

**Minutes of Bucklesham Parish Council Meeting**  
Held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 7:00pm  
In Bucklesham and Foxhall Village Hall, IP10 0DZ

Present

Cllr Trevor Bickers  
Cllr Lynda Seagroatt

Cllr David Brinkley (Chair)      Cllr Rhea Gardner  
Cllr Gemma Marriage (after item 14)

Cllr Lee Reeves (ESC)

Cllr Patti Mulcahy (SCC)

Ruth Johnson (Clerk)

3 members of the public were present

**1. Apologies for absence:**

**a. To receive apologies for absence.**

Apologies were received from Cllr Lenton (family commitments) and Cllr Roper (family commitments).

**b. To accept apologies for absence.**

Cllr Brinkley proposed that Cllr Lenton's and Cllr Roper's apologies be accepted, this was seconded by Cllr Seagroatt and all were in favour.

**2. 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 £50.00**

There were none.

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

There were none.

**3. Public Participation – To receive:**

**a. Reports from County and District Councillors:**

**• Suffolk County Cllr Patti Mulcahy:**

Cllr Mulcahy had sent a report on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September which was circulated to all Councillors. The Chair thanked Cllr Mulcahy for her attendance and her report but reiterated his request that future reports contain information more meaningful to Bucklesham residents. Cllr Gardner noted that Bucklesham's Highways issues were not mentioned at all.

- East Suffolk District Cllr Ninnmey and Cllr Lee Reeves:

The Chair welcomed Cllr Reeves to the meeting and thanked him for his attendance. Cllr Brinkley expressed his hope that all Councillors would work well together going forward.

Regular monthly reports had previously been received and circulated to all Councillors. It was noted that much of the reports were relevant to Bucklesham residents and much of the information had been passed on through the Bugle Bulletin.

Cllr Reeves was thanked for the considerable time he had spent helping an individual family from the village with their application for the Warm Homes Healthy People scheme.

- b. Questions from any member of the public:

- There were none.

**4. To agree Minutes of meeting dated 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023:**

All Councillors agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting. Cllr Bickers proposed that the minutes should be signed, this was seconded by Cllr Gardner 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. 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 bus shelter refurbishment had been completed with the new roof, a bench and a re-paint. Several residents had contacted the Clerk with very positive feedback.
- ii. The new signage for the Playing Field was in place along with the three new benches purchased from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money.
- iii. Cllr Bickers had attended the SALC AGM and had sent his report to the Councillors prior to the meeting. Feedback on the event had been passed to SALC.
- iv. The two new grit bins had been installed on the entrance to Field View and on the bank opposite numbers 82-92 Levington Lane. Refilling of all grit bins is due to be completed soon and will be carried out by Suffolk County Highways. Thanks to Cllr Lenton for installing these and a resident of Levington Lane for their help.
- v. The virus software protection for the Council's laptop was due to expire shortly and the Clerk is investigating suitable alternatives.

Chair's initials: .....

- vi. The Clerk had attended VAT training delivered by the Parkinson Project which had been very informative. The Clerk had asked a question on re-claiming VAT on works carried out to the Village Hall. This had been answered and the reply was sent to the internal auditor for clarification.
- vii. The Clerk had contacted East Suffolk Council with regards to cutting the paddock at the back of Green Crescent as neighbours had reported the overgrown vegetation was encroaching on their land. There was yet to be a response.

**Action: Clerk**

**6. To discuss the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of the Bucklesham Allotments from East Suffolk Council.**

Following the Council's agreement in principle to the proposed CAT, the Clerk had been in contact with Chris Phillips, Senior Estates Surveyor, East Suffolk Council.

The Clerk had asked for:

- The full costs involved in the management of the site.
- The full list of names of current tenants and those on a waiting list.
- The current charges, including the schedule of payments.
- Assurance that East Suffolk Council would agree to covering all legal fees encountered by both parties.

Chris had yet to provide all information requested but had informed the Clerk that the CAT of the allotments was placed on the agenda for East Suffolk Council to discuss at their next cabinet meeting in September. Due to many other items on the September agenda taking priority, this had been pushed back to the meeting for November. Chris had informed the Clerk that there was a likelihood it may be pushed back further still and warned the Clerk that this may be a long process.

**7. Playing Field:**

a. To discuss the anti-social behaviour from non-residents

A number of non-residents had visited the Field during the Summer and had engaged in some anti-social behaviour. The Clerk explained that the attraction of the Field for these groups of men were the football goals. On finding the goals locked, one visitor had pretended to be a resident by giving a false name and address to the Clerk when requesting the combination to the padlocks. When challenged, the group had become argumentative and had attempted to intimidate by videoing the incident on their mobile phones. The Police had been informed of the incident. Councillors expressed concern for the Clerk's welfare when challenging anti-social behaviour.

b. To discuss the use of the football goals

Unfortunately the combination to the padlocks appeared to have been shared with non-residents, and on several occasions some village children had left the goals unlocked after use. The Clerk had written to the parents of these children requesting that the goals are only used when an adult is present, that they are always locked after use, and that the combination is not shared with anyone who is not a resident of Bucklesham.

Chair's initials: .....

New padlocks had been purchased at a cost of £59 as the unlocked ones had been stolen. The Clerk was asked to put a reminder in the Bugle about the rules of the Playing Field to ensure that the facilities were protected for all residents.

c. To discuss the planting of a Wild Flower strip

The Clerk had met with Neil Lister, Countryside Project Officer from Suffolk County Council’s Coasts and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) department. The meeting had taken place on the Playing Field where the idea of planting wild flower seeds around the small trees at the top end of the field was discussed. Neil was extremely complimentary about what the Council had achieved on the Field so far.

Neil’s suggestion was to leave the small trees as they were as he felt it was a very diverse area with many species of wildflowers and grasses which were already hugely beneficial to insects and small mammals. He suggested a further strip along each side of the Field could be cultivated and turned into a mini wildflower strip (possibly one meter in depth). The benefits to wildlife and those residents using the Field would be immeasurable. However, Neil explained that as Bucklesham was just outside of the AONB it would not be possible to use his team of volunteers to assist the Council in preparing the land and sowing the wildflower seeds.

The Clerk met with a recommended contractor who had expertise on sowing wild flower meadows and explained what the project would be. A quote for the work is still outstanding and will be passed to the Councillors for their consideration once received.

**Action: Clerk**

**8. Documentation:**

i. To review and adopt the ‘Standing Orders – 2023’ and ‘Financial Regulations – 2023’ (as previously sent to Councillors).

The Clerk reminded Councillors that the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations needed to be reviewed and adopted annually. She assured the Council that the policies continue to use the current National Association of Local Councils (NALC) templates and so were completely correct and up to date. As with previous years, Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) advise that it is not necessary to print off hard copies but that publishing them on the website was still required. All Councillors confirmed these documents had been reviewed. Cllr Brinkley proposed they be adopted, which was seconded by Cllr Seagroatt and all were in favour.

ii. To review and adopt the ‘Risk Assessment (Financial)’ and ‘Risk Assessment (Non-Financial)’ (as previously sent to Councillors).

The Risk Assessments, both Financial and Non-Financial, need to be reviewed and adopted annually. All Councillors present confirmed these documents had been reviewed and the Clerk had made slight amendments as instructed. Cllr Brinkley proposed they be adopted, which was seconded by Cllr Gardner with all in favour.

- iii. To review and adopt Asset Register and approve revised document (as previously sent to Councillors).

The Clerk reminded the Council that the Asset Register needed to be reviewed and adopted annually, or each time a new asset is included. The new benches on the Playing Field and the grit bins had been added and all Councillors confirmed they had reviewed the Asset Register. Cllr Bickers proposed the Asset Register be adopted, seconded by Cllr Gardner and all were in favour.

- iv. To review and adopt the following Data Protection documents:

- Legal and Privacy Statement
- Cookies Policy
- Impact Assessment
- DP Statement
- Awareness Checklist
- Risk Assessment

All Data Protection documentation was taken *en mass*. They were proposed by Cllr Brinkley, seconded by Cllr Gardner, with all in favour.

- v. To review and adopt the following policies:

- Bring Your Own Device Policy
- Code of Conduct
- CCTV Policy and Code of Practice
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Dispensation Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Expenses Policy
- Freedom Of Information Procedure
- Formal Complaints Procedure
- General Reserves Policy
- Grants Award Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Health and Safety Policy
- Information Protection Policy
- Playing Field Management Policy
- Public Participation Protocol
- Publication Scheme
- Retention of Documents and Records Policy
- Safeguarding Children's Policy
- Sickness and Absence Policy
- Training and Development Policy

The Chair explained that all policies held by the Council should be reviewed approximately every four years. At the suggestion of the Clerk, the schedule for this would coincide with the Local Council Elections, giving each new administration an opportunity to review and adopt updated policies.

The Chair thanked the Clerk for all her hard work in updating all the policies and sending them to Councillors, in bite sized chunks on a weekly basis over the Summer, for their review. It was agreed that the Council was in an excellent position with so many policies in place, rivalling many larger Councils.

Cllr Brinkley proposed that all policies be adopted *en masse*. This was seconded by Cllr Seagroatt and all were in favour. The Clerk will publish all updated policies on the Parish Council website.

**Action: Clerk**

**9. Highways:**

- a. To discuss the 20's Plenty Campaign.

The Clerk had requested a quote from Prints 4 U for the 20's Plenty Campaign letter to be printed. It had been agreed that in order to be prudent with the Parish Council finances, the Clerk would add the details of the campaign to the next Bucklesham Bugle Newsletter which was due to be delivered at the end of September. The opinions of residents could then be discussed at the Parish Council meeting in November.

**Action: Clerk**

- b. To discuss the numerous reports to Highways with regards to broken pavements, overgrown footpaths, worn or twisted signs, and the overgrown path on the way to school.

Suffolk County Councillor Paul West had met with some Parish Councillors, the Head Teacher of Bucklesham Primary School, Rachael Rudge, a parent, and the Clerk, via Zoom Conferencing. This was to discuss the many Highways issues in the village and the request for a reduction in the speed limit on the Brightwell Road at the point where it passes the school.

This initial meeting had been requested by the Council following Cllr West's successful intervention over the issue of the overgrown hedge on the way to the school in July. Cllr West informed the Council that once the new Highways contractors were in place, there would be a more robust way of reporting any Highways issues, which would result in them being resolved in a more timely manner. Cllr West committed to following up on any reports in the village that had been actioned but not yet completed.

With regards to the speed limit on Brightwell Road, Cllr West had agreed to the Council's suggestion of a Highways Traffic Survey. This was to be carried out between 5<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> October, with the report due to be available in November. The cost of the survey and report was to be allocated to Cllr Mulcahy's Local Highways Budget.

**Action: Clerk**

**10. Planning:**

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

Gary Bareham, Construction Manager of Castlemore Homes, had sent another excellent report on the progress of the site, which Councillors found very interesting and informative. Cllr Bickers had personally visited the site and said that he had been extremely impressed with the way it was being managed. He viewed the show home and reported he felt it had been completed to an extremely high standard.

Cllr Brinkley stated that the developers had been exceptionally co-operative towards the village from the very beginning of the development. They had willingly supplied bowsers of water to enable the watering of the little trees on the Playing Field during the hot summer months. They had also loaned emergency fencing to the Village Hall when the collapse of the neighbour's fence left the car park in a precarious position.

