

BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting held virtually at 8pm on Monday 8th March 2021.

Present:

Cllrs Bourke, Cox, Husband (Chairman), Horden, Jones, Pryor and Steed and the Clerk.

In attendance

Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) Cllrs Simon Budd and Paul Potter.

Surrey County Council (SCC) Cllr Helyn Clack joined the meeting during item 8.

1. Apologies for Absence

(273) None.

2. Declarations of Interest

(274) None.

3. Requests for Dispensations

(275) None.

4. Minutes

(276) Council **resolved** to approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th January 2021. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

5. Open Forum

(277) MVDC Cllr Potter, relayed a message of thanks from several local residents for including the change to Betchworth Post Office opening hours in a parish update.

(278) Cllr Pryor shared his recent experience of reporting the need for a dead fox to be removed from the section of A25 roadside verge just to the west of Park Cottage. Over a period of four weeks he had, as a resident, made two online reports without success. He followed up the reports by calling MVDC and the reason given for the collection not being made was the location had probably been assessed as requiring traffic management. Cllr Pryor accepted MVDC Cllr Potter's offer to follow up with the relevant MVDC team.

6. Planning and Licensing

New Planning Applications

(279) MO/2021/0007: Erection of first floor front extension at 5 Tranquil Dale, Buckland, Surrey RH3 7EE. Council **resolved** to ratify the decision not to raise any objection to this application.

(280) MO/2021/0094: Temporary stationing of two mobile homes with associated storage containers and temporary fencing on land South of Betchworth Village Hall, Station Road, Betchworth, RH3 7DF. Council **resolved** to object to this application on the basis the application would be inappropriate development on green belt land without any special circumstances being cited. **Action:** Clerk to circulate a draft response to Cllrs serving on the Planning Committee prior to submission and to include within the response issues and concerns consistent with responses submitted to previous applications on this land.

Planning Notifications

(281) Council noted the following Local Planning Authority planning notifications:

- (i) 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. Withdrawn.
- (ii) MO/2020/2067: Erection of single storey side extension & proposed side first floor dormer window at Beechwood, Dungates Lane, Buckland, Betchworth, Surrey, RH3 7BD. Refused.

- (iii) MO/2020/2091: Discharge of conditions 8 and 9 of approved planning permission MO/2018/1848 to demolish existing sales building and remove linked canopy and LPG enclosure, erect new single storey sales building, gated timber fenced compound area with bins and plant units. Provide 12 No. new customer parking bays at Buckland Garage, Reigate Road, Buckland, Betchworth, Surrey, RH3 7ED. Approved with conditions. Council noted an informative had been included to advise the applicant this permission does not extend to the unauthorised lighting installed on the ATM machine.
- (iv) MO/2020/2178: Discharge of condition 1 of approved planning application MO/2020/1239 for prior notification for the change of use of agricultural buildings from agriculture to flexible commercial use (B1) at Kemps Farm, Rectory Lane, Buckland, Surrey, RH3 7BL. Partial discharge.
- (v) MO/2020/2396: Prior notification for the erection of a single storey rear extension of 5.72 metres deep and 3.4 metres high with an eave height of 3.25 metres at The Stream, Old Road, Buckland, Surrey, RH3 7DS. Prior notification not required.

Planning Enforcement Updates

- (282) Council noted the MVDC Enforcement team had not yet responded to Council's request for an update on the status of enforcement enquiries relating to the unauthorised installation of Amazon lock up boxes or the 24/7 ATM machine lighting at Shell Buckland Waitrose. Council accepted an offer from MVDC Cllr Potter to query the status of these enforcement enquiries with Mark Turner (Manager, MVDC Development Management).

Planning Policy

- (283) Council noted the government had launched a consultation on revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and proposals for a new National Model Design Code and **resolved** not to submit a response.
- (284) Cllrs Bourke and Cox had attended a MVDC Planning training session at 7pm on Wednesday 17th February 2021. Council noted both attendees consider the event had been worthwhile and provided an insight into the day to day challenges the Development Management Team, headed by Mark Turner faces.

7. Highways, Railways, Airports

Highways

- (285) Council **resolved** to ratify the response submitted to the SCC Highways consultation on the proposed design of an informal pedestrian island to improve safe access to the eastbound bus stop near Squires Garden Centre that had:
- (i) expressed Council's appreciation to the team at SCC Highways for responding so constructively to the needs of our residents;
 - (ii) expressed Council's support for the design team's decision, having taken time to assess the options, to relocate the bus stop from the "domed grass verge", a change Council believes will not only benefit passengers but also the local businesses whose entrances are close to the current location of the bus stop;
 - (iii) thanked SCC Highways for designing the scheme to include not only upgrades at the locations of the bus stops but also on the highway edge by the entrance to Shagbrook;
 - (iv) commended officers for the commitment being shown, during these challenging times, to deliver the scheme before the end of March 2021.
- (286) Council noted SCC Highways had since issued an amended design to address safety concerns expressed by Surrey Police and **resolved** to ratify the response submitted to express Council's thanks to the team for the diligence shown on the part of Surrey Police and SCC Highways to ensure the design is as safe as possible.
- (287) Council noted Amey, the contractor responsible for street cleaning in Mole Valley had made an early Saturday morning visit to remove debris from around the A25 traffic islands near Tranquil Dale and Lawrence Lane and is planning to return to focus on the islands in the centre of the village. **Action:** All to encourage residents to report any requirement for street cleaning to MVDC.

Airports

- (288) Council noted a response to part one of the Department for Transport consultation on “Night flight restrictions” had been submitted ahead of the 3rd March deadline.
Action: Clerk and Cllr Cox.

8. Amenities

Village Pond and Green

- (289) Council accepted Simon Elson’s offer to arrange a zoom call on Monday 15th March to discuss key themes emerging from his preliminary review of the Pond and Green Management Plan and noted the timeline continues to target adoption of a refreshed plan at the July meeting. Cllrs Husband and Horden expressed an interest in participating. **Action:** Clerk to book zoom call with Simon.
- (290) The Clerk advised that Burleys, weather permitting, hope to complete at least one and possibly two grass cuts before the end of March and had recently completed a one-off strimming task alongside FP 471. **Action:** Clerk to liaise with Burleys and arrange payment upon receipt of an appropriate invoice.

Rights of way

- (291) Cllr Pryor and the Clerk, at the invitation of SCC Cllr Clack, had attended a meeting of parishes in Cllr Clack’s Dorking Rural division with SCC Countryside Access on Wednesday 20th January 2021. Cllr Pryor advised Council there had appeared to be considerable confusion across SCC Cllr Clack’s division as to how improvements should be progressed. Council noted the meeting had not highlighted anything with specific relevance to the initiatives currently being progressed in Buckland.

SCC Cllr Clack joined the meeting.

- (292) Council noted the application to SCC Cllr Clack to secure matched funding to enable improvements to be made to the section of FP475, at the western entrance of the field known as Jubilee Field, a short distance to the east of Dowdes railway crossing had been approved subject to a condition requiring full liaison with the SCC Countryside Access team prior to work commencing. Council **resolved** to support the Chairman’s expression of thanks to SCC Cllr Clack.
- (293) Cllr Pryor advised Council three points of interest had been raised at the recent meeting of the Surrey Hills Byways Working Group held on 15th February 2021:
- (i) a temporary winter closure of the Wolvens Lane Byway is holding well and not been breached which has allowed a newly laid surface to settle in and further Traffic Regulation Orders for local byways are in the planning stage;
 - (ii) Surrey Police are now using the off-road bikes (previously no trained riders) with some notable success in catching illegal off roaders; arrests have been made and vehicles seized;
 - (iii) the Trail Riders Federation (TRF) is in the process of attaching “information notices” to SCC Highways posts on byways. Having spoken to their representative at the meeting, the TRF has agreed to co-operate with Council to ensure the signs installed will not conflict with our Road Markings and Signs Policy (Decluttering Policy) i.e. signs should only be installed on the section of restricted Byway (BOAT) to the north of Lawrence Lane.
- (294) Council noted Betchworth Parish Council, when it met on 4th January 2021, had recorded defects in Buckland highlighted by their Footpaths Officer and that the Clerk had asked the Betchworth Clerk to encourage all Betchworth residents to report any concerns they have direct to SCC Countryside Access to add weight to the concerns that have already and continue to be logged by Buckland residents.

9. Finance

(295) Council noted:

- (i) budget schedules, updated to reflect the decisions taken at the January 2021 meeting had been circulated to Cllrs shortly after that meeting; and
- (ii) a year-to-date cash book, analysis of current year expenditure against budget and a refreshed budget and notes had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Council **resolved** to adopt the budget schedules dated 8th March 2021 and the Chairman signed and dated copies of the current year forecast and budget schedules.

Account Payments and Receipts

(296) Council noted that a payment for £1,519.37, including £253.23 Vat, to G. Burley and Sons Ltd had been issued in accordance with minute 2020/21:226.

(297) Council noted that a payment for £3,530.40, including £588.40 Vat, to Centrewire had been issued in accordance with minute 2020/21:235.

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

- (i) HMRC £19.39, PAYE liability re: February salary payment, Employer NI £3.39, Employee Income Tax £16.00;
- (ii) SSALC Limited £36.00 including £6.00 Vat, Training Webinar – Transparency Code;
- (iii) SLCC £36.00 including £6.00 Vat, Training webinar – Planning;
- (iv) SSALC Limited £36.00 including £6.00 Vat, Training webinar - Year End Financial Procedures;
- (v) HMRC £19.39, PAYE liability re: March salary payment, Employer NI £3.39, Employee Income Tax £16.00;
- (vi) Buckland Parochial Church Council £80.00, Contribution towards the cost of electricity re floodlights to the church;
- (vii) Sheena Boyce £69.62 including £14.03 Vat, Council expenses less February and March income tax.

(299) Council **resolved** to:

- (i) approve a grant of £258.00, 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 2021; and
- (ii) extend its current subscription to Zoom for a further year.

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

(300) Council noted that the following amount had been received into the Parish Council bank account since the January meeting:

- (i) £32.00 refund of Employee Income Tax (December and January) from Sheena Boyce on 12th January 2021;
- (ii) £1,073.00 SCC Member Allocation to support improvements to local rights of way; and
- (iii) £40.00 donation raised through the sale of walk booklets.

10. Formalities

(301) Council noted a copy of Buckland Parochial Charity's draft accounts for the year to 31st December 2020 had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

(302) Council noted the information published on the Transparency pages of the village website had been updated to reflect the guidance the Clerk had received by attending Surrey ALC financial updates covering year-end financial procedures and the transparency guidelines on Tuesday 2nd and Tuesday 16th February 2021.

Surrey ALC

- (303) Cllr Jones, as Vice Chair, had attended a Surrey ALC Networking event at 10.30am on Wednesday 27th January 2021 convened to announce changes due to take effect on 1st April 2021, from which date the three counties previously served by a joint board will operate individually. Council noted following the appointment of Anne Bott as Chief Executive and Mulberry and Co as service provider for Surrey ALC that Anna Beams is joining Mulberry and Co to act as the first point of contact for Surrey member councils.
- (304) Cllr Jones had also attended a Joint Surrey and Sussex Chairman's networking call on Tuesday 9th February 2021. The meeting heard from the police team heading up the joint Surrey and Sussex Roads Policing Unit and parish councils were asked to highlight any concerns relating to use of our local roads to named officers for whom contact details were provided.
- (305) Council noted the SSALC team had encouraged councils to consider how meetings might best be held once the permission to meet virtually expires on 7th May 2021 and to consider whether to hold the 2021 Annual Meeting of Council during the first week of May. SCC Cllr Clack advised SCC proposes to adopt a change to standing orders to ensure the County Council retains the option to continue to hold virtual meetings. Council **resolved** to hold its next meeting, the 2021 Annual Meeting, on Tuesday 4th May 2021. **Action:** Clerk to reflect Council's wish to retain the option to hold virtual meetings when reviewing Council's Standing Orders for consideration on 4th May 2021.
- (306) Council **resolved** to continue its membership of National Association of Local Councils (NALC) for 2021/22 and to approve a payment of £199.69, comprising £35.76 to NALC and £163.93 to Surrey ALC Limited, its Surrey Branch. **Action:** Clerk to raise payment upon receipt of appropriate invoice from Surrey ALC.
- (307) Council, having given due consideration, **resolved** to ratify the response dated 22nd January 2021 issued in response to a **Freedom of Information Request** received via www.whatdotheyknow.org. The enquiry had questioned whether the Parish Council had adopted any byelaws or policies that could impact UAV flights. Council noted the response had replied to advise "No such byelaws or policies were in place as at the date of the reply".
- (308) Council noted updates issued by NALC, SALC, Census 2021 and the Electoral Commission had been circulated and key information published within parish updates or forwarded to relevant recipients.

Surrey Police

- (309) Council noted Cllrs Jones and Pryor had attended the Surrey Police Community Engagement Event at 5.30pm on Wednesday 27th January 2021. Council noted the Chief Constable had advised lockdown guidance in place at that time meant volunteers should not be delivering any leaflets, newsletters, or magazines door to door. Council noted this advice, and a link to a recording of the event had been forwarded to Rev Anna Moore.
- (310) Council noted a link to the Police and Crime Commissioner consultation re: 2021/22 Police Council Tax Funding had been published on the village website and highlighted in a parish update.

Crime Report

- (311) Council noted that no crimes had been recorded in Buckland between 11th January 2021 and 8th March 2021.
- (312) Seven incidents were recorded: two police stops and individual recordings of a road traffic collision between a car and a motorcycle (no injuries), roadworks traffic lights stuck on red, railway crossing barriers stuck in down position, vehicle driving dangerously at speed through temporary red traffic lights and a vehicle parked on private land blocking access to a shop.

- (313) Council discussed the challenges presented by the higher visitor numbers seen in Buckland that were considered to include:
- (i) inconsiderate parking, causing obstructions (as reported to the police) and consequential damage to verges and the village green;
 - (ii) walkers and cyclists failing to appreciate they need to “adhere to rights of way” and, before they set out equip themselves with the means to identify where they are and where they need to go to complete their route;
 - (iii) a general lack of familiarity with the Countryside Code;
 - (iv) an apparent unwillingness, on the part of visitors, to take their litter home with them;
 - (v) a need for SCC Highways to issue timely responses to be made to reports submitted by residents, particularly if the reports highlight issues with a safety aspect; and
 - (vi) a need for SCC Highways to ensure the working practices of their contractors do not undermine the ability of anyone visiting or passing through the parish being easily able to see Buckland is a well-cared for rural community that deserves their respect.
- (314) Council accepted SCC Cllr Clack’s offer to follow up within SCC Highways to:
- (i) Ask officers, for the work undertaken alongside the A25 between the Shell garage and Lawrence Lane, to share the selection criteria for the trees that have been cut, to explain the rationale for cutting down the trees to a stump and to clarify whether the intention is to allow the trees to regrow from that stump or to return at a later date to root treat or grub out;
 - (ii) Express concern about the recent damage to verges and A25 footways caused by SCC contractors driving their vehicles onto verges and footways and ask for contractors to be held to account; and
 - (iii) Seek clarification as to when the Countryside Access team will be able to address safety issues on two sets of steps on local rights of way that have been the subject of multiple reports via the Report a Fault facility on the SCC website.
 - (iv) Council noted SCC Cllr Clack’s suggestion that Council review the draft MVDC Tourism Policy and share any concerns with MVDC Cllrs Budd and Potter.
Action: Clerk to circulate a link to the draft policy and all Cllrs to provide feedback to the Clerk.

11. Forthcoming Meetings

- (315) The Parish Council confirmed the next full Council Meeting will be held virtually on Tuesday 4th May 2021 and with subsequent meetings scheduled to be held on 12th July, 13th September, and 8th November 2021.
- (316) The 2021 Annual Parish Meeting will be held as a virtual meeting on Monday 19th April.
- (317) Cllrs Husband, Jones and Pryor will attend a MVDC Planning training session at 3.30pm on Thursday 11th March 2021.
- (318) Cllr Jones will attend the Surrey River Catchments Annual Update at 6.30pm on Wednesday 17th March 2021.
- (319) Cllr Jones will attend the Betchworth Annual Parish Meeting at 7.30pm on Tuesday 30th March 2021.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 09.55pm.

Sheena Boyce, Clerk

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