

## BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting held at 8pm on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017 in the Reading Room, Old Rd, Buckland.

**Present:** Cllrs Day, Husband (Chair), Pryor, Steed and Westwell and the Clerk. District Cllrs Paul Potter and John Muggeridge attended for items 1-9.

### 1. Apologies for Absence

(219) Apologies and reasons for absence was accepted from Cllr Horden.

### 2. Declarations of Interest

(220) Cllr Pryor declared an interest, as an immediate neighbour to the property referenced in planning application MO/2016/1906.

### 3. Requests for Dispensations

(221) None.

### 4. Minutes

(222) Minutes of the Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2016, were agreed. Cllr Husband signed the minutes as a correct record.

### 5. Open Forum

(223) District Cllr Muggeridge advised he had recently met with MVDC Environmental Health to ask for an investigation to be undertaken to assess whether road noise emanating from the A25 in the vicinity of Tranquil Dale amounts to unreasonable noise pollution. **Action:** Cllr Muggeridge to provide an update to Council as soon as practicable.

### 6. Planning

#### New Planning Applications

(224) MO/2016/1906: Insertion of 7 rooflights to facilitate loft conversion at Pinebank, Reigate Road, Buckland, RH3 7EB. Council resolved to object to this application. District Cllrs Muggeridge and Potter, having reviewed the application and listened to the discussion extended their support to Council's request for the application to be determined by the MVDC Development Control Committee. **Action:** Clerk to submit statement of objection to MVDC upon conclusion of the meeting and to submit a fuller response as soon as practicable.

#### Mole Valley District Council ("MVDC") Planning Notifications

The following Local Planning Authority decisions were noted:

- (225) MO/2016/1662: To crown reduce one willow tree on Buckland Village Green by up to 2 metres. No objections.
- (226) MO/2016/1736: To reduce the height of 2 Lime trees by 5 metres and reduce lateral branches by 2-3 metres. To clear stem to crown break and thin crown by 10% at The Limes, Old Road, Buckland, RH3 7DU. No objections.

#### Planning Enforcement

- (227) The Clerk, having attended a meeting at MVDC, advised that Jack Straw (MVDC Head of Planning) and Nick Gray (Deputy Chief Executive) had stated that
- (i) whilst concern expressed by several Mole Valley Parish Councils had been noted that they do not consider it likely we will see an increase in service delivery in the near term;
  - (ii) resource constraints will continue to require a high degree of prioritisation within the Planning Function.

**Action:** District Councillors Muggeridge and Potter expressed their disappointment and agreed to follow up with MVDC.

## Planning Consultations

- (228) Council noted receipt of a copy of a letter sent to MVDC by Graham Capel setting out his objections to the planning permission recently granted (MO:2015/2017). No action required.
- (229) The Clerk reported that Hanson UK had confirmed the maintenance work being carried out at Tapwood Quarry had been completed last month. It was noted that Cllr Westwell and the Clerk will attend a meeting of the Buckland Liaison Group arranged for Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2017.