- b. To discuss the meeting with Boyer Planning on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023 with regards to the proposed Business Park at Felixstowe Road.

Cllr Brinkley, Cllr Lenton and Cllr Bickers attended this meeting in July. An extensive development is planned and Councillors felt it would be beneficial to local residents bringing vast employment opportunities to the area.

**11. Finance Matters:**

- a. To review accounts as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023 and review Bank Statements.

The accounts for 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023 had been sent to all Councillors and there were no questions.

- b. To set the Budget timetable

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

- 27<sup>th</sup> October – Draft Budget established and sent to Councillors
- 1<sup>st</sup> November – Draft Budget discussed at full Council meeting
- January 2024 meeting – Budget agreed by full Council

- c. To agree Reserve Allocations

The Reserve Allocations had been revised due to recent expenditure and income changes. After discussion Councillors agreed the following Earmarked Reserves:

- Office Equipment - £1,000.00
- Election Expenses - £1,000.00
- Staff Costs Emergency Fund - £1,000.00

The total held in Earmarked Reserves was £3,000.00

- d. To acknowledge receipt of the Notice of Conclusion of Audit and Section 3 of Part 3 of the 2022/23 AGAR from PKF Littlejohn LLP

The Clerk advised that Section 3 of Part 3 of the AGAR 2022/23 had been returned by PKF Littlejohn with no comments.

Receipt of Section 3 of Part 3 of the AGAR and Notice Of Conclusion of Audit were acknowledged by the Council.

- e. To acknowledge receipt of insurance renewal documentation from Came and Company and quotes from Zurich Insurance and BHIB Councils.

The insurance renewal quotation had been sent to all Councillors, and Came and Company had recommended Hiscox Insurance Company Limited. The premium for this year would be £597.81 which was £109.52 more than last year. The Clerk had sought two further quotes from Zurich Insurance and BHIB Councils but neither company had been able to advise of a price before the meeting. Cllr Brinkley proposed the quote from Came and Co be accepted, seconded by Cllr Seagroatt and all were in favour.

- f. To accept and agree the quote of £150 from Boston Bulbs for daffodil bulbs for the village.

Cllr Brinkley stated he felt the display of daffodils each spring was a lovely addition to the village and all Councillors wished the project to continue. The Clerk had obtained a quote from Boston Bulbs who could again supply 1,000 bulbs to be delivered in October for £150, which was the same price as last year. Cllr Gardner proposed the bulbs be purchased on the understanding that the cost can be covered by the CIL funds. If this is not possible, as it would not meet the CIL funding criteria, Cllr Gardner proposed the Council did not purchase bulbs this year. This was seconded by Cllr Seagroatt with all in favour.

- g. To discuss the ideas and suggestions for the allocation of CIL money.

The Clerk had produced a list of suggestions for the allocation of CIL money (see appendix A). The Council noted that many of the projects approved previously had now been completed. The maintenance programme for the Village Hall would continue with the re-painting of the interior arranged for December.

A request by a resident for a replacement of their fence and wall that had fallen in recent high winds was discussed and then dismissed. This request did not meet the criteria for CIL spending as money cannot be spent on a private residence, as set out in CIL guidance by East Suffolk Council. The Clerk was asked to write to the residents, explaining the position.

Given the volume of projects undertaken in recent weeks, Cllr Brinkley said he felt a pausing of the plans for CIL money was acceptable to give Councillors time to reflect on which further projects were a priority.

**Action: Clerk**

Chair's initials: .....

h. To authorise the following invoices for payment:

i. Clerk’s Salary and expenses (July/Aug/Sept)	£1,149.20
ii. HMRC (Clerk’s PAYE July/Aug/Sept)	£268.00

i. To note payments made since last meeting:

i. Plants for Village Sign	£36.00
ii. Community Council (remainder of Coronation Celebration Fund)	£406.79
iii. J Woods Electrical (Village Hall lights)	£396.00
iv. Marmax (benches on Playing Field)	£1,405.20
v. Glasdon (Grit Bins)	£431.33
vi. Waveney Norse (Playing Field inspections)	£168.00
vii. Waveney Norse (play equip emergency repair)	£70.80
viii. K Coe (Bus Shelter renovation)	£500.00
ix. SEH Asphalt (white lines in VH car park)	£1,074.00
x. ESC Election expenses	£67.32
xi. Signs For You (Playing Field Signs)	£59.64
xii. PKF Littlejohn (External Audit)	£252.00
xiii. Padlocks for goals	£59.98
xiv. K Coe (Playing Field maintenance)	£565.00
xv. K Coe (bench fitting)	£75.00

j. To note payments received since last meeting:

- i. None

k. To note Bank Balances as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023:

i. Current Account	£1,404.71
ii. Savings Account	£35,071.24

Cllr Gardner proposed that finance matters *h* to *k* were accepted, seconded by Cllr Bickers with all in favour.

**Action: Clerk**

**12. To discuss the lack of engagement from Suffolk County Councillor, Cllr Mulcahy, and discuss possible ways forward.**

At the request of the Chair, the Clerk had kept a record of communications between the Council and Cllr Mulcahy, and had been monitoring the emails sent to Cllr Mulcahy and whether or not there had been any response. The Clerk reported that of the seven emails sent, only two had been replied to.

Given the recent improvement in communications from Cllr Mulcahy towards the Council, the Chair said he felt any further action with regards to Cllr Mulcahy’s lack of engagement should be paused, but would be revisited in the future if necessary.

Chair’s initials: .....

**13. To discuss joining the Cross Boundary Group of Parish Councils.**

The Clerk had been contacted by Colin Shaw, Clerk of Kirton and Falkenham Parish Council, to enquire as to whether the Council was interested in joining a Cross Boundary Group of Parish Councils. Kirton and Falkenham Parish Council proposed the formation of a Cross Boundary Group in the spirit of information sharing, and had invited delegates from interested Councils to meet, when appropriate, to discuss shared issues.

There had been a similar Cross-Boundary Group in the past and Cllr Brinkley had been the Council's representative. Cllr Brinkley said he felt it was important to work together with our neighbours with regards to issues that affected us all.

Cllr Bickers proposed Cllr Brinkley be the representative from Bucklesham Parish Council and Cllr Brinkley accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Seagroatt and all were in favour.

The first meeting of the Cross Boundary Group of Parish Councils will be held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023 in Kirton Recreation Ground Pavilion at 7:30pm. Cllr Brinkley stated his intention to attend.

**Action: Clerk**

**14. To Co-opt Parish Councillor and signing of 'Declaration of acceptance of Office'.**

A member of the village, Gemma Marriage, had come forward to stand as a Parish Councillor following the advert in the Bugle, and after discussing the role with Cllr Roper. Ms Marriage had met with the Chair, Vice-Chair and Clerk, for an informal chat about the role. Ms Marriage read aloud a statement as to why she would like to be considered for the role and took questions from the Councillors.

The whole Council agreed that Ms Marriage would make an excellent Councillor and the Chair thanked her very much for her interest. Cllr Brinkley proposed that Ms Marriage be co-opted on to the Council. This was seconded by Cllr Bickers and all were in favour, therefore Ms Marriage was successfully co-opted on to the Parish Council.

Ms Marriage signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, and the Clerk said she would be in contact with Cllr Marriage in the coming days with details of how to complete the Register Of Interests with East Suffolk Council.

**Action: Clerk**

**15. To receive agenda items for next meeting (Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023).**

Continuing discussions for allocating the CIL money to various projects would be included in the next agenda along with the progress of the CAT of the Bucklesham Allotments.

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**

The meeting closed at 8:43pm.

Signed: .....  
Chair

Date: .....

*Ruth Johnson*  
Clerk to Bucklesham Parish Council

Chair's initials: .....