

## BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting held at 8pm in the Reading Room on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

### **Present:**

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

### **In attendance**

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

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

(164) Council **resolved** to approve the reasons given for the absence of Cllrs Pryor and Bourke and noted apologies from Surrey County Council (SCC) Cllr Helyn Clack.

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

(165) Cllrs Husband and Jones declared an interest in planning application MO/2022/1787, as agent/owner and immediate neighbour respectively to Dove Cottage. Council noted Cllr Cox would chair this item and Cllrs Husband and Jones would refrain from comment.

### **3. Requests for Dispensations**

(166) None.

### **4. Minutes**

(167) Council **resolved** to approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2022. The minutes were duly signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### **5. Planning**

#### **Planning Applications**

*Cllr Cox took the Chair.*

(168) Council **resolved** not to submit any comment on MO/2022/1787: Reduce height of one Sycamore tree by approximately 5 metres and thin by 20% and reduce height of one Laburnum tree by 2 metres at Dove Tree Cottage, Rectory Lane, Buckland, RH3 7BL.

*Cllr Husband resumed as Chair.*

(169) Council **resolved** not to submit any comment on 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.

#### **Planning Notifications**

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

- (i) MO/2022/1104 (LBC) and 1105: Erection of a single storey rear extension following removal of existing, erection of a detached car port with two-bedroom accommodation following removal of existing garage at The Old Cottage, Reigate Road, Buckland, RH3 7BG. Approved with conditions;
- (ii) MO/2022/1388: Erection of two storey side extension at 1 Garden Cottages, Reigate Road, Buckland, RH2 9RE. Approved with conditions; and
- (iii) MO/2022/1753: Discharge of condition 3 of approved planning permission MO/2022/1203 for a new casement window to ground floor of rear elevation. (Application for Listed Building Consent.) at 5 Buckland Court, Reigate Road, Buckland, RH3 3EA. Condition approved.

#### **Planning Policy : MVDC Housing Allocations Policy**

(171) MVDC had circulated a link to a consultation on updates being proposed to the MVDC Housing Allocations Policy which sets out how affordable housing will be allocated to residents and circulated a marked up copy of the policy to Councillors in advance of the meeting.

(172) MVDC Cllr Potter, responding to a question from the Chair, confirmed the “rural connection” clause that this review is proposing be deleted is the clause introduced, after a lengthy campaign, to recognise the importance of prioritising those residents registered with MVDC as being in need of affordable housing who are part of the rural community in which a vacancy arises.

(173) Council **resolved** to:

- (i) object to the proposed removal from the allocations policy of the section which recognises the value of rural connection;
- (ii) express concern that such a change has not required discussion with all MVDC Councillors before launching the public consultation;
- (iii) express disappointment the forthcoming consultation has not been highlighted to Clerks, an omission that appears to suggest either a lack of appreciation for the timelines parish councils work to or a wish to minimise responses. **Action:** Clerk.

## **6. Highways, Rights of Way, and Trains**

### **Highways**

(174) Council **resolved** to:

- (i) express support for the SCC Highways proposal to realign the junction of Headley Common Road and Pebblehill Road/Dorking Road to remove access to the right-hand turn slip road for traffic heading towards the A25 from Headley Common Road;
- (ii) seek confirmation that road markings directing drivers travelling north to merge into one lane will be apparent in advance of reaching the brow of the hill; and
- (iii) welcome the planned resurfacing of the downhill section of Pebblehill Road that is currently in a poor condition. **Action:** Clerk to submit consultation response.

### **Use of A25 as local highways diversion route during M25 night-time closures**

(175) Council noted Cllr Steed had met recently with SCC Cllr Clack to discuss this issue and had updated Council as follows:

- (i) Cllr Clack had received emails from five households on this subject in June 2022, three of which came from Buckland;
- (ii) SCC view is that
  - (a) any suggestion to review the diversion route is unlikely to be accepted because the low bridge at Tolworth, if hit, could have potentially serious consequences for road and rail travel; and
  - (b) targeting the A25 diversion signing at drivers of high sided vehicles would not be effective given the widespread use of satnav devices;
- (iii) Cllr Clack suggested SCC would be prepared to look at porous asphalt surfacing on the A25 but only when the present surface needs replacing which could be well into the future. Cllr Steed, having researched latest advice on surfacing, cautioned that while porous asphalt does reduce tyre noise it does not reduce engine noise and can potentially lead to undesirable flooding problems;
- (iv) recent data, collected by a temporary installation of VAS in June 2022 showed that adherence to the 40mph speed limit applying on the A25 is good (daily 85%ile is 42.8 mph and 39.8 mph); and
- (v) Cllr Clack suggested any residents who consider they are being adversely affected could investigate grants that are available to help better insulate properties from noise.

