



Buckland & Chipping Parish Council

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MINUTES OF BUCKLAND & CHIPPING PARISH COUNCIL MEETING No. 274 Monday 16th January 2017 at 8pm at The Manor House, Buntingford

PRESENT: Cllr J Jones, Vice Chairman (JJ); Cllr Teresa Harrington (TH); Cllr Jason Noy (JN);
Cllr Mell Trewin (MT)

- Public: Cllr Stan Bull and one other member of the public
- Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to Buckland & Chipping Parish Council

Cllr Jeff Jones, as Vice-Chair, chaired the meeting, which was opened at 8pm.

ACTION

274.01 Apologies for absence (reasons were accepted)

1. Councillors: Cllr Jeff Kenyon
2. Other apologies: None

274.02 Declarations of Interest and dispensations

1. **Interests:** None
2. **Receipt of written requests for dispensations:** None
3. **Consideration of requests for dispensations:** None

274.03 Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 273 held on 7th November 2016

It was **RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 273 held on 7th November 2016 as a true and accurate record.** The Chairman signed the Minutes after the meeting.

JJ/Clerk

274.04 Casual Vacancy: No applications received. It was confirmed that vacancy notices are on the boards and an invitation to apply is included in the Newsletter.

Clerk/JJ

274.05 Police Report: No report was provided. Cllr Jones said that gunshots were reported one night which, upon investigation, were found to be the legitimate activity of a gamekeeper.

274.06 Chairman's report

JJ

- Cllr Jeff Kenyon did not send a report. In his absence, Cllr Jeff Jones reported that some parishioners had attended the Christmas lunch, which was a great success, and he extended his thanks to Cllr Stan Bull for endorsing the grant application.
- Cllr Jones then informed the meeting that he has been nominated to stand as the Conservative candidate at the County Council elections in May.
- Cllr Jones also reported that, sadly, Martin Graham's health has deteriorated and it will not be possible for him to continue editing the Newsletter. His hard work as editor has been greatly appreciated and he will be sorely missed. The implications will be discussed under agenda item 274.18

274.07 Finance

1. Accounts

| Accounts summary 1st November to 31st December | £ |
|---|-------------------------|
| Opening bank balance 01/11/16 | 21,910.18 |
| Income 01/11/16 to 31/12/16 | 2,943.84 |
| Expenditure 01/11/16 to 31/12/16 | <u>2,449.99</u> |
| Available balance - cashbook 31/12/16 | 22,404.03 |
| Plus uncashed cheques | 194.00 |
| Minus banked Sept/Oct cheques | <u>126.00</u> |
| Balance reconciled to statement 208 31/12/16 | <u>22,472.03</u> |

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously **RESOLVED to accept the accounts statement.**

2. (i) Report on the financial position against budget

The report was received. Taking account of income and outgoings since the November meeting, the balance at year-end 31 March 2017 is projected to be approximately £19,400, including £290 VAT reclaim, against £18,950 in the budget. It was proposed, seconded and unanimously **RESOLVED to accept the budget report.**

2. (ii) Budget and Precept for 2017/18

The budget analysis for 2016/17 and possible budget projections for 2017/18 were considered. It was noted that EHC has confirmed the New Homes Bonus will be reduced from £2,293 to £822 for 2017/18. There was a discussion on how best to serve the parish with the reserve funds now available. It was previously envisaged that the PC would have to fund the speed signs, but that now having been done by HCC Highways at no cost to the Parish Council, various options were reviewed. With limited scope for amenity improvements within the parish, it was agreed that attractive gateway signs for both villages would enhance their appearance and community feel for drivers entering the villages. All would have to be discussed and agreed with Herts Highways for compliance. Options for style and design to be investigated.

Clerk/ALL

Maintenance of the pond - or at least its northern end - was also discussed and it was agreed that nothing would be done this winter or spring. It was agreed to look again at the 2015 Countryside Management Service report to see how best to manage the pond, taking full account of the conservation requirements for the indigenous animals, birds and amphibians that inhabit it and its surrounds. It is also necessary to take into account the fact that the southern end of the pond is privately owned and therefore any work should only be undertaken in consultation with the owner. It was acknowledged that there is no indication of what costs might be incurred in a professional maintenance venture, and what had previously been imagined as a simple clean-up by volunteers might have much wider considerations in the legal obligations governing the conservation of wildlife habitats. In any event, maintenance would probably have to be done in annual stages. It was therefore decided to not include the pond in the budget, but following further advice to be sought from CMS, to use money from the reserves to fund any work there.

The draft budget was accordingly amended; the overall expenditure was agreed at £11,210 against an income of £9,459 - including an unchanged precept - the shortfall to be taken up by reserves. It was proposed, seconded and unanimously **RESOLVED to agree the budget as amended and to set the precept at £3,897, the same as 2016/17.**

Clerk

3. Signing of cheques for payment

| | | | | | |
|------|-------------------|--|--------|--------|-------------------------------------|
| | Cancelled | cancelled | | 100725 | |
| 7/11 | Buntingford TC | EHC Xmas Lunch grant | 500.00 | 100726 | LGA 1972 s145 |
| 7/11 | M Webb | Replacing lost cheque bus shelters & kiosks 5 of 6 | 80.00 | 100727 | LG(MP)A 1953 s4 PCA 1957 s1 |
| 5/12 | Bank charge | Stopped lost cheque 718 | 12.50 | debit | |
| 5/12 | Clerk | Salary Oct-December | 456.23 | 100728 | LGA 1972 ss112, 151; LA 2011 s41 |
| 5/12 | HMRC | PAYE Oct- December | 114.00 | 100729 | LGA 1972 ss112, 151; LA 2011 s41 |
| 5/12 | Clerk – reimburse | SLCC subs (1/3 rd) | 46.50 | 100730 | LGA 1972 s111 |
| 16/1 | M Webb | Bus shelters & kiosks 6 of 6 | 80.00 | 100731 | LG(MP)A 1953 s4 PCA 1957 s1 |
| 16/1 | S Hall | Litterpicking Oct/Nov | 150.00 | 100732 | OSA 1906 ss9, 10 |
| 16/1 | Buntingford TC | Room hire 7th November | 16.00 | 100733 | LGA 1972 s111 |
| 16/1 | Clerk petty cash | Petty cash exp Nov/Dec | 23.80 | 100734 | LGA 1972 s111 |
| 16/1 | Clerk | Mileage exp Nov/Dec | 11.70 | 100735 | LGA 1972 ss112, 151; LA 2011 s41 |
| 16/1 | A Marks | Fixing laptop | 60.00 | 100736 | LGA 1972 s111 |
| | | VAT included: £0.00 | | | |

Cllr Harrington asked whether Buntingford Town Council had issued a receipt for the £500 EHC grant that was given them to go towards the cost of the Christmas lunch. The Clerk said they had not, but

there was a clear paper trail through the cashbook, bank statements and cheque book. It was agreed to ask if BTC could provide a receipt. Following a proposal and second, it was unanimously **RESOLVED to approve the signing of the cheques as presented.** The cheques were signed at the end of the meeting. It was also agreed to pay the Clerk from the Transparency Fund Grant with the March salary.

Clerk
Clerk

4. Plus Energy annual payment status. The Clerk confirmed that there was no planning obligation in the form of a Section 106 agreement imposed by North Herts District Council under which Plus Energy were paying an annual sum for the Wisbridge solar farm development, but it was rather in the form of a voluntary contribution for five years, valuation based on 50% of the precept.

5. Pensions Regulator. The Clerk confirmed that the Regulator has set the Staging Date as 1st February, and the Declaration of Compliance date as 30th June 2017. This is in hand.

Clerk

274.08 PLANNING

1. New Planning Applications: NONE

2. Decision Notices:

3/16/2258/HH Secret Cottage, Chipping: Demolish existing garage. Erect replacement. **GRANTED**

3. Late applications etc: NONE

274.09 Buntingford Community Area Neighbourhood Plan and EH District Plan. It was noted that the BCANP referendum will be on 23rd March. District Plan not expected until later in the year.

274.10 Correspondence: for information only and was noted as per the agenda:

- Parishioner: milestone reinstatement to Bucklandbury and request to add to agenda.
- To Karen Fishwick (Churches Conservation Trust): request for meeting on church issues
- Rod Taylor: AED familiarisation at Sandon, 19 December, and restoration of parish milestones
- Pensions Regulator: notification of Staging and Compliance dates (274.07.5)
- HCC: Herts' Traffic & Transport Data Report 2016 (based on 2015 data) (274.18)

274.11 Action Plan

The following three agenda items cover updates.

Clerk

274.12 Water Wheel and land registry

1. Restoration: Richard Maynard's plan is to have the restoration work completed by the end of February.

Clerk

2. Statements of Truth: The Clerk was given three signed Statements from parishioners. Cllr Jones and Cllr Harrington asked the Clerk to email a blank form so that additional long-standing parishioners could be asked to complete a Statement before writing to Land Registry.

