

WEST BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

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The minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 26th March 2024 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room, at West Buckland Village Hall.

Present: Cllr's C Silverlight (Chair), Ms S Drury, S Bellamy, Mrs B Moore, J Nutt, A Paul and M Wilson.

In attendance: Somerset Cllr R Henley and the Clerk, Mrs J Larcombe

169/03/24. To receive apologies for absence. There were no apologies.

170/03/24. Disclosure of interest in items on the agenda. No disclosures of interest.

171/03/24. To agree the minutes of the meetings held on 27/02/24 as accurate records of the meetings. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and they were duly signed by the Chair.

172/03/24. Matters arising from the minutes not covered by the agenda (for information only). No matters arising.

173/03/24. Somerset Council Report. This item was deferred until Cllr Henley arrived.

174/03/24. To continue to discuss broadband issues in the parish. The Clerk reported that she had finally found out who to make the complaint about Matt Barrow to. Even this was difficult as there are no contact details on the CDS website or details on how to make a complaint. The complaint will be made to Devon County Council. Cllr Ms Drury has produced a timeline to support the complaint and this evidences that since 2021 resolving the broadband issues in the parish has not moved forward, in fact it has gone backwards. Airband should have supplied superfast broadband to the whole area, even the hard to reach, in Quarter 3 of 2023 but are still only scoping. Cllr Silverlight and Cllr Paul attended the Blackdown Hills National Landscape Management Plan Review Workshop on 28th February 2024 and councillors from other Parish Councils said they had experienced similar behaviour from Matt Barrow. The 4G mast has been aligned for Wellington at the detriment of Ruggin. The Parish Council feels CDS is not fit for purpose in any shape or form. Year after year they have not delivered. A complaint about CDS will be made to the Chief Executives of Devon County Council and Somerset Council. It was felt that it would be a waste of time complaining to Rebecca Pow MP as complaints have been made to her in the past and her response has been felt to be very ineffectual and disinterested.

Cllr Henley joined the meeting.

Somerset Council are aware of the Airband issue. It was suggested that Cllr Bill Revans, Leader of Somerset Council could be invited to a Parish Council meeting.

175/04/24. Democratic Period. No members of the public present.

176/04/24. Somerset Council Report. Cllr Henley reported that he had attended Hatch Beauchamp Parish Council's meeting before joining this meeting. They have had a contentious planning application, similar to the Silver Street application, submitted for the third time.

There has not been any news regarding an appeal against Somerset Council's decision on the Silver Street planning application.

He has been in touch with Amy Green and Jo Humble about the Housing Needs Survey and to date 60 responses have been received.

Somerset Council has put in 16 orders for speed limits. Cllr Henley is trying to get opinions from West Buckland parishioners.

If planning application 43/23/0056 (Outline application with all matters reserved, except for access, for a mixed use development of up to 200 No. dwellings, employment land (Use Classes E & F), an internal spine road to facilitate a rail halt/station, public open space, drainage & associated infrastructure on land north of Taunton Road, Longforth Park, Wellington) is approved it will add more pressure on local services. The enormous pressure on Pharmacists already was noted. Wellington has lost its last bank and a banking hub has opened. 5 banks are using it 1 day per week. Lots of places across the country have been promised banking hubs but don't have suitable buildings. Wellington Town Council made a community building (previously a SWT building) available. Cllr Mrs Moore referred to people queuing for the pharmacist and asked how demand on local services fitted with planning. Cllr Henley said an application cannot be conditioned or refused because of this. He reported that Local Authorities are finding it hard to recruit planning officers and even harder to recruit planning enforcement officers.

Cllr Henley left the meeting.

177/03/24. Planning:

a) To consider any planning applications received by the Parish Council prior to the meeting.

46/24/0005 Formation of hedge bank to west boundary, vehicular access to the North west, parking and turning area and formation of wildlife pond on land and woodland of former Dukes Cottage, Ford Street Wellington (retention of works already undertaken). No comment.

b) To receive decisions from planning applications determined by Somerset Council.

46/23/0018 Application for Outline Planning with all matters reserved, except for access, for the erection of 12 No. dwellings (25% affordable) on land at Silver Street, West Buckland. Decision: refused.

c) Any other planning matters. 43/23/0056 Outline application with all matters reserved, except for access, for a mixed use development of up to 200 No. dwellings, employment land (Use Classes E & F), an internal spine road to facilitate a rail halt/station, public open space, drainage & associated infrastructure on land north of Taunton Road, Longforth Park, Wellington (Departure from local plan). West Buckland Parish Council are concerned about traffic and the impact on Poole. There is often a queue of traffic for the Recycling

Centre.

178/03/24. West Buckland Housing Needs Survey – any feedback. 60 responses received so far.

179/03/24. Highways.

a) To note any required work to be reported to SC. Cllr Silverlight reported that he had been contacted by someone who has collected a lot of rubbish from Buckland Hill and wondered if Somerset Council would collect it from them. Former negative responses were noted. This is seen as fly tipping. The LCN are having a Highways Working Group meeting on 28th March. Cllr Silverlight expressed his concerns about the Parish Council having to pay for highways work. Cllr Bellamy said it was a way of getting things done if the Parish Council is willing to pay. It is there if the Council needs it.

b) To receive an update on outstanding highways work (Kerb at Dyers Close and drainage in Silver Street). No update.

c) To discuss purchasing Speed Indication Devices (SIDs). Guidance has been circulated to councillors. Discussion was deferred to the next meeting. No funding was allocated in the 2024-25 budget for this but there is £2,800 in earmarked reserves for finger post sign refurbishment and councillors could agree to vire it to a new earmarked reserve to use it to purchase a SID/s instead.

d) Any other highways matters. It was reported that lots more parents are parking in Lee Park at the start and the end of the school day and some are parking across people's drives. The Clerk will email the school and PCSO Bramley.

180/03/24. Finance:

a) To agree and authorise any payments. It was resolved to make the following payments:

Somerset Council - £268.43 emptying dog bin quarter 4 plus 1 cut of grass (payment ref: 2324/53)

Mrs J Larcombe - £352.36 Clerk's salary and expenses March 2024 (Payment ref: 2324/54)

H M Revenue & Customs £23.40 PAYE March (Payment ref: 2324/55)

Hydra EVC Ltd £90.00 Hydra Nexus Annual AC Connector Fee (Payment ref: 2324/56).

A transfer will be made from the Current Account to the Instant Access Account to bring the balance back to £1,000.00.

b) To note any receipts since the last meeting and the bank account balance. Since the last meeting there have been no receipts

The current account balance is £1,000.00 and the Instant Access Account balance is £16,932.66

c) Acceptance of quote for cutting the playing field grass for 2024. A quote from Countrywide Grounds Maintenance Ltd has been accepted. The annual cost will be £1,351.68 (Monthly £112.64).

Somerset Council quoted £1,644.00.

181/03/24. Playing Field:

a) Any points to note from the regular inspections. No points to note from the inspections. A closer is needed on the second pedestrian gate. It was reported

that the first closer was making it hard for a child to open the gate. The Clerk will arrange for a closer to be installed on the second pedestrian gate and will ask if the first one can be adjusted.

b) Any other playing field matters. There is still an issue with people not picking up dog poo when they exercise their dog/s in the playing field. A reminder will be given on the Facebook page. The Clerk advised that the Parish Council could consider banning dogs from the playing field if this anti-social behaviour becomes a serious issue. Some Local Authorities have Public Space Protection Orders banning dogs from playing fields. Councillors will have a further discussion at the next meeting.

182/03/24. To discuss having .gov.uk email addresses for the Parish Council and Councillors. From time to time councillors are receiving spam emails that are supposedly sent by the Chair but are in fact sent by someone else. While Cllr Silverlight's email address is not on the website under Councillors details it is on the minutes on the website. Parish Councils are being advised they should consider using a gov.uk domain name for their website and email services to instil confidence in their users. Councillors decided against having .gov.uk email addresses at this time. A contact us button will be added to the website and individual email addresses will be removed.

183/03/24. Any footpath matters. Due to the continuing wet weather the footpath through the field below the playing field is very muddy and slippery. This is exasperated by the narrowness of the path which has electric fencing on one side.

184/03/24. To discuss arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting. This will be held before the Parish Council meeting on 30th April and will start at 7pm. The Chair will present a report of the Council's activities during 2023-24 and the Clerk will present the Council's accounts for the same period. The School, Church, Village Hall Committee, Parish Paths Liaison Officer and Somerset Councillors will be invited to give a report at the meeting. If they are unable to attend, they can send a written report to be read out at the meeting.

185/03/24. Correspondence. The Clerk reported that all Local Authorities, Town and Parish Councils had been offered a free framed portrait of HM King Charles III to mark his accession to the throne. The Chair of the Village Hall Committee has agreed this could be hung in the Village Hall and the Clerk has applied for one.

186/03/24. Any urgent business at the Chairman's discretion (Not for Decisions). The Chair reported that there doesn't seem to be an electricity supply to the Defibrillator. Enquiries will be made to find out why that is. There was concern that the EV charging point could possibly be being switched off on Sundays. A meeting will be arranged with representatives of the Village Hall Committee to discuss ownership, management and maintenance of the EV charging point. The Chair announced Cllr Nutt was resigning from the Parish Council and he was thanked by everyone for all his hard work for the Parish Council during his years as a Parish Councillor for West Buckland.

187/03/24. To note the date of the next meeting. The next meeting will be held on 30th April 2024 and will be preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting.

Signed:
Chair

Date: