

Minutes of Bucklesham Parish Council Meeting
Held on 1st March 2023 at 7:00pm
In Bucklesham and Foxhall Village Hall, IP10 0DZ

Present

Cllr Trevor Bickers
Cllr Rhea Gardner

Cllr Evelyn Bloomfield
Cllr Clive Lenton

Cllr David Brinkley (Chair)

Ruth Johnson (Clerk)

1 member of the public was present

1. Apologies for absence:

a. To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies had been received from Cllr Heather Owen (illness) and Cllr Seagroatt (prior engagement). A short statement from Cllr Owen was read aloud by the Clerk informing the Council of her decision not to stand again for election.

b. To accept apologies for absence.

Acceptance of the apologies of Cllrs Owen and Seagroatt was proposed by Cllr Bloomfield, seconded by Cllr Lenton and all were in agreement.

2. To receive any:

a. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest.

There were none.

b. Declarations of Non-Pecuniary Interest.

There were none.

c. Applications for Dispensation on Agenda Items.

There were none.

d. Declarations of Gifts or Hospitality received over the value of £25.00

There were none.

e. Notification of Lobbying with reference to Planning Applications to be discussed.

There were none.

3. Public Participation – To receive:

i. Reports from County and District Councillors:

- Suffolk County Cllr Patti Mulcahy:

A report had been received from Cllr Mulcahy at 5:50pm. Due to the timing of this report there had been very little opportunity for the Councillors to read and digest the contents, therefore no comments were made.

Chair's initials:

- East Suffolk District Cllr Mick Richardson and Cllr Richard Kerry:

Cllrs' monthly reports as well as many informative updating emails on various subjects had been previously received and circulated by the Clerk. The Chair thanked Cllrs Richardson and Kerry for once again supporting Bucklesham projects with their Enabling Communities Budget. Both Cllrs had contributed funds to sponsor the Bucklesham Carpet Bowls Club which enabled them to pay for Hall Hire for the year in advance. This not only helped the Bowls Club but also the Village Hall. Cllr Richardson had also sponsored the Bucklesham Bugle Newsletter for the year, including the forthcoming Election Special edition which will publicise the Local Elections in May.

Cllr Brinkley asked the Clerk to pass on the Council's thanks to both Cllrs Kerry and Richardson for their support over the last four years. He wished Cllr Kerry well in his retirement and wished Cllr Richardson good luck in the forthcoming District Council Elections on 4th May.

ii. Questions from any member of the public:

- A resident of the village had attended the meeting to inform the Council of the celebration event planned to mark the Coronation of HM King Charles III. Two meetings had already taken place with an organising committee, and events planned include a Tea Party on Sunday 7th May from 1:30 to 4pm in the Village Hall, with competitions for the children and an entertainer as well as a tombola or raffle.

A grant had been applied for to the National Lottery Community Fund to cover the cost of the celebrations, however the resident requested that the Council consider underwriting the cost of the celebrations should the grant application not be successful. The Chair thanked the resident for coming and explained that this would be discussed under item 9.b of the agenda.

4. To agree Minutes of meeting dated 31st January 2023:

All Councillors agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting. Cllr Gardner proposed that the minutes should be signed, this was seconded by Cllr Bickers and all Councillors agreed.

The minutes had already been published on the website in draft form in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.

Action: Clerk

5. Clerk's Report – To receive updates on matters not requiring debate or decision.

The Clerk's report had been previously circulated to all Councillors and much of its contents were on the Agenda, however some specific points were highlighted:

- i. The Clerk reported to the Council that she had passed the final Unit of the CiLCA qualification and was now a fully qualified Clerk. The training session for Unit 5 had not been needed as the Clerk had taught herself, so SALC had reimbursed the fees that had been paid in advance.

- ii. Arslaan Tahir, Program Manager from Novus RS, had notified the Clerk that Brightwell, Foxhall and Purdis Farm Group Parish Council had contacted them about the Solar Farm Planning Application. BFPFPC had requested that, should the Planning Application be successful, they receive a share of the Community Levy paid to Bucklesham Parish Council as they were a near neighbour of the site. Mr Tahir informed them that the entire levy would be paid to Bucklesham as the proposed site was in Bucklesham Parish.
- iii. The next edition of the Bugle will include an 'Election Special' supplement to raise awareness of the Local Elections, explain the role of the Parish Council in the hope that further residents may consider standing, and inform villagers of the requirement to take photo ID when voting on 4th May.
- iv. Cllrs Bickers, Brinkley, Gardner, Lenton and Seagroatt had all completed the HSBC Banking Mandate form and had taken their IDs into the branch. The Clerk has now submitted this Mandate to allow all five Councillors to be signatories on the account. Cllr Owen had been removed from the Mandate due to her forthcoming retirement. Cllr Bloomfield had been removed due to the necessity of Councillors to be able to undertake internet banking.
- v. The Clerk reminded all Councillors that they needed to register to attend the CIL training offered by East Suffolk Council.
- vi. Following the comments made at the last meeting by Cllr Bloomfield regarding the gullies in Levington Lane, the Clerk had contacted Suffolk Highways once again to request that they be cleared. Highways reported that they had indeed been emptied last year following the request from the Clerk, and will be emptied again on a two year rolling programme. The plum hedge on Main Road had also been cut following the Clerk's annual request to Suffolk Norse. The broken 'Church Close' sign had been reported to Suffolk Norse and a replacement had been ordered.
- vii. The Clerk thanked all Councillors for their support, hard work and commitment during this last term of office. She wished good luck to all those standing for re-election in May.