JJ/TH

Clerk

274.13 Buckland Church – Eco toilet: Nothing to report from either the PCC or the Diocese.

Clerk

274.14 Pond: Working Group. As discussed under agenda item 274.07.2(ii) above. The Clerk agreed to re-circulate the 2015 CMS report to members. To be discussed again at the March PC meeting.

Clerk/ALL

274.15 Welcome Pack and Community Engagement

Cllr Harrington (TH) set out some ideas for a pack to be given to new households moving into the parish. She thought current parishioners could be asked to inform the Parish Council when they became aware of new people moving in a pack could be given out. A request could also be printed in the Newsletter asking for the PC to be kept informed about when newcomers move in.

TH

TH was willing to set this up. The information to include a directory of local health providers, nearest A&E, police, shops - including opening times and take-aways etc, bin collection days, EHC departments, dog bin locations, churches, schools, Neighbourhood Watch, local councillors – Parish/District/County, diary of local events, local maps/FPs, buses/transport, etc. The information should be as visually attractive as possible and, since the turnover of new residents is quite small, packs could be produced as required.

As to the question of how to identify who the recipients might be, TH said that part of the community engagement objective would be met by talking to or getting in touch with current residents and setting up a contact list that would hopefully develop and grow. This could be email based. Cllr Jones expressed concerns about the amount of work involved and that other councillors might not be able to commit the necessary time. TH said would take responsibility, but obviously anticipated some help from others. She indicated that she was willing to be the contact.

TH

The practicality of texts and social media was considered. Every two months or so, a reminder of events could be sent round.

TH to prepare information for sending round with the next Newsletter, including a request for interested parties to email her. Cllr Jones agreed to set up a special info@ email address. **TH
JJ**

Cllr Harrington asked the Clerk to email her a blank Parish Council heading with the logo so that she could begin to set up some initial papers. **Clerk**

274.16 Summer event

Cllr Noy (JN) reported that he had met with his Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust colleagues and they were enthusiastic about the idea of a joint event with the Parish Council. They have held very successful events in other counties and have developed a popular format. This includes starting late afternoon/early evening with a BBQ/hog roast and ferret racing that develops into a barn dance later, with a raffle etc.

The date proposed is Friday 30th June. Concerns were expressed about getting people along for an early start on a Friday, but JN said their experience was that Friday was very popular because it was a great way to start the weekend and didn't eat into other weekend plans. **JN**

The Trust would organise everything, including the band or disco and the TEN licence. It was agreed that parishioners with a ticket would gain free entry, one free drink, and one BBQ visit as part of the Parish Council's contribution to the community. All non-parishioners would be charged.

It was agreed to discuss further at the March PC meeting and to agree then the cost for entry, BBQ and drink. **JN/ALL**

274.17 HCC's Hertfordshire's Traffic & Transport Data Report 2016. This was received for circulation to members. **ALL**

At 9.55pm it was **RESOLVED to suspend the meeting for public comments**

- Cllr Stan Bull said he was pleased to see that the traffic speed sign has been fixed. He also noted the number of dead deer along the A10 verges that have been struck by a car. EH Environmental Health will remove them when brought to their attention. The Clerk was asked to inform them of one on the south-bound A10 between Buckland and Chipping. **Clerk**
- A parishioner has asked to have one of the Jubilee Medallions – these are held by the Chairman who will be asked to contact the parishioner when he returns from holiday. **JK**

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 10.05pm

274.18 Urgent matters received too late for the agenda

Further to the ill health of the editor of the Newsletter mentioned in the Chairman's comments (274.06), a new editor will have to be found. Cllr Jones (JJ) said the biggest problem is getting the information and contributions from which to create the copy. JJ said he would act as the editor for the March edition only, but not beyond, therefore all contributions should be emailed to him. The vacant editorial position to be advertised in the March Newsletter. **JJ/ALL
JJ**

274.19 Items for future agendas:

- Arrangements for community engagement activities at the Annual Meeting of the Parish in May, including AED familiarisation **TH/ALL**
- Bonfire/Fireworks night 2017 **ALL**
- To review the Emergency Plan (which can be found on the website)

274.20 Calendar of 2017 Meetings and Newsletter deadlines

1. The draft Calendar of Meetings was amended and approved. It was agreed that 2017 Council meetings should be convened half an hour earlier, at 7.30pm. **ALL/Clerk**

2. Newsletter deadlines: Final copy to JJ 25 February; To print 3 March; Deliver 4/5 March weekend. **JJ/Clerk**

Next PC meeting: Monday 13th March, 7.30pm, The Manor House, Buntingford. **Clerk/JK**

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10.27pm.

Signed.....Date.....