## 7. Highways, Transport and Rights of Way

- (230) Inspector Hamlin had advised Council (14<sup>th</sup> November 2016) that two **road traffic accidents** had been recorded to have occurred on the A25 through Buckland; one without injury and one with injury. The Clerk had since circulated further details of the incidents:
- (i) Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2016 (c.8am) – collision between a car and a pedestrian on the A25 near Tapwood Lane – slight injury – taken to hospital as a precaution
  - (ii) Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September (c. midnight) – vehicle overturned on Buckland bends
- (231) Cllr Steed advised that he had, with Inspector Hamlin, been considering how easy it might be to install a modestly sized vehicle activated sign, for a short time, to enable an objective assessment of vehicles speeds to be undertaken. Cllr Steed advised he had offered to meet with the Neighbourhood Team's Casualty Reduction Officer to evaluate potential sites to position a **VAS** and is awaiting a response from Inspector Hamlin.
- (232) Council welcomed news that a new location for the **Variable Message Sign** being proposed for the benefit of westbound traffic on the A25 had been identified; close to the junction of Colley Lane and the A25. It was noted that the alternate location proposed for eastbound traffic; alongside the verge at the junction of Reigate Road and Old Reigate Road (a short distance to the east of Haytor Kennels) had also been accepted. **Action:** Clerk to write to thank Matthew Jezzard (SCC Highways) for amending the proposals to address the safety concerns expressed by Council.
- (233) The Clerk advised she had received two enquiries about the Parish Council's policy on the erection of new "for information" signs and had, responded on both occasions in a manner consistent with Council's Decluttering Policy (adopted June 2013):
- (i) The Clerk had provided contact details for the appropriate officer within the SCC Countryside Access team to advise on one of the queries that had related to encouraging appropriate use of a right of way;
  - (ii) Ken Caldwell, Chair of the Reading Room Committee had relayed a query from the Committee asking what options there might be for promoting awareness of the location of the Reading Room. The Clerk advised she had made a number of suggestions and had not had any request for further assistance.
- (234) The Clerk reported that James Bennett, the owner of Garden End, had replied to the request for him to arrange for the verge and any overhanging plants to be cut back to the edge of the hard-surfaced footpath. Mr Bennett had also explained that he will first need to fully recover from a recent period of ill health.

## Improvement work to footpaths alongside the A25

- (235) It was noted that a team of three operatives had been supplied by Burleys to undertake cutting back of the footpaths alongside the southern edge of the A25; work that had been two thirds funded by a Highways Localism grant with the Parish Council precept funding the balance. The project had provided for the removal of the surplus soil off site and three six yard skips of material were removed.
- (236) Shortly after the Highways Localism work was completed a further one and half days work was contracted. This additional work, was jointly funded, on an equal basis by the Parish Council and SCC Mole Valley Local Committee. The Parish Council recorded a vote of thanks for Cllr Helyn Clack's support, without which the funding would not have been made available.

- (237) The Clerk confirmed that a bid had now been submitted to secure funding under the 2017/18 Highways Localism Initiative for a further four days work, next winter and hopefully by the same team, to cut back sections of footpath further towards Reigate.

### **Buckland Lane**

- (238) Council noted that the SCC Highways Engineer with responsibility for implementing the proposal to introduce a 1.5m (4 feet 11 inch) restriction on Buckland Lane (D318) had advised no objections to the proposed Traffic Regulation Order had been received during the consultation. **Action:** Clerk to ask Cllr Helyn Clack to seek a commitment from SCC Highways that every effort will be made to implement the proposed permanent Traffic Regulation Order as soon as practically possible.

### **Aviation**

- (239) Cllr Steed had joined a half day visit to Gatwick Airport that had included a behind the scenes tour and a series of presentations from Gatwick Airport Limited. Cllr Steed had previously circulated a copy of the presentation slides and summarised the experience as “an interesting and informative morning”.
- (240) Cllr Potter, having recently attended a meeting of the Redhill Aerodrome Consultative Committee, shared a copy of a consultation document that sets out a proposal for a garden development of new housing on the site. No action required.

### **8. Amenities and Events**

- (241) British Heart Foundation volunteers will be running a **Heartstart Training Course** (in the Reading Room) on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March. It was noted that all twenty places had been allocated and a number of reserves are currently wait listed.
- (242) Council approved a plan to hold a Spring tidy during the afternoon of Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March as part of the **Great British Spring Clean Event** being promoted by Keep Britain Tidy. **Action:** Clerk to publicise in Parish Updates.
- (243) It was noted that the Reigate Area Conservation Volunteers had offered to support a pond clearance event on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> August 2017. **Action:** Clerk to publicise the event in parish updates.

### **9. Formalities**

- (244) SALC had, in a recent bulletin, emphasised the need for all Parish Councils, however small to have in place certain **policies and procedures**. Cllr Westwell had undertaken an initial review of the following draft documents, prepared by the Clerk in accordance with minute 2016:204. Council, having reviewed the draft documents approved a proposal from Cllr Day, seconded by Cllr Westwell for the following policies to be adopted with immediate effect:
- (i) Complaints Procedure
  - (ii) Data Protection Policy
  - (iii) Documents and Records Policy
  - (iv) Information Technology, Email and Internet Policy
  - (v) Disciplinary and Grievance Policy
- Action:** Clerk to circulate and publish adopted versions.
- (245) Council endorsed Cllr Steed’s suggestion for the Clerk to review the Risk Register and insert references, where applicable to the newly adopted policies. **Action:** Clerk.
- (246) It was noted that Cllr Inwood had, earlier in the day, circulated an update outlining the steps she had recently taken relating to Community Resilience and advised that she intended to step down from her volunteer work to allow her to focus on her growing portfolio of business opportunities. **Action:** Cllr Husband, in his role as Chairman agreed to contact Cllr Inwood to clarify her intentions with respect to timings and the implications for the event she had been planning, with Time Well Spent, to hold on 2<sup>nd</sup> February and mindful that Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2017 is the editorial deadline for the February issue of the Parish Magazine.

- (247) It was noted that the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government had announced (December 2016) that a proposal to require Parish Councils (irrespective of their size) to hold a local referendum prior to applying a rise in precept of 2% or £5 per year, whichever is higher had, for now, been deferred.
- (248) It was noted that **updates** issued by the **Surrey Police Chief Constable, SALC, 3SC** (the body charged with drawing up a devolution plan for Surrey, East Sussex and West Sussex), **GACC** and the **Gatwick Airport Community Engagement Team** had been circulated to Cllrs and key information included within Parish Updates.

## 10. Finance

### Budget and Precept Request for the period April 2017 – March 2018

- (249) A Draft Budget, accompanied by a schedule of explanatory notes and draft assumptions and a copy of the latest full year forecast to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 had been circulated to Cllrs accompanied by a “wish list” of potential expenditure proposals relating to amenity improvements.
- (250) It was noted that the Finance team at MVDC had recently:
- (i) advised Council that a proposal to apply a 2% increase to the 2016/17 council tax support scheme payment of £750 is being prepared for consideration by MVDC and agreed it would be reasonable, for the purposes of preparing the draft budget to assume the 2017/18 figure will be set at £780. It was noted that this grant is provided to offset what would otherwise be a reduction in precept as a consequence of the localisation of council tax benefits that first took effect on 1 April 2013;
  - (ii) advised Council that the agreement to apply an inflationary formula to the concurrent service payment equal to that which is being applied to District council tax is being prepared for consideration by MVDC. Whilst MVDC had yet to decide exactly what increase shall be applied it will be no more than the greater of 2% and the equivalent percentage of a £5 increase to Band D council tax. For the purposes of preparing a draft budget an increase of 1.95% has been assumed and a concurrent payment grant of £1987 (£1949 16/17); and
  - (iii) notified a local tax base for Buckland Parish of £296.80 for 2017/18 compared to £295.90 for 2016/17.
  - (iv) Council, having reviewed the current year forecast and draft budget concluded that with increased budgetary pressures evident at District and County there is a need for the Parish Council to ensure it has sufficient financial resource available to be able to fulfil its obligation to maintain the village green and pond, and, when determining how best to set the budget to manage the risks that discretionary grants be withdrawn and restrictive caps be introduced with the effect of limiting Council’s future ability to raise the precept without incurring the significant cost of a referendum.
- (251) Council resolved to:
- (i) set budgeted expenditure for the 2017/18 financial year at £16,710.
  - (ii) to budget for a £750 surplus to be transferred to the election reserve, in line with Council’s decision to set aside sufficient funds to cover the MVDC estimated costs of a Parish Council election in May 2019;
  - (iii) set the precept at a level, given the notified council tax base of £296.80 to be equivalent to an increase of 2% on the 2016/17 Band D Parish Council tax charge of £42.03 i.e.  $1.02 * £42.03 = £42.87$ .
  - (iv) submit a precept request for the 2016/17 financial year of £12,723 i.e.  $£42.87 * £296.80$ . The precept request form was duly signed by Cllrs Husband and Day.  
**Action:** Clerk to return the precept request to MVDC.
- (252) Council adopted the remaining assumptions and explanatory notes that had accompanied the financial projections. **Action:** Clerk to circulate schedules, updated to reflect decisions taken and to pursue the expenditure proposals.

## Account Payments and Receipts

- (253) It was noted that a payment for £78.00 including £13.00 Vat to the Surrey Association of Local Councils had been paid in accordance with minute 2016:142 and a registration fee of £250.00 had been paid to the Society of Local Clerks in accordance with minute 2016:143.
- (254) Council approved establishing a direct debit in favour of the Information Commissioner's Office to facilitate the annual renewal fee for continued registration under the Data Protection Act as required by law. It was noted that the annual fee for 2017, a sum of £35.00 will be debited on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2017.
- (255) The following payments were approved:
- (i) DG Tree Services Ltd £390.00 including £65.00 Vat, Tree works to willow tree during December 2016.
  - (ii) G Burley and Sons Ltd £1728.00 including £288.00 Vat, Highways Localism: Path edging - 3 days : December 2016.
  - (iii) G Burley and Sons Ltd £1004.40 including £167.40 Vat, Highways Localism : Skip hire – 3 : December 2016.
  - (iv) G Burley and Sons Ltd £1198.80 including £199.80 Vat, Community Enhancement - Path edging – 1.5 days : December 2016.
  - (v) Sheena Boyce £261.35, Additional Salary re: Highways Localism £132.00, council expenses £129.35.
- (256) It was noted that Cllr Day had verified the bank balances entered on the bank reconciliation against the bank statements, initialled both documents, and had confirmed that no exceptions had been identified in the transactions reported since 14<sup>th</sup> November 2016.

## 11. Items deferred to next meeting

- (257) It was noted that the publicity period for **MO/2016/1957**: Erection of 1 No. dwelling and detached garage following removal of existing dwelling at Garden Cottage, Sandy Lane, Buckland, Betchworth, Surrey, RH3 7AA had commenced on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2017 and would close after 21 days. Councillors agreed it would be appropriate to convene an additional meeting to provide an opportunity to discuss the proposal and submit a response. **Action:** Clerk to seek to book a room for Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> January for an additional meeting. All to review 2016/1957 and pass any queries/requests for information to the Clerk to provide an opportunity for MVDC to respond before the next meeting. [nb. agreed, with MVDC, on 18<sup>th</sup> January, to defer meeting pending MVDC reply to Council's query]
- (258) Council agreed to discuss the agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting at the next meeting.
- (259) A decision as to whether to send a representative to the Surrey Association of Local Councils ("SALC") Spring Conference was deferred pending publication of the programme.

## 12. Forthcoming Meetings

- (260) The **Parish Council** confirmed that the next confirmed Council Meeting will be held at 8pm on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2017 and that subsequent meetings are scheduled to commence at 8pm, in the Reading Room, on 8<sup>th</sup> May, 10<sup>th</sup> July, 11<sup>th</sup> September and 13<sup>th</sup> November 2017 and on 8<sup>th</sup> January and 12<sup>th</sup> March 2018.
- (261) Cllr Steed will attend a meeting of the Local Forum of Parish Councils (date not yet confirmed) to be attended by Surrey PCC David Munro.
- (262) Cllr Pryor will attend the River Mole Catchment Partnership Annual Event at Betchworth Memorial Hall on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017.
- (263) The Clerk will attend a half day Media Awareness Course on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017 at the SALC offices in Lewes, a Sutton and East Surrey Water Customer Scrutiny Panel meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> January and a meeting of Mole Valley Clerks on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February.
- (264) The 2017 Annual Parish Meeting is to be held in the Reading Room, on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2017, commencing 7.30pm.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.40pm.

**Sheena Boyce, Clerk**

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