Action: Clerk

6. Playing Field:

- a. To discuss the installation of a trampoline.

Cllr Lenton had requested this be discussed as a future project for Community Infrastructure Levy funds having been approached by a resident. The Clerk had researched the price of installation and the various considerations needed. Complete installation and equipment needed for a ground level trampoline of 1.5m x 1.5m bouncing area complete with safety matting surround would cost in the region of £10,120 including VAT. The Council's insurance cover would also need to be increased due to the high level of incidents caused by such equipment.

Chair's initials:

Councillors agreed that while this would be a welcome addition to the play area for the children, it was an expensive piece of equipment for individual use and therefore not good value for money. There were obvious issues with safety and maintenance, and it was also agreed that while the area remains unfenced it could potentially be difficult to keep clean. The Clerk was asked to write to the resident thanking them for the idea and explaining the Council’s decision.

Action: Clerk

7. Documentation:

- a. To receive notification of addition to Asset Register – Nest Swing (as sent to Councillors on 23/02/23)

The Clerk reminded the Council that they were required to review the Asset Register each year. It had recently been updated to include the new Nest Swing. Cllr Gardner proposed that this was an accurate document which was seconded by Cllr Brinkley with all in favour.

- b. To discuss and agree new Training and Development Policy (as sent to Councillors on 23/02/23).

This policy had been written as part of the Clerk’s CiLCA qualification and had been circulated to all Councillors. Cllr Brinkley requested a small amendment which the Clerk had made. Cllr Lenton proposed this be adopted which was seconded by Cllr Bickers with all in favour.

Action: Clerk

8. Highways:

- a. To discuss the request for a further grit/sand bin and a litter bin at the far end of Levington Lane.

The Clerk had been contacted by a resident of the far end of Levington Lane asking that the Council purchase both items. A request would need to be submitted to Suffolk County Council Highways to site a further grit bin on Levington Lane. A similar request made in October 2021 had been rejected as SCCH considered there was already sufficient bins on Levington Lane. If approved, the Parish Council would need to purchase the bin at a cost of between £150-£450. East Suffolk Norse would need to be contacted with regard to the request of a litter bin. Again, if approved, the Council would need to purchase the litter bin at a cost of approximately £200-£400 depending on the size of the bin. Total cost including installation and VAT of both items would likely reach £1,500.

As both items could be funded by future CIL money, Cllr Brinkley proposed that the Council request both a new grit bin and litter bin for the far end of Levington Lane once the next CIL payment is received. This was seconded by Cllr Bloomfield with all in favour.

- b. To discuss and agree date for Annual Village Spring Clean (provisionally Sat 1st April).

The Clerk reminded Councillors that the Parish Council Annual Litter Pick usually takes place at the beginning of the Easter Holidays. This year the date would be Saturday 1st April. Cllr Lenton proposed that the 1st April be agreed as a suitable date, seconded by Cllr Bickers and all were in favour. The Clerk was asked to advertise the event in the Bugle to ask for more volunteers in order that this not particularly pleasant task does not fall on just a few people. The Clerk agreed to register the litter pick with Suffolk Norse in order to be provided with enough equipment.

- c. To discuss the purchase of '30mph drive carefully' wheelie bin stickers for all residents.

The Clerk had requested a quote from Screen Studio for the purchase of '30mph Please Drive Carefully' stickers to attach to wheelie bins, as seen in neighbouring Parishes. These are considered an effective speed control measure. It was agreed that they could be effective if placed on the bins of properties along Main Road and Newbourne Road but that they would not be necessary for the smaller Lanes and Closes. The Clerk informed the Council that as there are 60 homes situated in suitable locations, each with two bins, allowing for two stickers per bin (to catch traffic coming in both directions) the Council would need to purchase 240 stickers, with a total cost of £195. Councillors agreed the stickers could prove to be very helpful in their continued efforts to manage the speeding traffic through the village. Cllr Bickers proposed the Council purchase 250 stickers for suitable houses. This was seconded by Cllr Lenton with four in favour and one abstention.

- d. To discuss the many potholes in the village.

Cllr Brinkley had requested this item be placed on the agenda following several more potholes that had appeared. It was agreed that the 'Report it' tool on Suffolk Highways website (also accessible via a link on the Parish Council website) was a quick and effective method of reporting potholes, and there had been experience on the Council of reported potholes being filled in within 21 days. The Clerk was asked to advertise once again the method of reporting such issues in the next edition of the Bugle.

Action: Clerk

9. Projects:

- a. To discuss and agree the arrangements for the Thermal Imaging Project.

As part of their Green Suffolk Strategy, the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership have offered the use of Thermal Imaging Cameras to all Parish Councils to enable them to carry out surveys in their local area. The aim in running the project is to raise awareness about insulation, and if possible to help residents to improve the energy efficiency of their houses. This could mean a reduction in fuel bills, better health and also a reduction in the total amount of carbon dioxide that is emitted into the atmosphere.

Infra-red radiation cannot pass through glass and so the camera cannot see through windows, doors or walls. This means that a thermal imaging survey will not invade residents' privacy, and what will be seen in the images is only the outside surface of the house. The Parish Council have been offered the use of the camera from 10th to 24th April. The Clerk offered to collect the camera from Fakenham Magna Parish Council who would be using the cameras in the fortnight before Bucklesham. Cllr Lenton proposed that the Council go ahead with the project as he felt it was an excellent idea and that many villagers could benefit. This was seconded by Cllr Brinkley with all in favour.

b. To discuss the arrangements for the Coronation of HM King Charles III.

Cllr Seagroatt had attended a meeting with a small group of residents who wished to mark the Coronation of HM King Charles III with a village celebration. Their ideas involved a Tea Party for the whole village on Sunday 7th May in the Village Hall, along with an art competition for village children and a raffle or tombola. Cllr Brinkley said he felt it would be a nice idea for the Council to purchase commemorative mugs for all village children of primary school age and under. The Clerk had asked the School and the Toddler Group for approximate numbers of qualifying children. The School reported that 20 children attending the school have a Bucklesham address and the Toddler Group estimated 17 preschool children their group.

The Clerk had requested a grant from the National Lottery Community Fund of £1,000 on behalf of the organising committee to cover all costs including bunting, the hire of the Village Hall, competition prizes, catering, and the purchase of commemorative mugs. Cllr Lenton proposed that the Council purchase one box of 36 mugs and that the second box of 36 is paid for from the Lottery Grant. This was seconded by Cllr Bloomfield and all were in favour.

Cllr Brinkley proposed that the Council agree to cover the cost of the celebrations in their entirety if the grant application was not successful, as without some assurances of how the idea would be financed the organisation could not begin. This was seconded by Cllr Bickers with all in favour. The Clerk was asked to advertise the celebrations in the next edition of the Bugle and to ask parents to contact the Council by the 26th March if they wished their child to receive a mug.

c. To discuss offering First Aid and defib refresher training to residents.

The Council had been contacted by a resident suggesting the Council organise a First Aid and defibrillator refresher course. The Clerk had investigated suitable organisations who could deliver this training. Stephanie Thrush, a highly recommended qualified First Aid and Defibrillator Refresher Course trainer, could offer to teach 12-16 people at a time, with a session lasting no longer than 45 minutes. The cost of the training would be £50 in total, regardless of the number of people attending or the number of sessions in the afternoon. A date had been provisionally booked for Tuesday 30th May 2023 in the Village Hall from 2pm. Cllr Gardner proposed that the Council accept the offer of training from Stephanie as she felt this was a very important skill for as many residents as possible to acquire. This was seconded by Cllr Bloomfield with all in favour.

Action: Clerk

Chair's initials:

10. Planning:

- a. To discuss the following Planning Applications received:
 - i. None received.
- b. To hear details about retrospective planning application, DC/22/3652/FUL, Valley Farm.

The Council had previously contacted the Planning Enforcement Officer with regards to businesses at Valley Farm operating without planning permission. These had been investigated by Assistant Enforcement Officer, Dominic Starkey, who had reported that the retrospective planning permission had now been granted.

- c. To receive an update on the Castlemore Homes Oak Tree Farm, Levington Lane development.

Work had started on the site and the Clerk was keeping in regular contact with Gary Bareham, the Construction Director, who had sent a progress report. This had been forwarded to Councillors. There had been a few incidents of workmen's cars parking on the Lane and causing a nuisance for residents, however this had been quickly rectified by Gary. Block and beam floors have been fitted on the first six houses with timber frames to two houses being erected this week. The issue of lorries arriving at the site outside of the agreed hours of work was being closely monitored.

11. Finance Matters:

- a. To review accounts as at 28th February 2023 and review Bank Statements.

The accounts had been sent to all Councillors and there were no questions. Cllr Brinkley was asked to sign and verify that the bank statements reflected the money held at the end of the month.
- b. To discuss the Grant Request from the Bumps, Babes and Toddler Group to fund an Easter Egg Trail and Easter Craft and Coffee Morning.

The Council had received a Grant Application from the Bucklesham Bumps, Babes and Toddler Group asking for £100 to cover the cost of an Easter Egg Trail and Easter Craft and Coffee Morning for the whole village to take place on Maundy Thursday 6th April. Cllr Brinkley proposed that the request be granted as he felt this was an excellent idea and the organisers should be applauded. This was seconded by Cllr Bickers with all in favour.

- c. To discuss the purchase of gifts for retiring Councillors.

Following the decisions of Parish Councillor Heather Owen and District Councillor Richard Kerry not to stand again for office at the Local Elections on May 4th, Cllr Brinkley proposed that the Council purchase retirement gifts for both Councillors in recognition of their service and achievements.

It was agreed that Cllr Kerry had been a very proactive District Councillor and had been very generous with his time, and in supporting many Bucklesham projects with his Enabling Communities Budget. Cllr Brinkley proposed that a bottle of whisky be purchased as a thank you. This was seconded by Cllr Gardner and all were in favour.

The Clerk reminded the Council that Cllr Heather Owen has been a Bucklesham Parish Councillor for 20 years, taking the seat from her late husband Roger Owen in 2002. During her time on the Council, Heather had served as Chair for many years. Heather had been a very proactive Councillor and initiated many projects for the village, including the installation of the Play Equipment, the handover of the management of the Playing Field from the Community Council, and the subsequent development of the Field including the purchase of benches, table tennis tables and the woodland walkway. Heather had also been a vital part of the grant applications team over the last term of the Council, helping the village to obtain over £150,000 in grants for various projects. Cllr Brinkley, the current Chair, said he felt that Heather should be celebrated and thanked for her significant achievements, remarking that she had steered the Council through some very tricky times in recent years. Cllr Brinkley proposed a gift be purchased to the value of £50 in recognition of her many years' service. This was seconded by Cllr Gardner with all in favour.

- d. To note payments made since the last meeting:
 - i. None
- e. To authorise the following payments:

i. Print 4 U – Spring Bugle (including two Supplements)	£217.00
ii. Ruth Johnson (Clerk’s Salary Jan/Feb/Mar plus annual expenses and CiLCA reimbursement)	£3,100.98
iii. HMRC (Clerk’s PAYE)*	£990.96
<i>*Cheque would not be written until after 5th April 2023</i>	
- f. To note Payments received since last meeting:
 - i. SALC (refund for Clerk’s CiLCA training session not needed) £66.00
- g. To note Bank Balances as at 28th February 2023:

i. Current Account	£9,270.02
ii. Savings Account	£0.06

Cllr Brinkley proposed that finance matters ‘d’ to ‘g’ were accepted, seconded by Cllr Lenton with all in favour.

Action: Clerk

12. To receive agenda items for next meeting (Wednesday May 10th 2023) which is the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, including the Community Council AGM and the Annual Parish Meeting.

There were no other agenda items as at the meeting from the Councillors, but the Clerk reminded them that all projects going forward would be included and that any new items should be notified to her at least one week before the meeting.

The next meeting in May will be the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting. It was agreed that the start time of the Annual Parish Meeting would be 6:30pm followed by the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council straight after. The Clerk was asked to write to all those who offered a report last year for this year’s reports.

Chair’s initials:

Both meetings would be preceded by the Community Council AGM starting at 6:00pm.

As this will be the final meeting of the current term of office, the Chair thanked all Councillors for their commitment and hard work over the last four years. He wished them all good luck for the forthcoming elections and hoped to reconvene the Council again in May.

Cllr Bloomfield informed the Chair that she would not be standing again for re-election in May and wished to retire from the Council. The Chair thanked Cllr Bloomfield for the enormous contribution she has made to the Council over the more than fifty years she has served. Cllr Brinkley praised Cllr Bloomfield for her passion, enthusiasm and knowledge and expressed his opinion that she has been an extremely valuable Councillor. He wished her well for the future. Cllr Gardner wished to reiterate Cllr Brinkley’s comments adding that Cllr Bloomfield’s knowledge had been of valuable assistance. Cllr Bloomfield was urged to write down all her knowledge of Bucklesham history to preserve for future generations.

Cllr Bloomfield assured the Council that she intended to attend Parish Council meetings in the future but would sit on the other side of the floor from then on.

The meeting closed at 8:45pm.

Signed:
Chair

Date:

Ruth Johnson
Clerk to Bucklesham Parish Council

Chair’s initials: