

Minutes of Bucklesham Annual Parish Council Meeting

Held on 4th May 2021 ~ 7.00pm

Via Zoom Video Conference

Present

Cllr. Evelyn Bloomfield

Cllr. David Brinkley

Cllr. Gina Burgess

Cllr. Rhea Gardner

Cllr. Clive Lenton

Cllr. Heather Owen (Chair)

Cllr. Lynda Seagroatt

Judi Hallett (Interim Clerk) 2 members of the public were present

1. To elect the Chair of the Parish Council for 2020/21 and signing of ‘Declaration of acceptance of Office’.

Cllr. Burgess nominated Cllr. Heather Owen to be Chair of the Council for another year and she agreed. This was seconded by Cllr. Bloomfield and all were in favour. The signing of the Declaration of acceptance of Office’ would happen after the meeting.

Action: Clerk

2. To receive Apologies for absence:

Cllr. Richard Kerry gave apologies due to commitments at another meeting. Patricia O’Brien was unable to connect to the meeting so sent her apologies via email and sincere thanks for the beautiful tree peony.

3. To receive any Declarations of Interest and any Applications for Dispensation on Agenda Items (either pecuniary or non-pecuniary):

There were none.

4. Public Participation – To receive:

A member of the public in attendance informed the Council that he had good reason to believe there would shortly be a planning application submitted for a Solar Farm on the Bucklesham Estate. The Clerk asked the gentleman for the contact details of his source of information in order to make contact and gather more information. The Clerk assured Councillors that the Council would be electronically notified the minute any planning applications go live on the Planning Portal.

Action: Clerk

5. To agree Minutes of meeting dated 11th March 2020.

All Councillors agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting. Cllr. Bloomfield proposed that the minutes should be signed, seconded by Cllr. Brinkley, and all Councillors agreed.

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

Chair’s initials:

Action: Clerk

6. To appoint a Vice Chair for the Parish Council for 2020/21 and signing of ‘Declaration of acceptance of Office’.

The Clerk explained that this was not a statutory role but that it was useful to have a Vice Chair in the event of the Chair’s absence. All Councillors agreed to again consider their suitability for this position.

Action: Clerk

7. To appoint persons to the following offices:

Position	Person Nominated
Responsible Finance Officer	Clerk
Website Manager	Mrs Ruth Johnson
Bugle Editor	Mrs Ruth Johnson
Tree Warden	Mr David Butcher
Footpath Warden	Mr Charlie Cook
SALC rep	Cllr. Gina Burgess
Felixstowe Peninsular Community Partnership Rep	Cllr. Rhea Gardner
Internal Auditor	Mr Trevor Brown

Councillors and members of the public were thanked for taking on these roles. Cllr. Bloomfield proposed the above nominations be appointed. This was seconded by Cllr. Brinkley and all Councillors were in agreement.

8. To remind Councillors to review their Register of Members Interests entry at East Suffolk Council system.

The Clerk reminded Councillors it was their responsibility to check their entry on the ESC Register of Members Interests. It had been noted that many Councillors were not aware they had to include their own homes when listing ‘Land Owned By’. The Clerk had previously sent guidance to how to fill this in correctly.

9. Review and Confirm all Direct Debits and Standing Orders previously set up by the Council.

The Clerk confirmed there was presently one Standing Order established on the Council’s Bank Account : Information Commissioner’s Office for £35.00 per annum. Cllr. Owen proposed that the Council continue with this Standing Order. This was seconded by Cllr. Burgess and all were in favour.

Chair’s initials:

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

The Clerk's report had been previously circulated to all Councillors, but some specific points were highlighted.

- i. The Clerk informed the Council that the level of Fly Tipping in Bucklesham is considerably higher than in the other Parishes that she oversees. This is possibly due to Bucklesham's close proximity to the town and drivers passing through the village using it as an opportunity to clean out their cars on the way through. Also, it was noted the amount of Fly Tipping on a Thursday increases following the closure of the Foxhall Recycling Centre on a Wednesday. The Clerk suggested contacting the County Council (who run the Centre) for extra help with regards to keeping the Village tidy.
- ii. The Clerk wished to inform the Councillors that she had worked very closely with Ruth Johnson on the accounts and that she felt now all the correct procedures were in place Ruth would be in a good position to carry on with these moving forward. In three cases it was found that cheques written by the previous Clerk did not match the invoice and this had had to be explained to the Internal Auditor.
- iii. The owner of Twisted Oaks had contacted the Council and wished to share plans, soon to be submitted to the East Suffolk Planning Department, for the extension to the bike trails. This was for information only and Councillors were reminded to make no comment at this stage until they were in sight of formally submitted plans. These are now being circulated among the Councillors.
- iv. The Council had been contacted by the Developer of the Levington Lane site with planning permission for 33 houses opposite number 72 to number 92. He has requested an informal meeting with the Parish Council to arrange an exhibition and information sharing evening with the village.

11. Reports - To receive reports from Mrs Ruth Johnson on:

a. Bucklesham Village Website Administration

Ruth Johnson reported that she had made a new page for the Annual Parish Meetings and for the Quiet Lanes information. News is being updated as and when but at least monthly.

b. New Year edition of Bucklesham Bugle

The Summer Edition is now in Draft form. Twisted Oaks had requested inserting another leaflet offering Villagers a whole day pass to have a look around and see what they are trying to achieve. Ruth explained that in the past any villager who had asked to insert their own leaflets had been encouraged to make a donation to the Village Hall. The owner from Twisted Oaks had subsequently donated £500.00 to the Village Hall Roof Project.

c. Friends of Playing Field

Ruth reported that football will be finishing in the next two weeks. There had been another increase in visitors to the field following the easing of restrictions. Many had read the signs and driven away but some had continued onto the field regardless. There had been a few incidents where a group of men or young lads had gathered to play

football. They had been asked to leave by one of the FOPs and had done so with little fuss. A villager has requested some static personal training equipment. Ruth offered to look into a possible grant from Sport England to fund the project and was encouraged to visit Kingston Playing Field in Woodbridge.

d. Bucklesham Community Council

Ruth reported that acting as the Community Council she had been successful in her application for further funds for the Village Hall from the Felixstowe Peninsula Community Partnership for funds to lay a patio in the garden area. Also, that there had been donations from all the Hall User Groups towards the Third-Party Contribution for the roof as well as some very generous individual donations. Ruth informed the Council that the District Councillors had promised money from their forthcoming Enabling Communities Budgets and therefore the £4,000 needed was remarkably close to being secured.

12. To receive and ask questions of report from Cllr Gardner on Felixstowe Peninsula Partnership Meeting 22nd April 2021.

Cllr Gardner had previously circulated her report containing two main points:

- i. Victoria Field in Nacton has been awarded £5,000 to develop a ‘Trim and Trail’ project. This will provide exercise equipment which will also be accessible to disabled users.
- ii. Bucklesham and Foxhall Village Hall has been awarded £2,000 from the Small Grants Scheme which will be spent on the patio area leading out from the new French doors revamping the underused garden. Cllr. Gardner expressed congratulations to Ruth on another successful grant application.

The next meeting will be on June 24th 2021. As the recovery from Covid continues, the Community Partnership members will strive to develop and deliver local initiatives that combat Social Isolation and seek to improve Transport links in this rural area.

13. To discuss the Quiet Lanes project and to formally nominate Church Lane (from beyond the entrances to Church Close and St Mary’s Park) and Levington Lane (from beyond number 92) as Quiet Lane Status.

Following the Public Consultation, the next step is for the Parish Council to formally nominate the two lanes proposed. The Clerk reported that the vast majority of comments received had been very positive and supportive and that the only negative comments had not opposed the adoption of the Lanes, merely unsure of the effectiveness of the scheme. In addition, the Quiet Lanes team had also confirmed the project would cost the Parish Council nothing as all funding was in place.

Cllr. Brinkley proposed that Church Lane (from beyond the entrances to Church Close and St Mary’s Park) and Levington Lane (from beyond number 92) be formally nominated for the Quiet Lane status. This was seconded by Cllr. Gardner and all were in favour.

Action: Clerk

14. To discuss HGV vehicle movements through the village from Valley Farm and response from E S Planning.

Unfortunately, despite two follow up emails, no response to the Parish Council’s letter to a Senior Planning Officer regarding this matter had been received. The Clerk informed the Council that she had logged a concern stating a possible Planning Infringement with East Suffolk Planning Enforcement Team online. This automated system generated a reference number and was followed up by Dominic Starkey, an Enforcement Officer. The Clerk offered to share information previously received by the Council regarding the HGVs through the village.

Action: Clerk

15. Planning:

No Planning Applications had been received.

16. Finance Matters:

a. To accept Annual Accounts for year-end 31st March 2021.

The Clerk was thanked for producing the accounts so quickly after 31st March and congratulated on the presentation of them. Cllr. Owen proposed they be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. Gardner and all Councillors were in agreement.

b. To accept Internal Auditors report for 2020/21 and Internal Audit Report of Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR 2020/21)

Both these documents had been sent to Councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr. Brinkley Proposed they be accepted and acknowledged as received. This was seconded by Cllr. Gardner and all Councillors were in agreement. Cllr. Owen referred to the comments from the Internal Auditor as to the Clerk’s and Mrs Johnson’s work in producing the accounts.

c. To agree and complete Section 1 Part 3 of the AGAR (2020/21)

The Clerk read each point of Section 1 Part 3 of the AGAR, in turn. Cllr. Burgess proposed that the Council answer in the affirmative to each point. This was seconded by Cllr. Brinkley and all Councillors were in agreement.

d. To agree and complete Section 2 Part 3 of the AGAR (2020/21)

This section had previously been sent to Councillors. Cllr. Brinkley proposed the figures were correct and should be reported in the AGAR. This was seconded by Cllr. Burgess and all Councillors were in agreement.

The Clerk agreed to take all relevant papers to the Chair for signing, to publish on the website and to send a link to all documentation to PKF Littlejohn as per the instructions.

e. To agree the CIL Report 2020/21

The CIL report had previously been sent to Councillors. Cllr. Gardner agreed they were a correct statement which was seconded by Cllr. Brinkley and all Councillors agreed.

f. To agree Reserve Allocations as at start of 2021/22

Cllr. Gardner proposed the Reserve Allocation were a true record of Reserves as at start of 2021/22 financial year. This was seconded by Cllr. Brinkley with all in favour.

g. To review accounts as at 30th April and Review Bank Statements

The accounts for 30th April 2021 had been sent to all and there were no questions. Cllr. Owen agreed to examine the Bank Statement at the next opportunity.

h. To authorise the following invoices for payments

i. There were none

i. To note Payments made since last meeting:

i. J Hallett (Clerk’s Salary)	£600.00
ii. HMRC (Clerk’s PAYE)	£150.00
iii. Print 4 U (Bugle Newsletter)	£88.00
iv. H Owen (postage stamps)	£9.21
v. Trevor Brown (Auditor)	£150.00
vi. SALC (new Clerk training)	£180.00
vii. SALC Subscription	£249.10
viii. ICO	£35.00

j. To note Payments received since last meeting:

i. VAT Refund	£2929.49
ii. CIL receipt	£15.00
iii. Precept	£8993.00
iv. Tax Base Grant	£50.00

k. To note Bank Balances as of 30th April 2021:

i. Current Account (No. 80152285)	£13,747.29
ii. Savings Account (No. 00605875)	£4,250.25

Action: Clerk

17. To receive agenda items for next meeting on Wednesday 7th July 2021

There were no new 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 the new Clerk by at least one week before the meeting.

Cllr. Burgess reported that she had raised the subject of ‘Youth Engagement’ with Parish Councils at the last SALC meeting. This was to continue at the following meeting and any ideas would be brought to the Council at the September meeting.

Action: Clerk

Exclusion of the press and public from this item by virtue of Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 s1 (2) because of the confidential nature of the matter to be discussed

Chair’s initials:

18. New Clerk:

- a. To receive update on the interview for the position of Clerk and recommendations from the Interview Panel:

Cllr. Owen reported back to the Council about the very successful interview of Ruth Johnson. Ruth had given excellent answers to all questions and the panel had been very impressed by her ability, commitment and eagerness to take on the role. They also commented on the very professional way the interview was conducted and that all parties had taken the matter very seriously.

The panel unanimously recommended that she be appointed as the new Clerk with effect from 1st July 2021.

The appointment of Mrs Johnson was proposed by Cllr. Bloomfield, seconded by Cllr. Brinkley and all were in agreement.

- b. To appoint new Parish Clerk with effect from 1st July 2021 and to discuss and agree all employment terms and conditions:

A discussion took place regarding the Terms and Conditions of employment. A contract (in line with the latest SALC template) will be sent to Ruth Johnson formally inviting her to accept the position.

The Chair reminded Councillors that, although Judi Hallett would be remaining in post until 1st July, this would be her last meeting in attendance as Clerk. Judi was thanked by all Councillors for her hard work and efforts to bring the Council up to date. It had been recognised how important it was that Judi had undertaken a complete overhaul of all Parish Council Policies and Procedures and that now the Council was completely in line with current guidelines and regulations.

Judi thanked the Council for their comments and assured them it had been an absolute pleasure to have been able to help.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

Signed:
Chair

Date:

Judi Hallett
Interim Clerk to Bucklesham Parish Council

Chair's initials: