

Minutes of Bucklesham Parish Council Meeting
Held on 1st September 2021 at 7:00pm
In Bucklesham and Foxhall Village Hall

Present

Cllr Evelyn Bloomfield
Cllr Rhea Gardner

Cllr David Brinkley (Chair)
Cllr Clive Lenton

Cllr Gina Burgess
Cllr Lynda Seagroatt

Cllr Richard Kerry (ESC) Ruth Johnson (Clerk)

4 members of the public were present

In the absence of the Chair, the Clerk asked for a Councillor to act as Chair for the meeting. Cllr Bloomfield proposed Cllr Brinkley which was seconded by Cllr Seagroatt. Cllr Brinkley accepted and all were in favour.

1. To receive Apologies for absence:

Apologies were received from Cllr Heather Owen (medical appointment) which were accepted.

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

Cllr Bloomfield declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 10. a. i.

3. Public Participation – To receive:

a) Reports from County and District Councillors:

- Suffolk County Cllr Patti Mulcahy: No report received on this occasion.
- East Suffolk District Cllr Richard Kerry: Cllr Kerry was thanked by the Chair for his report which had previously been circulated by the Clerk. Cllr Burgess asked about the permanent provision of housing for the homeless following the Covid 19 pandemic. Cllr Kerry was pleased to report that most of those in need had now been found permanent accommodation and were resettled in their new homes.

b) Questions from any member of the public:

The four members of the public attending expressed their concerns over any future plans for the Twisted Oaks Cycle Park. It was felt that the unspoilt countryside was under threat and that the beautiful woodland should be protected for the benefit of all villagers. The Council was asked if they would visit the site to see for themselves the environment and the threat posed by potential further development.

Chair's initials:

Cllr Burgess assured the members of the public that every member of the Council had indeed visited the site, although it was agreed that this was in response to the previous retrospective Planning Application.

Cllr Brinkley explained that the Council could not comment on a Planning Application that did not yet exist. The members of the public were concerned that once a Planning Application was submitted, the timescale to respond would be very short and therefore it may be prudent to research and visit the site prior to any future Planning Application.

Cllr Brinkley assured the members of the public that their concerns had been heard, and that once a Planning Application was submitted to East Suffolk Council, the Parish Council would consider their views along with the views of the rest of the village. Cllr Brinkley reminded the members of the public that it was incumbent upon them to express their views directly to the Planning Authority, East Suffolk Council, as the Parish Council is merely one consultee.

4. To agree Minutes of meeting dated 7th July 2021:

All Councillors agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting. Cllr Burgess proposed that the minutes should be signed, this was seconded by Cllr Lenton 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. Clerks 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. Despite more chasing emails and telephone conversations, Ipswich Borough Council had still not completed the work on the Play Equipment following the RoSPA report in December 2020. The Clerk had contacted Lisa Stannard, the Head of the Parks Department, who promised to get things moving as soon as possible. The work outstanding consists of cleaning and maintenance of the equipment, replacement of two poles and the replacement of the basketball hoop.
- ii. There had been only 2 emails received from villagers expressing their desire for Jubilee Celebrations in Bucklesham following the Bugle Bulletin, only one of which was in a position to offer help with the organisation. The proposals are included in the next Bugle and the Clerk will pass on any contacts to Cllr Seagroatt.
- iii. The Clerk had received an email from Dominic Starkey, Assistant Enforcement Officer at East Suffolk Council with regards to the report of HGVs driving through the village from Valley Farm. A site visit was completed by East Suffolk Planning Department on 28th April 2021 and the site had been inspected. An extensive review of the planning history of the site was then completed. A further site visit is required to gather more information and fully review the use of this area which should be completed imminently. East Suffolk Planning will then be in a position to issue a final response.

