

Minutes of Bucklesham Parish Council Annual Meeting

Held on 10th May 2023 at 7:00pm

In Bucklesham and Foxhall Village Hall, IP10 0DZ

Present

Cllr Trevor Bickers

Cllr David Brinkley (Chair)

Cllr Clive Lenton

Cllr Kathryn Roper

Cllr Lynda Seagroatt

Ruth Johnson (Clerk)

4 members of the public were present

1. To elect the Chair of the Council for 2023/24 and signing of the ‘Declaration of Acceptance of Office’.

Cllr Seagroatt nominated Cllr Brinkley to be Chair of the Council for the coming year and he agreed. This was seconded by Cllr Bickers and all were in favour. Cllr Brinkley then signed the ‘Declaration of Acceptance of Office’.

2. Apologies for absence:

a. To receive apologies for absence.

Cllr Gardner gave her apologies (illness).

b. To accept apologies for absence.

Cllr Lenton proposed Cllr Gardner’s apologies were accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Seagroatt and all were in favour.

3. To receive Introductions from all Councillors.

All Councillors gave a short introduction to themselves and explained their reasoning for standing for Parish Council. The Chair reminded Councillors of their responsibilities with regards to replying to emails in a timely fashion and keeping up to date with Council business.

4. To receive any:

a. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest.

There were none.

b. Declarations of Non-Pecuniary Interest.

There were none.

c. Applications for Dispensation on Agenda Items.

There were none.

d. Declarations of Gifts or Hospitality received over the value of £25.00

There were none.

e. Notification of Lobbying with reference to Planning Applications to be discussed.

There were none.

5. Signing of ‘Declaration of Acceptance of Office’ for all Councillors and completion of Election Expenses Forms.

All Councillors signed the ‘Declaration of Acceptance of Office’. There were no Councillors with election expenses and the forms were completed to reflect this. The Clerk will send all forms to East Suffolk Council.

6. Public Participation – To receive:

i. Reports from County and District Councillors:

• Suffolk County Cllr Patti Mulcahy:

Once again no report had been received from Cllr Mulcahy. Cllr Brinkley expressed his deep dissatisfaction with Cllr Mulcahy for once again being absent, particularly as this was the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and there had also been the Annual Parish Meeting with no annual report. A discussion took place with regards to the process of holding Cllr Mulcahy accountable to the electorate.

• East Suffolk District Cllr Ninnmey and Cllr Lee Reeves:

Neither Councillor were in attendance but the Chair stated he felt this was understandable as both were extremely new to post and had likely not yet received all the induction procedures necessary. The Clerk was asked to invite both new Councillors to the July meeting with the Agenda in the hope that they could both attend.

ii. Questions from any member of the public:

- There were no questions from the floor. One resident added their dissatisfaction with the lack of engagement from County Cllr Mulcahy and suggested that any other local Parish Councils who felt the same way may wish to join with the Council in expressing their collective concerns.

7. To elect the Vice-Chair of the Council for 2023/23 and signing of the ‘Declaration of Acceptance of Office’.

Cllr Brinkley requested this be put back on the agenda for July’s meeting in order to give the full Council an opportunity to consider the role.

8. To declare the ‘Power of Competence’ for the Council for the year 2023/24.

The Clerk reminded Councillors of the concept of the General Power of Competence. A Council must meet three criteria: to have a Qualified Clerk; to have two thirds of Councillors elected to office; and to Declare the Power of Competence as an agenda item. Cllr Brinkley proposed that the Power of Competence was declared. This was seconded by Cllr Roper and all were in favour.

9. To appoint persons to the following offices:

Position	Person Nominated
Responsible Finance Officer	Clerk
Village Hall Rep	Cllr Lynda Seagroatt
Archer Cartwright Rep (2 positions)	Cllr Rhea Gardner Cllr David Brinkley
SALC Rep	Cllr Kathryn Roper
Felixstowe Peninsular Community Partnership Rep	Cllr Rhea Gardner
Speed Indicator Device Wardens	Cllr Clive Lenton Hilary Garlick Keith Woods
Internal Auditor	Mr Trevor Brown

Cllr Brinkley proposed that all offices be appointed. This was seconded by Cllr Seagroatt and all were in favour.

10. To remind Councillors to review their Register of Member’s Interests entry at East Suffolk Council system (guidance notes previously sent to Councillors).

The Clerk reminded Councillors it was their responsibility to check their entry on the ESC Register of Member’s Interests. Councillors should remember to include their own homes when listing ‘Land where the member has an interest’. The Clerk had previously sent guidance to how to fill this in correctly.

11. To confirm areas of additional responsibility for Councillors.

Councillors confirmed the following areas that they would like to be responsible for in the current administration:

- **Cllr Brinkley** – Planning, Finance
- **Cllr Gardner** – School Liaison, Documentation, Personnel
- **Cllr Lenton** – Highways, Playing Field, Village Maintenance
- **Cllr Seagroatt** – Community Engagement, Community Infrastructure Levy, Planning
- **Cllr Bickers** – Planning, Finance, Highways
- **Cllr Roper** – Community Infrastructure Levy, Community Engagement, Playing Field

12. To review and confirm all Direct Debits and Standing Orders presently 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 Seagroatt proposed that the Council continue with this Standing Order. This was seconded by Cllr Bickers and all were in favour.

13. To agree Minutes of meeting dated 3rd March 2023:

All Councillors agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting. Cllr Brinkley proposed that the minutes should be signed, this was seconded by Cllr Seagroatt 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

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

The Clerk had continued to inform the Councillors of ongoing issues via a weekly email however some specific points were highlighted:

- i. The Clerk welcomed the Council to this first meeting of the new administration and congratulated them all on their appointments.
- ii. The Clerk pre-warned Councillors that it would be necessary to review all Council Policies at the September meeting as this was a task performed every four years to ensure all policies and documentation are relevant and up to date. Therefore to prevent an overload of documentation being sent round for review in one go, the Clerk advised Councillors of the aim to send three to four documents each week. This would allow Councillors to read each of them thoroughly, and request amendments if necessary, before officially reviewing and adopting at the September meeting.
- iii. Cllrs Bickers, Brinkley, Gardner, Lenton and Seagroatt are now all signatories on the HSBC Parish Council bank account as the mandate had finally been accepted. HSBC had made a gesture of goodwill of £200 for the inconvenience caused.
- iv. The Clerk and all Councillors had attended the East Suffolk Council Community Infrastructure Levy training which was very helpful in confirming the projects that CIL money can fund.
- v. The Thermal Imaging Project had been mostly successful with many participants expressing gratitude for the initiative. Some results had been hard to read due to weather and external lights but the Council will return to the project this coming winter.
- vi. SALC are offering New Councillor Training via Zoom consisting of two 2 hour sessions. The Clerk had previously sent details of available dates to Cllrs Bickers and Roper who had both committed to attend and had been registered on the sessions for May and June.

Action: Clerk

15. Playing Field:

- a. To discuss the Management of the Play Equipment for 2023/24 by contractors Suffolk Norse and the quotation from David Bracey, Play Safety Inspections.

The Council had been using the services of Norse in the previous year but this had not been very satisfactory. Following recommendations from a neighbouring Clerk, it was suggested that the quote from David Bracey be accepted for the coming year. David would inspect the play equipment as follows:

One Annual inspection (June 2023) - £100 plus vat (£20) = £120

Three Quarterly inspections (Sept '23/Dec '23/March '24) = £225 plus vat (£45) = £270

Total for 4 inspections per year = £325 plus vat (£65) = £390

Cllr Brinkley proposed this quote be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Seagroatt and all were in favour.

Action: Clerk

16. Documentation:

- a. To receive BPC 4 Year Plan (as sent to Councillors on 4th May 2023)

The Clerk explained to the Council that the 4 year Business Plan was an assignment that had to be completed for the CiLCA qualification and that it was recommended to have such a plan at the beginning of each new administration to focus their efforts in the years ahead. The Chair felt it was an excellent document and proposed that it was accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Bickers with all in favour.

Action: Clerk

17. Planning:

- a. To discuss the progress of the Castlemore Homes Oak Tree Farm, Levington Lane development.

Work had continued at a rapid pace with the first phase of houses well underway. The Clerk had been contacted by Castlemore Homes to explain the procedure for the allocation of the contract to manage the Social Housing. This had still not been agreed. Any villager wishing to take advantage of the residents' discount for either of the two available properties should contact Castlemore Homes directly.

Cllr Lenton expressed his concern at the number of construction vehicles which were using Nacton Lane to enter the village. Nacton Lane has a width restriction and the Clerk was asked to contact Gary Bareham, Construction Manager, to request he speaks to the contractors with regards to using the Kirton turn-off as an alternative route.

Cllr Seagroatt reported that Gary had acted very quickly over her previous concerns regarding the concrete lorries and all Councillors agreed Castlemore Homes were managing the site excellently and that their communication with the Parish Council had been exemplary.

- b. DC/23/0756/FUL Development of a temporary "Water Sourcing Facility" for Sizewell C, Site Of SZC Freight Management Facility, Felixstowe Road, Levington.

A lengthy discussion took place as to the Parish Council's concerns with regard to the planning application and the Council's ability to comment with authority on technical issues beyond its understanding. Cllr Brinkley questioned whether the Council's comments would even be considered given their lack of expert knowledge on the matter.

Cllr Lenton and Cllr Brinkley agreed to work together to draft a response to East Suffolk Planning offering 'No Objection' to the application but with some comments regarding various concerns of the impact on the village.

- c. DC/23/1717/VOC Variation of Condition Nos. 2 and 3 of DC/21/2661/FUL - Development of a Communal Barn to support the existing camping facility known as Cosy Camping Suffolk.

Councillors made the following comments:

- No Objections

The Clerk was asked to register a comment of No Objection on the East Suffolk Planning Portal.

- d. DC/23/1607/LBC Listed Building Consent - Installation of a wood burner in the lounge. No amendments or removal of existing materials. The Forge, Main Road, Bucklesham IP10 0DN.

Councillors made the following comments:

- No Objections

The Clerk was asked to register a comment of No Objection on the East Suffolk Planning Portal.

Action: Clerk, Cllr Brinkley and Cllr Lenton

18. Finance Matters:

- a. To accept and sign Annual Accounts for Year End 31st March

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

- b. To accept Internal Auditors Report for 2022/23 and 'Internal Audit Report' of Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR 2022/23).

Both these documents had been sent to Councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr Bickers Proposed they be accepted and acknowledged as received. This was seconded by Cllr Seagroatt and all Councillors were in agreement. Cllr Brinkley referred to the comments from the Internal Auditor as to the Clerk's hard work in producing the accounts and the excellent standard to which they were produced. The Auditor had generously invoiced the Council a reduced fee due to the Clerk's excellent standard of presentation making the audit much easier to undertake.

c. To agree and complete Section 1 of Part 3 of the AGAR 2022/23

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

d. To agree and complete Section 2 of Part 3 of the AGAR 2022/23.

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

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

e. To agree the CIL report for 2022/23.

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

f. To agree Reserve Allocations as at start of 2023/24.

Cllr Bickers proposed the Reserve Allocations were a true record of Reserves as at start of 2023/24 financial year. This was seconded by Cllr Seagroatt with all in favour.

The Internal Auditor had raised concerns at the lack of General Reserves. The Council's Reserves Policy states that there should be 9 to 12 months expenditure set aside for various emergencies, which would equate to £9,800. The current General Reserves are £2,800. Cllr Roper disagreed that it was necessary to have such a high amount in reserves. The Clerk informed the Council that the Reserves Policy would be reviewed at the September meeting and the figure reduced if the Council agreed.

g. To review accounts as at 30th April 2023 and review Bank Statements.

The accounts for 30th April 2023 had been sent to all councillors and there were no questions.

h. To note payments made since the last meeting:

i. HMRC (previously authorised)	£990.96
ii. SALC (payroll and subs)	£291.57
iii. T Brown (internal auditor)	£210.00
iv. Retirement gifts and admin	£168.96
v. Coronation Celebration Mugs	£584.40

i. To authorise the following payments:

i. SALC (Good Councillors Guide)	£24.50
ii. Bucklesham Village Hall (for Carpet Bowls hall hire)	£1,440.00

j. <u>To note Payments received since last meeting:</u>	
i. CIL payment	£29,147.48
ii. HSBC Compensation (good will gesture)	£200.00
iii. ESC (Precept)	£9,800.00
 k. <u>To note Bank Balances as at 30th April 2023:</u>	
i. Current Account	£48,869.12
ii. Savings Account	£0.06

Cllr Bickers proposed that finance matters g to k were accepted, seconded by Cllr Seagroatt with all in favour.

Action: Clerk

19. To Co-opt Parish Councillor and signing of ‘Declaration of acceptance of Office’.

There were no villagers who had come forward to stand as a Parish Councillor at this time. The Clerk was asked to advertise the vacancy in the next Bugle in the hope that someone would be willing to take on the role.

20. To receive agenda items for next meeting (Wednesday July 5th 2023).

Discussions for allocating the CIL money to various projects would be included in the next agenda along with the appointment of the Vice Chair of the Council.

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.

Points to Note

The Chair wished to congratulate Cllr Seagroatt and the Organising Committee of the Coronation Celebrations on their magnificent Tea Party held in the Village Hall. The afternoon had been an absolute triumph and many positive comments had been received from those who attended. It was commented that a lot of hard work had clearly gone in to the planning of the event and that it was a wonderful expression of the village’s community spirit.

The Chair stated that the organisers had done such a commendable job that he hoped they would take part in the planning of future events, and would consider joining the Community Council to make their role official. This would give them access to the Community Council’s bank account and entitle them to apply for various grants to help with funding.

The meeting closed at 8:40 pm.

Signed:
Chair

Date:

Ruth Johnson
Clerk to Bucklesham Parish Council

Chair’s initials: