

BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting held virtually at 8pm on Monday 9th November 2020.

Present:

Cllrs Bourke, Cox, Husband (Chairman), Jones, Pryor and Steed and the Clerk. Cllr Horden joined the meeting during item 5.

In attendance

Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) Cllrs Simon Budd and Paul Potter, Surrey County Council (SCC) Cllr Helyn Clack and, for items 1-6, two members of the public.

1. Apologies for Absence

(143) None.

2. Declarations of Interest

(144) None.

3. Requests for Dispensations

(145) None.

4. Minutes

(146) Council **resolved** to approve Minutes of the Meeting held on 14th September 2020. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

5. Open Forum

(147) Cllr Husband welcomed two residents and, having established their interest as MO/2020/1788 invited each of them to address Council. Cllr Husband thanked each of the residents for taking the time to attend and encouraged both to submit their individual representations to MVDC, the local planning authority.

6. Planning and Licensing

New Planning Applications

(148) MO/2020/1747: Remove two horse chestnut trees at Rana, Old Road, Buckland, RH3 7DZ. Council **resolved** not to make any comment on this application.

(149) MO/2020/1788: Erection of shed following removal of existing structure at Shagbrook, Reigate Road, Buckland, RH2 9RE.

Council **resolved** to record its disappointment the applicant did not apply for planning permission prior to erecting the new structure and to object to this application.

Action: Clerk to submit letter of objection on grounds the build, on land outside any residential curtilage, is inappropriate development in the green belt for which the applicant has failed to provide any special reasons sufficient to justify its approval.

(150) MO/2020/1795: Erection of 1 No. dwelling with associated landscaping, parking and access following demolition of existing barn on land South of Betchworth Village Hall, Station Road, Betchworth, RH3 7DF.

Council **resolved** to object to this application. **Action:** Clerk to submit objection; to query the basis for allowing the proposed replacement dwelling on open green belt land and proposed scale of the dwelling and to express Council's view that the proposed change of use for a significant parcel of agricultural land to residential curtilage would amount to inappropriate development in the green belt and cause harm to the openness of the surrounding green belt land.

(151) MO/2020/1839: Outline application for the consideration of scale in respect of the erection of 1 No. replacement dwelling at Buckland Heights, Buckland Hill, Buckland, KT20 7HZ. Council noted this submission replicates an application for which permission will expire in March 2021. Council **resolved** to replicate the response submitted in 2017 that had queried how scale can be properly assessed on such limited information and to reserve judgement for the detailed application that will need to be submitted should MVDC approve this application.

Planning Notifications

(152) Council noted the following Local Planning Authority notifications:

- (153) MO/2020/1135: Erection of a single storey side extension at Little Court, Buckland Court, Reigate Road, Buckland, RH3 7EA. Refused;
- (154) MO/2020/1174: Erection of 1 No. dwelling with associated landscaping, parking and access following demolition of existing barn on land South of Betchworth Village Hall, Station Road, Betchworth, RH3 7DF. Withdrawn.
- (155) MO/2020/1236: Loft conversion with 1 No rear dormer window with gable addition to front elevation at 5 Tranquil Dale, Buckland, RH3 7EE. Refused;
- (156) MO/2020/1946: Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposed development in respect of a hip to gable loft conversion with 1 No. rear dormer window at 5 Tranquil Dale, Buckland, RH3 7EE. Under consideration.

Planning Updates

(157) Council noted the applicant had submitted additional information in relation to application : SCC/2020/0030 (MO/2020/0702): Details of a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan pursuant to Condition 11 of planning permission ref: MO/2017/1797 dated 30 May 2018 at Park Pit, Reigate Road, Buckland, RH3 7BE. No action required.

(158) Council noted:

- (i) the unauthorised siting of two mobile homes and erection of boundary fencing on land adjacent to Betchworth Village Hall is the subject of a MVDC planning enforcement enquiry; and
- (ii) on 25th September 2020, MVDC had advised a breach of planning condition notice had been served on Karcher JMS, Station Road, Betchworth and that a failure to clear the external area of material and equipment within 28 days would be a criminal offence.

Council **resolved** to object to the installations of any structures on the open green belt agricultural land adjacent to Betchworth Village Hall. **Action:** Clerk to liaise with MVDC.

Shell Buckland Waitrose

(159) Council noted:

- (i) an enforcement enquiry had been submitted to MVDC to ask the Compliance Officer to visit the site to inspect the unauthorised installation of Amazon lock up boxes;
- (ii) until Council noted the installation, that does not form part of the business franchise, had come as a surprise to the onsite team who had questioned how they can be expected to ensure the operation complies with the planning and licensing conditions imposed to protect the amenity of the nearby residents.
- (iii) Shell had instructed Amazon to power down the lock up boxes to allow time to resolve the site-specific queries that have been raised.

(160) Council **resolved** to record its concern:

- (i) at the lack of prior consultation undertaken by the Shell team responsible for this separate business stream;
- (ii) about the extent to which this installation may increase onsite traffic congestion and its potential to further undermine the service offering at Betchworth Post Office.

Action: Clerk to continue to seek input from MVDC.

Planning Policy – Planning Futures White Paper

(161) Council noted responses to this consultation issued by the following groups had been made available to help Cllrs gain an awareness of the widespread concern being expressed about the proposed changes: South East Region County Association Forum, SCC, MVDC, Centre for Sustainable Energy and Farnham Town Council.

7. Highways, Railways, Airports and Rights of Way

SCC – Highways

- (162) Council noted SCC Highways had advised that with a lower volume of traffic currently on our roads than is “normal” a speed survey will not be scheduled until SCC believes the survey will provide an accurate assessment of what the mean speeds are on the section of the A25 between Tranquil Dale and Betchworth roundabout. SCC hopes traffic will have sufficiently returned to "normal" to carry out the survey Spring 2021.
- (163) Council **resolved** to ask Cllr Clack to seek confirmation from SCC Highways that the proposed speed reduction from 50mph to 40mph will not be implemented between Brockham and Betchworth roundabout until it has been established whether the section between Betchworth roundabout and Tranquil Dale can be included. Cllr Clack agreed to put Council’s question to SCC Highways. **Action:** Cllr Clack.

SCC – Rail Strategy

- (164) Council noted consultants Arup had been appointed by SCC to update and refresh the County’s Rail Strategy, that the parish council had submitted a response and that its request to be kept informed had been acknowledged.

Airports

- (165) Council noted Gatwick Airport Limited had recently announced plans to introduce a £5 forecourt charge to encourage passengers to travel to the airport via public transport rather than arrange to journey via a means involving a drop off and/or collection.
- (166) Council noted the village website had been refreshed to include key information included in the GACC October newsletter.

Rights of Way

- (167) Council noted a link to the SCC Countryside Access Annual Report 2019-2020 had been included in a recent parish update.
- (168) Council noted Cllr Pryor had attended a meeting of the Surrey Hills Byways Forum on 5th October 2020, and that whilst no specific actions were being recommended, continuing to participate in the working group remains worthwhile.

8. Amenities

Village Pond and Green

- (169) Council noted that that updated government guidelines had prompted the Reigate Area Conservation Volunteers to defer plans for a working party at Buckland pond on Sunday 27th September 2020.
- (170) Council recorded a vote of thanks to Alan Pryor, Martin Boyce, and the Clerk for installing the silhouettes and large poppies. The Clerk confirmed they will be removed shortly after 11th November and retained for re-use.

Buckland Business Network

- (171) Council noted Cllr Horden had:
- (i) started to proactively approach the local community to gauge interest in establishing a local business network; and
 - (ii) having attended a virtual meeting of the Mole Valley Chamber of Commerce, had taken up a 6-month trial membership (no charge) to gain an understanding of what the Chamber can offer our local business community.

Action: All to encourage anyone operating a local business or working from home to make contact with Cllr Horden and to share details of any existing local networking and/or support groups with Cllr Horden.

Amenity Improvements

- (172) Council noted SCC Highways had advised the second cut of the grass verges was due to be undertaken within the next week and that a request to MVDC to sweep the A25 roadside pavements would be submitted once the cut has been completed.
- (173) Council **resolved** to approve the Clerk's recommendation for Burleys to be invited to schedule the budgeted winter clearance work to cut back any build-up of earth and vegetation from the A25 roadside pavements.

Stile free rights of way

- (174) Council received a project update from the Clerk on steps being taken with the aim of improving accessibility on rights of way within the parish; principally by seeking the replacement of stiles with gates.
- (175) Council noted the Clerk had recently met with the local Network Rail manager who has responsibility for the two pedestrian railway crossings with a view to exploring the potential for Network Rail to contribute to this initiative. **Action:** Clerk to issue a parish update to seek input from residents.
- (176) Council **resolved** to record its thanks to:
- (i) Buckland Estate for agreeing to arrange and fund the installation of any gates the parish council can source to replace stiles on rights of way on estate land within the parish;
 - (ii) Cllr Clack for her offer to support an application for a £767 SCC Community Grant to be matched by £767 parish council funding to fund the purchase of four kissing gates; and
 - (iii) Alan Brindley for offering to seek out donations from other local voluntary organisations to accelerate progress towards Buckland becoming stile free.
- (177) Council **resolved** to authorise the Clerk to place an order for new gates upon receipt of the SCC Community Grant.

9. Finance

Account Payments and Receipts

- (178) Council **resolved** to approve the following payments:
- (i) HMRC £19.39, PAYE liability re: September salary payment, Employer NI £3.39, Employee Income Tax £16.00;
 - (ii) HMRC £19.39, PAYE liability re: October salary payment, Employer NI £3.39, Employee Income Tax £16.00;
 - (iii) G. Burley and Sons Ltd £197.69 including £32.95 Vat, Grass cutting: September (October – nil);
 - (iv) Society of Local Council Clerks £36.00 including £6.00 Vat, Website Accessibility Training re: Microsoft Excel;
 - (v) HMRC £471.98, PAYE liability re: November salary payments, Employer NI £141.09, NI & Income Tax deducted from employee £330.89;
 - (vi) Sheena Boyce £666.91, additional hours – April – Oct 2020, Includes expenses £16.00 less £16.00 refund October Employee Income Tax.
- (179) Council noted a £16.00 refund of £32.00 Employee Income Tax less expenses £16.00 (August and September) from Sheena Boyce was credited to Council's bank account on 15th September 2020;
- (180) Council noted that Cllr Jones had verified the bank balances entered on the bank reconciliation against the bank statements, initialled both documents, and confirmed that no unreported exceptions had been identified in the transactions reported between 1st July 2020 and 30th September 2020.

Financial update

(181) Council noted:

- (i) a year to date cash book and bank reconciliation and analysis of current year expenditure against budget had been circulated prior to the meeting; and
- (ii) the full year forecast income now includes £5,293.17 Community Infrastructure Levy MVDC had recently advised would shortly be paid to the parish council.

(182) Council **resolved** to set a date for an informal working group session to initiate preparation of the 2021/22 budget and review Council's 3-year financial plan.

Action: Clerk to circulate potential dates in December.

10. Formalities

Climate Action Event

(183) Cllr Jones and the Clerk had attended a Climate Action Virtual Conference on 30th September 2020. Council, having considered feedback from the event **resolved** to “actively think about climate change in every action Council takes by Cllrs incorporating consideration of climate change into their everyday thinking” rather than rush to launch any specific initiatives at this time.

(184) Council expressed an interest in any future initiatives our neighbouring parishes (and statutory) councils might be championing with a climate change or environmental theme. **Action:** Clerk to respond to approach from Betchworth Parish Council to respond positively to an offer relayed by Betchworth Parish Cllr Higgins to keep Council informed and to express Council's thanks for his offer to do so.

SALC AGM

(185) Council noted:

- (i) Cllr Jones had represented Council at the SALC AGM on Thursday 22nd October 2020 and that links to a recording of the proceedings had been circulated;
- (ii) Tim Oliver, Surrey Leader had provided an update to the AGM that had included reference to a presentation that would shortly set out an invitation to parish councils to take on services currently provided by SCC;
- (iii) Tim Oliver and Trevor Leggo (SALC) encouraged parishes to carefully consider the budgetary implications of taking on more responsibility when reviewing the aims and objectives that inform council's 3-year financial projections; and
- (iv) Rob Fairbanks, Surrey Hills, had taken the opportunity to encourage parish councils to attend a virtual update from the Surrey Hills Board and a Surrey Hills Symposium to receive briefings on what Surrey Hills suggest is the “long awaited Natural England led review of the Surrey Hills AONB boundaries” and a recent initiative – “Making Space for Nature”.
- (v) Cllrs had signed up to represent Council at both events.

SALC Chairman's Meeting - Policing

(186) Council Cllr Jones advised Council the key topic on the recent virtual call had been problems caused by noisy and speeding motor vehicles. The need for a simpler means for residents to report problems to Surrey Police was highlighted with a Sussex Police operation (Operation Crackdown) being suggested as a model Surrey Police should be asked to consider introducing.

(187) Council noted Cllr Jones and the Clerk had submitted enquiries via SALC and Surrey Police respectively to gain a better understanding of the best way for residents to report their concerns to which responses are awaited.

(188) Council thanked Cllr Jones and the Clerk for initiating these enquiries. **Action:** Clerk to diarise update for January meeting agenda.

Mole Valley Neighbourhood Police Team

(189) The crime report advised six crimes recorded in Buckland between 14th September 2020 and 9th November 2020: criminal damage to petrol pump and three make offs without payment at the Shell garage, the theft of an acer from a pot and the use of a mobile phone whilst driving.

(190) A further 8 incidents were recorded: two road related offences, two suspicious circumstances, two police stops and individual recordings of nuisance neighbours and concern for safety.

SCC Consultation on admission arrangements for Surrey's community and voluntary controlled schools for 2022

(191) Council noted SCC is consulting on a proposal to remove “use of ‘nearest school’ as a criterion within the admission arrangements and that a link to the consultation had been included in a parish update.

Standards in Public Life

(192) Council noted SALC (Surrey Branch of NALC) had circulated a link to a government consultation on Standards in Public Life and a draft NALC (National Association of Local Councils) response with a request for feedback and comment. Council **resolved** not to submit a response.

Liaison with Buckland Parochial Charity

(193) Council noted the Clerk had forwarded the recently published NALC Guide to Dementia Friendly Communities and an update from Mole Valley Life to Buckland Parochial Charity for the Clerk to share with trustees.

National Government Devolution to Unitary Local Government

(194) Council noted:

- (i) the Government had announced a delay in the publication of its White Paper on Devolution until next year and advised SCC that Surrey would not be invited, at this stage to progress any unitary proposal;
- (ii) although SCC had deferred any further significant investment in developing a business proposal until after the 2021 County Council elections work focused on local democracy would continue;
- (iii) Surrey’s eleven District and Borough Councils plan had agreed to continue to work collectively to identify opportunities to secure cost savings through joint working.
- (iv) SCC Cllr Clack’s assurance that the anticipated invitation to parish councils from SCC is intended to offer a choice to local communities rather than require them to take on more activities and that any transfer of responsibility could be expected to bring with it an element of finance.

Action: Clerk to maintain watching brief.

11. Forthcoming Meetings

(195) The **Parish Council** confirmed the next full Council Meeting will be held virtually on Monday 11th January 2021 with a subsequent virtual meeting scheduled to be held on Monday 8th March 2021.

(196) Cllr Pryor will attend a virtual meeting of the **Surrey Hills Community Forum** on Friday 13th November 2020.

(197) Cllrs Jones and Pryor will attend a virtual **Surrey Hills Symposium** on Wednesday 25th November 2020.

(198) Cllr Cox will attend the virtual **Gatwick Noise Management Board Annual Public Meeting** on Thursday 3rd December 2020.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 10.25pm.

Sheena Boyce, Clerk

email: parishcouncil@bucklandsurrey.net

Disclaimer: Hard copies of this document are considered uncontrolled. For the latest version please refer to www.bucklandsurrey.net.