Chair's initials:

- iv. The Parish Council had received several emails from non-residents asking for updates on Bucklesham Solar Farm. All had been asked if they would like to join the Bugle Bulletin Email Alert Service as this was the most efficient way to be kept informed of all Parish Council news. The Clerk had explained that all members of the press and public were very welcome at Parish Council meetings, but that the Bucklesham Parish Council would only take into consideration the views of their residents, whatever they may be.
- v. Two village children had approached the Clerk asking for two more pieces of Play Equipment, specifically a Zip Wire and a Nest Swing (suitable for disabled children). The Clerk informed the Council that the request for a Zip Wire had been included in the original plans back in 2008, however it had been dismissed as it was objected to by neighbours of the Playing Field in Field View and was very costly on the Insurance. It was proposed by Cllr Burgess that the Clerk investigate the cost of a Nest Swing and possible Grants. This was seconded by Cllr Lenton and all were in favour.
- vi. There had been no requests from villagers for a ‘Welcome to Bucklesham Pack’, which had been advertised several times in the Bugle. The Clerk shared with the Council the idea of a ‘Welcome to Bucklesham’ Postcard, an example of which had previously been circulated to Councillors. This could easily be posted through new residents doors with details of the Clerk and directions to the Website detailing all relevant Bucklesham information that a new resident may require. A ‘New Residents Information’ page could also be added to the Website. Councillors agreed this was an excellent idea and the Clerk was asked to investigate printing costs and draft an example ‘Welcome to Bucklesham’ Postcard for discussion at the November meeting.

Action: Clerk

6. To discuss grant application for Picnic Benches on the Playing Field and the quotes received:

The Clerk informed the Council that they had been successful in their request to the ‘Mrs L D Rope’s Third Charitable Settlement’ and had received £3,000 for new picnic benches on the Playing Field. A thank you letter had already been sent and the Clerk had obtained 3 quotes from suppliers. The company chosen, Marmax Recycled Products, offered best value for money, free delivery and had been recommended by a local primary school who had purchased several benches in the last year. The benches are made from recycled milk cartons, can be placed directly on the grass, are rot-proof and maintenance-free and guaranteed for 25 years. Cllr Lenton proposed that 8 picnic benches are ordered and that the old wooden ones are offered free to villagers with first refusal given to the FOPs. This was seconded by Cllr Seagroatt and all were in favour.

Action: Clerk

7. To discuss and approve grant application for outdoor gym equipment for the Playing Field and the quotes received:

The East Suffolk Boost Scheme has been established in response to the work of the Communities Team. Given the health impacts of Covid-19 and the importance of keeping active in managing long term conditions, East Suffolk Council want to encourage new community-led projects that support people in achieving this.

Chair’s initials:

They have established a new grant fund totalling £180,000 to help local groups to tackle the need. Outdoor Gym Equipment is one specific project that can be funded with grants of up to £5,000.

The Clerk had sought quotes from 3 companies who provide such equipment, the details of which had previously been circulated to Councillors. After much discussion Cllr Brinkley proposed that the Clerk apply for the grant of £5,000, and that once the outcome of the grant application was known, Councillors would revisit the decision as to who would be chosen as the preferred supplier. This was seconded by Cllr Burgess with all in favour.

Action: Clerk

8. To discuss quote from Sackers Scrap Metal for removal of container on Playing Field:

The Clerk had investigated several means of removing the shipping container on the Playing Field which is no longer in use. As the condition of the container, specifically the roof, could not be guaranteed, a quote had been obtained from Sackers to weigh it in for its scrap value which would cover the cost of removal with the likelihood of surplus profit on top. It was suggested that the old goals and flood lights could be included in the removal which would add to the weight. The Clerk reported that David Riddleston had offered to clear out the container of all the non-metal rubbish if this could then be removed and taken to the Foxhall Tip which would be considerably cheaper than hiring a skip. Cllr Lenton offered to disable the floodlights and put them in the container along with the goals once David had cleared it. It was proposed by Cllr Bloomfield that once the container is ready, the Council instruct Sackers to remove it. This was seconded by Cllr Seagroatt with all in favour.

Action: Clerk

9. To discuss investigation of costs to install and maintain Tennis Court and Playing Field:

The Clerk had been asked to investigate the costs of installation and maintenance of a Tennis Court following a suggestion from a villager in response to requests for projects for future Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The Council had been informed that CIL generated from the development on Levington Lane could be in the region of £60,000.

ETC Sports Surfaces Limited had been invited to the field to give an initial quotation and talk through the processes involved with installing a Tennis Court and the maintenance that would be required. ETC representative Nick Drake had met with Cllr Gardner, Cllr Owen and the Clerk and had provided guidelines to an estimated initial cost and ongoing maintenance requirements. The initial cost was likely to be in the region of £48,000 which would include a surrounding fence, all court markings and nets. There would be extra costs if soil were to be removed from the site which could be in the region of £5,000. Repainting the lines, weed removal and jet washing would likely be a yearly job which ETC would undertake for a cost of roughly £500. After 12 years the Court would need resurfacing which would cost £12,000.