(176) Council noted:

- (i) as National Highways (NH) rely on the internet and social media to disseminate information Cllr Clack recommended Council advise residents to monitor with the NH Twitter account or NH website;
- (ii) Cllr Steed's experience of the NH twitter feed, having recently signed up to "*test it out*" is one of information overload because there is very limited scope to filter data e.g. the most local geographical filter is "southeast";
- (iii) Cllr Steed will continue to monitor the twitter feed and update Council as to its usefulness at the January meeting. **Action:** Cllr Steed.

(177) Council noted a link to the SCC Highways consultation on future bus services across the county had been published on the village website and highlighted in a parish update.

## Airspace Modernisation Strategy

(178) Council noted:

- (i) in October 2018, following the publication of the Government and CAA co-sponsored Airspace Modernisation Strategy, Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL) had initiated a project to redesign its departure and arrival routes and procedures under the auspices of the Future Airspace Strategy Implementation - South (FASI-S) Airspace Change programme;
- (ii) GAL had, to date, engaged with a targeted group of stakeholders that has included local government (some parish, borough, district, and county councils) alongside key local environmental and community noise action groups;
- (iii) GAL had now invited stakeholders from across a wider area to attend a briefing to hear an explanation of the progress of this airspace change to date, to receive an update on the Comprehensive List of Options GAL has developed and overview of the Design Principle Evaluation and Initial Options Appraisal process in advance of upcoming engagement sessions being planned for early next year; and
- (iv) Cllr Cox will attend a virtual briefing on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

## 7. Amenities

(179) Council **resolved** to record a vote of thanks to Martin Boyce and Cllr Pryor for installing the poppies and silhouette respectively to coincide with the RBL Poppy Appeal.

### Village email group

(180) Council **resolved** to record a vote of thanks to Cllr Pryor for making visits to recruit residents to the village email group and welcomed news that the number of households:

- (i) signed up to receive emails now exceeds 200 (82%); and
- (ii) without any internet access continues to reduce – currently recorded as 10 (4%).

(181) Council noted:

- (i) fewer than 30 households (11%) have, thus far, declined to sign up; and
- (ii) the balance reflects properties currently undergoing a change of occupier (3%).

**Action:** All to encourage new residents to sign up.

## Bus Shelter

(182) Council **resolved** to record a vote of thanks to:

- (i) SCC Cllr Helyn Clack's, whose support for a request to be made for a £1000 contribution from her SCC Member allocation had recently been approved by the SCC Partnership Team; and
- (ii) the Betchworth and Buckland Society whose committee had pledged to make a £500 donation.

(183) Council noted the contractor had recently advised they hope to complete the work in February 2023. **Action:** Clerk.

## 8. Formalities

(184) Council noted:

- (i) MVDC had recently initiated a review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations, prompted by the publication of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England final proposals for MVDC ward boundaries; and
- (ii) As the MVDC proposal is for the Reading Room to continue to as the polling station for Buckland, no objection had been expressed.

(185) Council noted:

- (i) the Smaller Authorities Audit Appoint (SAAA) had appointed PKF Littlejohn LLP to be external auditor for parish councils in Surrey for the next 5-year period, running from 2022-23 until 2026-27; and
- (ii) the fee for a limited assurance review for parish councils with income and expenditure of up to £50,000 at £210.

## Annual review of effectiveness

- (186) In accordance with advice set out in the Practitioners Guide to Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England (2022), Council considered the effectiveness of its system of internal control and reviewed the measures in place to prevent and detect fraud and corruption.
- (187) Council noted that the Financial Regulations had last been reviewed at the 2022 Annual Meeting and the next review is scheduled for May 2023.
- (188) Council, having reviewed the recently circulated risk assessment schedule and audit plan concluded its system of internal control remains effective, its risk assessment is relevant and effective.
- (189) Council, having given due consideration, **resolved** to re-adopt the current audit plan and to appoint Peter Barclay to continue as Council's Internal Auditor for the period covering the preparation and publication of the 2023 Annual Return (AGAR).  
**Action:** Clerk to liaise with the internal auditor.
- (190) Council noted:
- (i) Cllr Jones had attended the Surrey ALC AGM and Conference on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at Shalford Village Hall
  - (ii) Cllr Jones felt the event had been worthwhile and of much more relevance now that Surrey ALC focuses on Surrey in contrast to previous events that has been too weighted towards Sussex;
  - (iii) presentations from SCC had highlighted the County Council's focus on the need to consider climate change across all functions and to deliver meaningful progress towards its medium-term net zero target; and
  - (iv) reference had been made to a "Sustainable Warmth" campaign that would offer targeted grant funding to help make homes more energy efficient; an opportunity that had since been promoted via a parish update and website post.
- (191) Council noted Cllrs Cox and Jones had attended a MVDC led training session on the recently adopted Code of Conduct at 6.30pm on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022 and found the session very useful. **Action:** Clerk to relay positive feedback and express Council's thanks to MVDC Democratic Services.
- (192) Council noted Cllrs Husband, Jones, Horden, Pryor, and Cox had accepted invitations to attend the formal opening of Poland Meadows on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022 and resolved to record its congratulations to the Poland Trust.
- (193) Council noted:
- (i) the Boundary Commission for England had published revised proposals for new parliamentary boundaries and launched a four-week public consultation;
  - (ii) the BCE proposes Buckland will be in the "Dorking and Horley" parliamentary constituency;
  - (iii) a link to the consultation had been published on the village website.

## Police Report

- (194) Council noted the crime report provided by Surrey Police had advised six incidents recorded in Buckland between 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022 and 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022 : individual reports of: an accident involving a motorcycle on the A25 Reigate Road, cars speeding on the A25 Reigate Road, a police stop, a query about a possible break in, a request seeking advice re keys locked in a car and concern expressed for a dog left in a parked car.
- (195) Council noted:
- (i) Surrey Police had advised Council's request for the classification of the accidental fire to be changed from a crime to an incident is under review. **Action:** Clerk to continue to monitor; and
  - (ii) Buckland Estate, having received an invitation to field a representative, will have an opportunity to raise recently expressed concerns relating to trespass and slow response time to 101 calls at a forthcoming meeting of the Rural Crime Forum that is to be chaired by MVDC Cllr Budd.

(196) Council noted:

- (i) An invitation to submit an expression of interest to MVDC for a Community Capacity Building and Infrastructure Support Grant and a bulletin from Utility Aid had each been passed to Buckland PCC and the Reading Room Treasurer; and
- (ii) updates issued by the NALC, Surrey ALC, SCC, MVDC, Surrey Hills Society, Gatwick Airport, SES Water, Thames Water (received via Surrey Wildlife Trust) and Surrey Police had been circulated to Cllrs and key information published within Parish Updates.

## **9. Finance**

(197) Council noted:

- (i) Cllr Jones had verified the bank balances entered on the Q2 bank reconciliation against the bank statements, and having reviewed the cashbook against the bank reconciliation, signed the cashbook to confirm no anomalies had arisen between 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022.
- (ii) financial schedules circulated in advance of the meeting had included a year-to-date cash book and analysis versus budget and bank reconciliation; and
- (iii) an instant access savings account is now operational at Unity Trust Bank.

### **Account Payments and Receipts**

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

- (i) Microsoft £79.99 including £13.33 Vat, 365 Software licence;
- (ii) G Burley & Sons Ltd £104.36 including £17.39 Vat, One September grass cut;
- (iii) Affordable Roofing Services £2,394.00 including £399.00 Vat, Purchase of cedar shingles and tiles re bus shelter roof;
- (iv) Reading Room £100.00, Room hires: 9<sup>th</sup> May, 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 11<sup>th</sup> Jul, 23<sup>rd</sup> Sep, 14<sup>th</sup> Nov;
- (v) HMRC £82.63, PAYE liability re: October salary payment;
- (vi) HMRC £81.87, PAYE liability re: November salary.

## **10. Forthcoming Meetings**

(199) The Parish Council will next meet on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023 in the Reading Room.

(200) Parish Council meetings are subsequently scheduled to be held in the Reading Room on the following dates:

2023: 13<sup>th</sup> March, 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 10<sup>th</sup> July, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 13<sup>th</sup> November;

2024: 8<sup>th</sup> January, 11<sup>th</sup> March.

(201) The 2023 Annual Parish Meeting will be held at 8pm on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023 in the Reading Room.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.10p.m.

**Sheena Boyce, Clerk**

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