

## BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting held at 8pm on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2015 in the Reading Room, Old Rd, Buckland.

**Present:** Cllrs Day, Horden, Husband, Inwood, Pryor, Steed and Westwell, District Councillor Paul Potter, and the Clerk.

### 1. Apologies for Absence

(139) None.

### 2. Declarations of Interest

(140) None.

### 3. Requests for Dispensations

(141) None.

### 4. Minutes

(142) Minutes of the Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2015, were agreed. Cllr Husband signed the minutes as a correct record.

### 5. Community Police Report

(143) Inspector Hamlin had advised Surrey Police would be unable to send a representative to the meeting. Council recorded a note of disappointment that they had yet to meet PC Lee Munday and hope that a representative would attend the next meeting.

(144) PCSO Sadler had emailed crime statistics for 3 crimes reported to have occurred in the locality between 6<sup>th</sup> July and 14<sup>th</sup> September 2015. The crimes comprised one cannabis warning to a driver, the theft of two pedal cycles taken from an outhouse and criminal damage to a front door. **Action:** Clerk to ask PCSO Sadler to be in a position to discuss these crimes, alongside any that are reported by November at the next meeting.

(145) Council noted that whilst the report of an abandoned car on the Buckland Lane BOAT had been included in a Countrywatch Bulletin that PCSO Sadler had not shared any details with Council. **Action:** Item to be raised at November Meeting

### 6. Open Forum

(146) The Clerk advised that Mr. C. Jones, resident in Rectory Lane, having expressed concern about contractors who had been working in highway verges near his home had been advised to contact UK Power Networks (the body who had tasked the contractors) and Surrey Highways who would have granted a licence for the works to be completed. The Clerk advised that she had reported the issue to Jackie Lees-Howes, MVDC Environmental Services and that Jackie had agreed to add her weight to the resident's call for SCC Highways to take appropriate action to ensure the contractors leave the highway in an acceptable state.

(147) MVDC Cllr Paul Potter, being aware of Council's concern about changes being proposed by Surrey County Council ("SCC") to their Recycling Centres and the consultation currently underway reported that this issue had recently been discussed at MVDC by the Scrutiny Committee. He expressed his hope that MVDC will submit a robust response and undertook to update the Clerk as more information emerges. It was noted that a link to the Consultation had been included in a Parish Update and made available on the village website. **Action:** Clerk to await the MVDC response, and, subject to it including a request for the consultation to be set aside to submit a response supporting the MVDC stated position.

(148) MVDC Cllr Paul Potter advised that at a recent meeting of the Redhill Aerodrome Consultative Committee ("RACC") that the management team had reported a reduction in helicopter flights following a decision on the part of one of the companies previously based there to relocate. Paul advised the rebuilding of fire-damaged assets is proceeding and that minor alterations to the grass runway are being made. Council thanked Paul for continuing to represent the local community on the RACC.

## 7. Planning

### New Planning Applications

- (149) MO/2015/1371/PLAH Erection of a 1.7m high fence on top of existing wall on rear boundary with A25 at April Cottage, Old Road, Buckland, Surrey, RH3 7DY. No Comment.
- (150) MO/2015/1006/PLAH: Erection of single storey rear extension at Cop End, Old Road, Buckland, Betchworth, Surrey, RH3 7DY. It was noted that Council had not commented on this application.

### MVDC Planning Notifications

The following Local Planning Authority decisions were noted:

- (151) MO/2015/0848/PLA: Erection of single storey extension to ground floor, first floor extension to create Manager's flat and alterations to landscaping and car parking arrangements at The Jolly Farmers, Reigate Road, Buckland, Surrey. RH3 7BG. Approved with conditions.
- (152) MO/2015/1006/PLAH: Erection of single storey rear extension at Cop End, Old Road, Buckland, Betchworth, Surrey, RH3 7DY. Approved with conditions.
- (153) MO/2015/1242/CAT: Reduction of one yew tree at The White House, Old Road, Buckland, Surrey. RH3 7DZ. No objection.
- (154) MO/2015/1279/CAT: Crown reductions of a Beech tree, a Weeping Willow, an Oak tree and a Sugar Maple tree at Bratton House, Slough Lane, Buckland, Surrey. RH3 7BJ. No objection.
- (155) MO/2015/1311/CAT: Crown reduction of one beech tree at Jokers Moon, Dungates Lane, Buckland, Surrey, RH3 7BD. No objection.
- (156) MO/2015/1358/CAT: Tree works at Yewdells, Dungates Lane, Buckland, Surrey. RH3 7BD. No objection.

### Planning Consultations

- (157) It was noted that the next Meeting of the Buckland Liaison Group, scheduled for Friday 16<sup>th</sup> will provide an opportunity for representatives to meet Chris Rowlands, who will, be overseeing final restoration tasks at Tapwood Quarry and Park Pit following the retirement of Graham Tucker.
- (158) MVDC had invited comment on a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule proposed for inclusion in the Mole Valley Community Infrastructure Levy ("CIL") Policy. A link to the consultation papers had previously been circulated to Councillors and the Clerk, responding to a query raised, had advised that MVDC had confirmed the 15% Parish share of any CIL would be automatically paid across to the Parish Council and not held by MVDC as has been the case with s.106 contributions. No further action required at this time.

## 8. Highways, Transport and Rights of Way

### Highways Maintenance

- (159) It was noted that at the start of September, local contractor Burleys had removed a build-up of debris from the carriageway, trimmed back the hedgerow to the edge of the tarmac and re-profiled the bank to "reclaim a strip of road surface" around the north side of what had become a dangerous bend at the top of Old Road.
- Votes of thanks were recorded for the SCC Mole Valley Local Committee for approving a **Highways Localism** grant to fund this "one-off" task and to Cllr Helyn Clack without whose support the grant would not have been forthcoming. **Actions:** Clerk to complete the paperwork required by the SCC Highways Localism Team to confirm completion of the task and to focus on resident responsibilities for roadside vegetation in the Parish Update to be submitted for inclusion in the October parish magazine.

- (160) The Clerk advised that the **second rural cut** due to be completed during September was underway and that whilst the standard of the cut was higher than in the spring that the operatives appeared to have missed the verge on the inside of the footpath alongside the A25. **Action:** Council accepted Cllr Pryor's offer to report the missed work to MVDC.
- (161) The Clerk advised that having replaced the two welcome gates at the western parish boundary, The Landscape Group had returned the original **welcome gates** to her and she had arranged for them to be stored by the local Highways team
- (162) SCC Highways had given notice of changes proposed to the **Surrey Permit scheme**, under which licences are granted to allow works to be completed within the highway. SCC Highways had explained that the over-arching principles and objectives of the scheme remain the same and that the changes proposed are required in order for the scheme to comply with updated National legislation. Cllr Steed, having reviewed the proposed changes confirmed they appeared to be reasonable.

Council noted Cllr Steed's concern that the current scheme ought to have enabled SCC Highways Streetworks ensure local residents did not experience the conflict that recently occurred when Betchworth and Brockham bridges were simultaneously closed at the same time as traffic lights were in place on the A25.

Councillors empathised with the frustration drivers had experienced when faced with conflicting diversions routes, expressed concern that the confusion had led to local residents missing medical appointments and to a large vehicle becoming wedged on Flanchford Bridge. **Action:** Cllr Steed to raise Council's concern at the next meeting of the Dorking Rural Highways Forum.

- (163) It was noted that the SCC Highways appointed contractor had submitted a request for a permit to allow the temporary use of traffic lights on the A25 to allow a cherry picker to be used to install a **Vehicle Activated Sign** on the empty post (installed 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015) to the east of the Shell garage. Council, whilst pleased to hear that progress is finally being made, expressed disappointment at the time it has taken to address the damage incurred in March 2014.
- (164) The Clerk confirmed that Council's requests for the condition of the central areas of the carriageway of the A25 through Buckland to be improved had been submitted to SCC Highways as had requests for the MVDC Street Cleaning team to sweep around and clean the street furniture. **Action:** All to encourage any local residents concerned about the state of the state of the A25 road surface and/or the street furniture to submit reports to SCC Highways and MVDC respectively.

## 9. Amenities

- (165) The Clerk advised that Thamesway Contractors Limited had been granted a permit to complete the work to replace the **post and rail barrier alongside the A25**. The work was, weather permitting, set to commence on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2015. Council recorded a vote of thanks for Paul Manwaring, SCC Highways Engineer whose support had been instrumental in securing the permit. **Action:** Clerk, upon satisfactory completion of the work and receipt of an invoice was instructed to arrange for a cheque to be issued to settle the amount falling due.
- (166) The Clerk advised that when MVDC had recently offered to incentivise each community within the District to install a Public Access Defibrillator with the offer of a £300 contribution towards the cost of the defibrillator and cabinet she had submitted an application and since received the funding. Council recorded a vote of thanks to MVDC for the contribution towards the project, noting this had halved Council's contribution.

## Village Pond

- (167) On Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> August a working party of sixteen village volunteers and nine Reigate Area Conservation volunteers successfully removed large quantities of unwanted vegetation from the pond, dug saplings out and cut back perennial plants around the pond perimeter; and used drain rods to clear silt from the drain runs serving the pond from Rectory Lane and the Towered Barn.

- (168) The working party activities were led by Simon Elson, one of the Reigate Area Conservation Volunteers. A combination of low water levels, recent light rainfall that had “softened the ground conditions” and adequate resource allowed Simon to conclude that there would not be a requirement for any further mechanical clearance in the pond this year.
- (169) Simon provided the following quote for use in the parish update circulated shortly after the event: *“Whilst many people see low water level in a pond as a disaster, they forget that in the aquatic habitat world, many species have strategies to deal with such variations as it is natural for water levels to fluctuate and for relatively shallow points to occasionally dry out.”*
- (170) During the event the presence of two species of amphibian was recorded – the common frog and common newt and lots of froglets and this prompted Simon to comment that *“this is good evidence that the pond is functioning successfully as a breeding site.”* We also observed three species of Dragonfly – the Emperor, Common Darter and Black-tailed Skimmer and two species of Damselfly - the Blue-tailed Damselfly, and Common Blue Damselfly all of which point to the pond doing okay.
- (171) Two volunteers opted to complete tasks south of the A25, tidying an area around the Reading Room and removing surplus earth that had built up around the bus shelter.
- (172) Council recorded a vote of thanks to all the villagers who turned out and contributed to a successful event, to Simon Elson and the Reigate Area Conservation Volunteers (“RACV”) for leading the event and to Buckland Estates for the provision of a trailer.  
**Action:** Clerk to arrange for a donation of £75.00 to be raised and sent to RACV.

## 10. Formalities

### Annual Review of Effectiveness of Internal Controls

- (173) In accordance with advice set out in the Practitioners Guide to Governance and Accountability for Local Councils (2014), Council considered the effectiveness of its system of internal control.
- (174) Council reviewed the recently circulated risk assessment schedule and audit plan and concluded that both the risk assessment schedule and audit plan are relevant and effective.
- (175) Council, having given due consideration, resolved to confirm the appointment of Braidwood and Associates as Internal Auditor for the period covering the preparation and submission of the 2016 Annual Return on the basis of the currently adopted audit plan. **Action:** Clerk.
- (176) Council noted a further change in legislation due to come into effect 1 April 2016 that will extend the 15 working day period during which Council’s books can be inspected to a period of 30 days that shall include the first 14 days of July. Council approved the Clerk’s proposal (agreed in principle with Chris Braidwood) for the books to be lodged with Braidwood and Associates during such period as the Clerk may be unavailable.  
**Action:** Clerk to relay Council’s decision to Chris Braidwood within the appointment letter.
- (177) At the January 2015 meeting Council had noted the **Transparency Code for Small Councils** that had been published in December 2014 with an effective date of 1 April 2015 and agreed to keep the new rules under review. When the code was published there had been a suggestion that funds would be available to help smaller councils meet their new obligations and information setting out the details of the fund and its existence had recently become available and circulated to Councillors. **Action:** Clerk to draft a bid to be submitted to enable Council to “tap the fund” and to record the time for inclusion within the bid.
- (178) It was noted that **Training Event information** issued by the Surrey Branch of the National Association of Local Councils and an **Autumn Newsletter** issued by Council’s Insurance Broker, Came & Company had been circulated to Councillors

## 11. Finance

### Account Payments and Receipts

(179) The following payments were approved:

- (i) G Burley and Sons Limited £215.78 including £35.96 Vat, Two cuts of the grass and one trim of the hedge during July 2015.
- (ii) G Burley and Sons Limited £86.32 including £14.39 Vat, One cut of the grass during August 2015.
- (iii) G Burley and Sons Limited £1,526.40 including £254.40 Vat, Highways Localism work alongside Old Road.
- (iv) Sheena Boyce £117.39, Re-imburement council expenses, including £79.99 renewal fee for office software licence (Vat £13.33).

## 12. Community Wellbeing

(180) Following a presentation at a recent meeting of Mole Valley Clerks, the Clerk had shared with Councillors summary details of a proposal to set up an event in Mole Valley to establish greater community wellbeing across all sectors. It was noted that the initiative is taking a broad view of well-being that includes health, environment, income, social, learning, employment and managing the work-life balance and aims to support and inform people at all levels, building community health and ensuring that the information and support to make the right choices is in place. Cllr Inwood expressed an interest in the initiative and Council accepted her offer to take the lead as and when Council input is invited. **Action:** Clerk to liaise with Cllr Inwood.

## 13. Forthcoming Meetings

- (181) The **Parish Council** confirmed that next full Council Meeting will be held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2015 and that subsequent meetings are scheduled to be held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March, 9<sup>th</sup> May, 11<sup>th</sup> July, 12<sup>th</sup> September and 14<sup>th</sup> November 2016. **Action:** Clerk to confirm meeting dates to Doreen Dart.
- (182) The Clerk will attend a meeting of Mole Valley Clerks at Pippbrook on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2015.
- (183) Cllr Pryor and the Clerk will attend the Surrey Association of Local Councils Annual Conference and represent the Parish Council at the AGM on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2015.
- (184) The Clerk will attend a meeting of the SESW Customer Scrutiny Panel on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2015 and a Stakeholder meeting at Bough Beech Reservoir on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2015.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

**Sheena Boyce, Clerk**

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