After much discussion it was proposed by Cllr Bloomfield that once any significant CIL money had been received, the Council would survey the village and ask their opinions as to how the money should be spent. A village meeting would take place to allow all proposals, including the Tennis Court, to be fully discussed and the implications of imposing any ongoing costs to village Council Tax payers explained. This was seconded by Cllr Gardner with all in favour.

Chair's initials:

10. Planning:

a. To discuss the following Planning Applications received:

- i. Approval of Reserved Matters of DC/19/4510/OUT erection of 33 dwellings Levington Lane –

Councillors made the following comments:

- It is disappointing that there are so few bungalows on the site.
- The provision of parking will not be adequate and there is a likelihood of residents parking along Levington Lane which is already very congested.

In conclusion the Clerk was asked to register a comment of ‘No Objection’ with ESC but to note the concerns about the lack of bungalows and the inadequate parking.

Action: Clerk

b. To discuss any application coming forth since publication of agenda

- i. There were none.

11. To review and adopt the ‘Standing Orders – 2021’ and ‘Financial Regulations – 2021’ as sent to Councillors on 07/08/21:

The Clerk explained the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations need to be reviewed and adopted annually. She assured the Council that the Policies continue to use the current NALC templates and so were completely correct and up to date. As with last years, SALC advise that it is not necessary to print off hard copies but that publishing them on the website was still required. Proposed by Cllr Gardner, Seconded by Cllr Bloomfield, and all were in favour.

Action: Clerk

12. To review and adopt the ‘Risk Assessment (Financial)’ and ‘Risk Assessment (Non-Financial)’ as sent to Councillors on 07/08/21:

The Risk Assessments, both Financial and Non-Financial, need to be reviewed and adopted annually. They had previously been sent to Councillors for full review and were proposed by Cllr Lenton, seconded by Cllr Gardner, and all were in favour.

Action: Clerk

13. To review and adopt Asset Register and approve revised document as sent to Councillors on 10/07/21:

The Clerk had updated the Asset Register following the purchase of the Village Signs which are due to be installed by Cllr Lenton. The Clerk explained the Asset Register needs to be updated each time a new asset is included. This was proposed by Cllr Burgess , seconded by Cllr Gardner, and all were in favour.

Action: Clerk

14. General Documentation:

- a. To accept and adopt the Playing Field Management Policy and Rules for use of the Field (as sent to Councillors on 11/07/21).
- b. To accept and adopt the Grants Application Form (as sent to Councillors on 07/08/21).
- c. To accept and adopt the Expenses Policy (as sent to Councillors on 14/08/21).
- d. To review and accept amendment of Clerk’s details on the following Policies:
 - Bring your own device Policy
 - CCTV Policy and Code of Practice
 - Disciplinary Procedure
 - Equal Opportunities Policy
 - FOI Procedure
 - Formal Complaints Procedure
 - Formal Grants Award Policy
 - Grievance Procedure
 - Health and safety procedure
 - Information Protection Policy
 - Public Participation Protocol
 - Publication Scheme
 - Retention of Documents and Records Policy
 - Safeguarding Children Policy
 - Sickness and Absence Policy

The Chair thanked the Clerk for all her hard work with these Policies. Points a. to d. were taken *en mass*. They were proposed by Cllr Bloomfield, seconded by Cllr Burgess with all in favour.

Action: Clerk

15. Finance Matters:

- a. To accept accounts up until 31st August and review of 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 set the Budget timetable.

The Clerk set out the following timetable for the Budget and this was agreed:

- 1st November – Draft Budget established and sent to Councillors
- 3rd November – Draft Budget discussed at Full Council meeting
- January 2022 meeting – Budget agreed by Full Council

- c. To agree the Reserves Allocations

The Reserve Allocations had been sent to Councillors previously and these were agreed:

- Office Equipment £500.00
- Playing Field Reserves £2,000.00
- Defibrillator £1,000.00
- Clerk Emergency Fund £500.00
- Plum Hedge £250.00

The total held in Earmarked Reserves was £4,250.00

Chair’s initials:

- d. To acknowledge receipt of the Notice of Conclusion of Audit and Section 3 of Part 3 of the 2020/21 AGAR from PKF Littlejohn LLP

The Clerk advised that Section 3 of Part 3 of the AGAR 2020/21 had been returned by PKF Littlejohn with the following three comments.

- i. *“In the prior year, the smaller authority was exempt from our review, thus we have not reviewed any evidence to support the prior year comparatives on the AGAR.”*

This was due to the Council spending less than £25,000 in the prior financial year.

- ii. *“The AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review. The AGAR had to be sent back for amendment.”*

This was due to an inaccurate previously submitted Asset Register by the former Clerk.

- iii. *“We note that the smaller authority did not comply with Regulation 15 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 as it failed to make proper provision during the year 2021/22 for the exercise of public rights, since the notice regarding the period for the exercise of public rights was not published before the start of the period (the date of the notice is the same date as the first day of the period). As a result, the smaller authority must answer ‘No’ to Assertion 4 of the Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22 and ensure that it makes proper provision for the exercise of public rights during 2022/23.”*

PKF Littlejohn LLP have now issued a statement rescinding this comment after having been provided with evidence to show the Notice of Public Rights was displayed correctly within the correct time frame.

- e. To receive update on adding new bank signatories and move to full online banking

The Clerk reported that she had now changed the details of the Bank Accounts from the previous Interim Clerk. As soon as all Councillors feel comfortable with having face to face appointments at HSBA, arrangements will be made to facilitate full online banking.

- f. To accept and agree the quote of £75.00 for bulbs from Boston Bulbs

It had previously been agreed to hold an annual Bulb Planting Day in the village. The Clerk sought a quote from Boston Bulbs who could supply 1000 bulbs to be delivered in October.

- g. To acknowledge receipt of Insurance renewal documentation from Came and Company

The insurance renewal quotation had been sent to all Councillors, and Came and Company had recommended Pen AXA’s quote as the Council had entered into a ‘Long Term Agreement’ with them last year. This year’s quote had increased by more than £500.00. Came and Company had explained to the Clerk that this was due to several reasons; implications of the Covid 19 Pandemic, Brexit, and the updated Asset Register.

The Clerk had been advised that if the Council wished to remove the Play Equipment from the Insurance Cover, the premium would decrease by approximately £500. Public Liability Cover would remain on the entire field and it's equipment. Cllr Brinkley proposed the Pen AXA quote to remove the Play Equipment was accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Bloomfield, and all were in favour.

- h. To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:
 - i. Marmax Products Ltd (New Picnic Benches) £3,512.40
 - ii. PKF Littlejohn LLP (External Auditor Fee) £240.00

- i. To note Payments made since last meeting:
 - i. Padlocks for Goals £59.98
 - ii. Retirement Gift for District Councillor £10.00
 - iii. Replacement Goal Nets (Rigby Taylor) £114.00

- j. To note Payments received since last meeting:
 - i. Grant from Mrs L D Rope Third Settlement £3,000.00

- k. To note Bank Balances as at 30th August 2021:
 - i. Current Account (No. 80152285) £14,780.26
 - ii. Savings Account (No. 00605875) £4,250.39

Cllr Bloomfield proposed that all finance matters were accepted, seconded by Cllr Burgess with all in favour.

Action: Clerk

16. To receive agenda items for next meeting on Wednesday 3rd November 2021:

Cllr Gardner informed the Council that she would be attending the next Community Partnership meeting on 23rd September 2021 and would supply the Council with a report. Cllr Burgess would be attending a SALC Forum and would also report back to the Council in the November 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.

Action: Clerk

Items of Interest:

- i. Cllr Brinkley expressed concerns over the high level of traffic using Nacton Lane and that he felt this would only increase with the new development on Levington Lane. The Clerk was asked to investigate the installation of some 'Passing Places' with Suffolk Highways.

- ii. Cllr Burgess reported that even though the path to the school had finally been cut, it was not wide enough for a parent and child to walk side by side or to be used easily with a pushchair or wheelchair. The Clerk was asked to investigate the possibility with Suffolk Highways of permanently widening the path by resurfacing.

Action: Clerk

Chair's initials:

The meeting closed at 8:10 pm.

Signed:
Chair

Date:

Ruth Johnson
Clerk to Bucklesham Parish Council

Chair's initials: