

BUCKERELL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 16th November 2022 at Doug's Shed Splatthayes

Those Present

Clare Slater – Chair (CS)
Helen Howard - Vice Chair (HH)
Jo Knight (JK)
Cllr Philip Twiss – Devon County Council (PT)
Cllr Alasdair Bruce - East Devon District Council (AB)
Ian Tucker - Clerk (IT)

There was 1 member of the public present.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Sandra Money and Geoff Wright.

2. Agreeing the Minutes of the Meeting Held 20th July 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 20th July 2022 were agreed as a correct record of that meeting.

3. Matters arising (not on agenda)

- a) It was **AGREED** that the Parish Council would send a message of condolence to the royal family. **CS**
- b) It was noted that the BCA had purchased a wheelchair for the use of the community, and stored in The Shed.
- c) The Clerk was asked to pursue the plaque for the Jubilee oak tree which had been originally offered by EDDC. **IT**

4. Declarations of interest

Clare indicated her interest in the payment for plants at the War Memorial (Item 6 a)).

5. Public questions

Penny Mear asked the Parish Council to support a photographic project to capture pictures of the residents of Buckerell in the years of the late Queen and the new King. It was **AGREED** that this had the full backing of the

Parish Council. Costs are yet to be identified but the Council will in principle provide some financial support.

6. Finance and Governance

Balance at bank £8419.55 at 31st October 2022

a) Payments approved unanimously -

Steve Triner (Village Maintenance)	£96.25
Ian Tucker (Clerk Pay)	£85.91
Doug Cowans (Venue hire)	£30
Clare Slater (Plants at War Memorial)	£37.92

b) The recent Local Government Association pay award has been agreed nationally. This was discussed and it was agreed to adopt this. In light of the Parish Clerk's experience in post it was also agreed that the clerk should be moved from spinal column pay point 10 to 12.

c) It was **AGREED** to obtain some quotes for the re-surfacing of the area belonging to the Parish Council at the War Memorial.

d) Ian was asked to look into opening a savings account to hold monies for this re-surfacing project until they are needed.

HH

IT

7. Councillor Philip Twiss – Report

A mixed bag of items this time for you to share with people in your local communities, where from my perspective every day presents its own challenges and could never be described as dull!

Growing Communities fund

The DCC Growing Communities Fund (GCF) is making a real difference, giving a helping hand to local communities during the cost-of-living crisis. So far £250,000 has been awarded to local projects across the County, many of which are helping communities cope with the sharp increase in food prices and heating bills. We have committed a further £200,000 and we are inviting applications for projects that support communities and help them to become more resilient. This is in response to the fastest rise in the cost of living for 40 years; the cost of food increased by 14.6 per cent in the year to September, reaching its highest level since 1980. Projects supported include those that offer local people a warm safe haven, produce food,

distribute surplus food and essentials, food banks and classes showing communities how to cook nutritious meals on a budget. See <https://www.devon.gov.uk/communities/growing-communities-fund> for further information. Free holiday activities with hot meals now available for children during the Christmas 2022 holidays School holidays can be particularly difficult for some families because of increased costs, such as food, especially now, when costs of living are so high, and rising. DCC have arranged a programme of funded holiday-time activities, with hot meals, to run for up to four days over the Christmas 2022 school holiday. To see the full programme of available activities, and to book a place through our providers at <https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/document/hafproviders-christmas-2022/#introduction> where there are number of options available in Honiton, Axminster, Sidmouth and Honiton Digital support for small businesses New online support is now available to help small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) to be more savvy with their digital skills. As part of the Digital Enablement for SMEs (DESME) project, DCC is delivering in partnership with YTKO and Cosmic, an online self-assessment tool, called the Digital Maturity Index, has been launched, see <https://digital.benchmarkindex.net/auth/signup> . It has been devised to enable businesses to gain an understanding of their digital strengths and weaknesses. It also offers insights into digital tools that may help their business develop and grow. This self-assessment tool is designed to be completed by business managers on behalf of their business. Once they have completed this assessment and downloaded their report, they will have targeted information that can guide them to access funded digital training courses and resources or further advice from one of the project's expert digital advisors. The DESME project, which is funded by the European Social Fund (ESF), offers bespoke training to enable businesses to make the most of readily available digital tools. The aim is to improve the management of their business, increase efficiency and help them to grow their reach. The project also offers the Digital Course Finder, an extensive online database of digital skills training courses delivered by training providers across the county, as well as online digital skills courses. See <https://digitalcoursefinder.org.uk/> for details of 202 courses! This website is the first of its kind in Devon and is aimed at adults of all ages who are looking to learn new skills, as well as businesses looking for Digital Skills training for their employees. Users can search for digital courses based on a variety of factors such as subject, location, course length or format. Training providers can create their own accounts which will enable them to add courses and events as well as maintain and update their courses. Police news DCC members in the Eastern part of Devon will receive a monthly 'trends' update for the area and the first below from the 8th of November is interesting, if not specific, where the news that surgeries are back a positive step in the right direction, towards the reopening of the front desk at Honiton Police station. Over the last 28 days for the Rural East Devon Sector, we have seen very steady crime statistics. Most crime offences across the sector are about where they are for the same 28 day period in 2021. The only notable increase relates to vehicle offences. There have been a disproportionate number of thefts from motor vehicles across the whole

sector, the majority of which relate to thefts of catalytic converters. These have predominantly taken place across Axminster and Seaton patches, which of course includes the rural aspects of these towns. Police are working hard across the board in order to combat this issue. A force wide operation has been instigated and actions are being taken. These include a number of overt tactical options. There will be an increase in patrols in the area over evening times in order to locate any offenders of these crimes. Police from the local area are also linking in with our colleagues in Dorset and Avon and Somerset in order to coordinate joint days of action. This is a rapidly evolving crime series. Advice has been put out by police on social media channels, with the hope of increasing awareness locally. There is a trend of Honda Jazz vehicles and Toyota Auris vehicles being targeted, and so owners of these vehicles should be particularly mindful of this issue and establish any steps that they can take on an individual basis in order to safeguard their property where possible. There are no other crime trends that require attention. Rural East Devon remains a safe place to live, and crime statistics in the area are pleasing. In some good news, Axminster and Honiton have recently enjoyed their town carnivals. Both events were well attended by the public, they were pleasant events to police and no known issues have occurred during either events. Police in all 4 towns are looking at bringing back Police Surgeries, where the public can meet face to face with a local police officer to discuss any local concerns. Details of these will be published on our website in due course as and when they have been set up. This will be an opportunity for some positive engagement between the local police and the communities we serve.

In addition to the above report Phil mentioned that the planned move of the 30mph restriction at the north of the village is currently with the police for their evaluation, so is progressing slowly.

The Boundaries Commission findings will have an impact on the current local constituencies. It looks as if Honiton and Sidmouth will be within the same boundary, whilst Tiverton will go in with West Somerset.

8. Councillor Alasdair Bruce – Report

Matters raised at the last meeting.

The Deer Park Gym

I have been advised that the enforcement notice is still being reviewed by the council's legal team, but that a notice will be served shortly. There was an anticipation that an appeal may be lodged but this has not happened.

Causley Farm.

I have been advised, finally, that the environment team are now in the process of opening a case on this business. They did add that no complaints have been received regarding this business, so I would ask the

Parish Council to encourage those that do have a grievance over noise to report it to the team at EDDC.

Sunningdale development.

Both the officer and senior planning officer for our area has visited the site and are now awaiting a new application from the owners agent. When pressed , the officer gave the same reply. To me this clearly indicates that the Parishes observations that the development had overstepped its consent are confirmed. I now intend to press the planning officer to explain how such a breach can go unpunished and simply be corrected by a new application. I will advise the chair of planning that some strong comments must be added to the new application to make it clear exactly what has happened. One has to wonder just how far the developer would have gone before realising that a new application was needed.

I have to say that these planning issues do seem to show that our enforcement action as a council is weak. Most of us are generally compliant, I know when I was building my own house I was at pains to make sure everything was correct. But it's clear from the cases above that any action from the council is reactionary rather than proactive, and seems to come with no teeth!

Around the District

The Strategic Local Plan is rapidly moving towards the public consultation phase. In my ward, Feniton and Gittisham are the two locations that may be impacted by this update to the local plan, with Feniton threatened with potentially unsustainable development. Face to face meetings between the parishes, senior officers and members of the public have now been announced. This will allow them and residents the opportunity to question what is being proposed. It is vitally important that as many residents as possible are able to have their voices heard over this major plan. There will be a limited time frame of some ten weeks within which to submit comments prior to the Plan going forward for adoption. The deadline is set for January 15th, 2023, which with Christmas in between does not allow much time. I have urged all to take the time to engage in the public presentation\consultation and have their say on the future of these beautiful villages.

After far too long on zoom, meetings in person are now to resume at Blackdown House for most meetings. Despite stiff opposition, the vote was carried in favour of a return to normal, not least because we were the last District Council in England not back in the office. However, the return to 'normal business' is not without its problems. These are the first meetings I have attended at Blackdown House and there are some obvious issues with

the acoustics and the number of public we can safely accommodate. Some, but not all, of these issues are currently being worked on.

It is also hoped that by the time of the November parish council meetings, normal access by the public to the council offices will have been reinstated. There are staffing problems which I understand are being sorted as soon as is practical.

For those of us that are off grid when it comes to heating, news is eagerly awaited from central government as to how the £100 grant is to be rolled out. I have made the point to our MP that many will have already purchased our oil or lpg for winter, and that a system of payment must be robust, and designed to mitigate the kind of abuse that was seen of the furlough initiative. I understand there is an imminent announcement so I will update the Parish Council accordingly.

In addition to the above Alasdair mentioned the consultation on the Local Plan currently taking place. He stressed how important it is for residents to have their say. He pointed out that Buckerell will be impacted by events in Feniton and Gittisham because of traffic. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would remind Buckerell residents of the consultation, and inform them of the venues where they could find out more. Clare will respond to the consultation on behalf of the Parish Council.

9.Planning

The comments submitted by the Parish Council in respect of recent plans were noted.

10. Roads Report

Since reporting a fly tipping incident to EDDC Clare had heard nothing.

11. Trees, Footpaths, Hedgerows and Drains

- a) The report of the lack of dog access at the stile adjacent to Treaslake seemed to have disappeared from the DCC reporting problem website. The report would be re-submitted and the reference passed to Phil to follow it through.
- b) Helen had purchased some signs about dogs to display around the village, and is in the process of putting these in place to remind dog owners to act responsibly.

IT

12. Climate Emergency

Deferred till next meeting.

13. Parish Pump

The response from the Conservation Officer was noted which seemed to indicate that an interpretation panel would be in order. The Clerk will obtain some quotes for the panel, and the installation work.

IT

14. Village Maintenance

The decision by Steve Triner to give up village maintenance was noted, and it was **AGREED** that he should be thanked for his efforts over the years. Ian will invite him for a lunch out somewhere on behalf of the Council. A successor is being sought.

IT

15. Matters for next meeting

- a) Repair or replacement of Parish Noticeboard. Ian will get some quotes.
- b) Defibrillator and VETS scheme.

IT

16. Date of next Meeting

Wednesday January 18th 2023