbie Jones, and Martin Cantor had each been appointed to serve a four-year term as Nominative Trustees of Buckland Parochial Charity;
 - (ii) Council had appointed Liz Vahey as a Nominative Trustee to serve a four-year term on 13th January 2020;
 - (iii) as the next meeting is not until Monday 22nd May 2023, the Clerk to the Parochial Charity had asked Council to decide on the appointment of three Nominative Trustees at this meeting.
- (275) Council **resolved** to appoint Amanda Oakes-Smith, Debbie Jones and Martin Boyce to each serve a four-year term as Nominative Trustees of Buckland Parochial Charity from the date of the four-year anniversary of the previous nominations (i.e. 25th April 2023).

Police Report

- (276) Council noted the report provided by Surrey Police had advised 2 crimes and 4 incidents were recorded in Buckland between 9th January and 13th March 2023. The two crimes were the theft of a catalytic convertor from a car parked in the car park of The Pheasant and arrest of a driver, on the A25, for suspected intoxication. The four incidents, all recorded on the A25 Reigate Road were a two-vehicle road traffic accident with minor injury, a police stop and two traffic related incidents - each resulting in the issue of advice.
- (277) Council noted communications issued by the NALC, Surrey ALC, Forestry England, SCC, MVDC, Surrey Hills Society, Gatwick Airport, GACC, Surrey Police and the Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner had been circulated to Cllrs and key information published on the village website and in parish updates.

10. Forthcoming Meetings

- (278) The Parish Council will hold its Annual Meeting at 8pm on Monday 22nd May in the Reading Room.
- (279) Parish Council meetings are subsequently scheduled to be held in the Reading Room on the following dates:
- 2023: 10th July, 11th September, 13th November; 2024: 8th January, 11th March.
- (280) Spring Volunteer events will be held between 10am and noon on Saturday 15th April 2023 and Saturday 22nd April 2023. Details will be published via the village email group and the community WhatsApp group.
- (281) Cllrs Horden and Jones will represent Council at the Betchworth Annual Parish Meeting on Monday 27th March 2023.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.35p.m.

Sheena Boyce, Clerk

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