

BUCKERELL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 18th January 2023
at Doug's Shed Splatthayes

Those Present

Clare Slater – Chair (CS)
Geoff Wright (GW)
Jo Knight (JK)
Cllr Philip Twiss – Devon County Council (PT)
Ian Tucker - Clerk (IT)

There were no members of the public present.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Helen Howard, Sandra Money and Alasdair Bruce. In addition, Penny Mear presented apologies as a member of the public.

2. Agreeing the Minutes of the Meeting Held Wednesday 16th November 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 16th November 2022 were agreed as a correct record of that meeting.

3. Matters arising (not on agenda)

- a) Jubilee Oak – Plaque

The Clerk had made enquiries and ascertained that Ward Councillors had been asked to distribute the plaques. Alasdair is aware and will hopefully bring the plaque to the next meeting of the Parish Council.

4. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5. Public questions

- a) Clare had received a request from Phil and Mollie Courtney for a grit bin adjacent to Avenhayes as the icy road had been a significant

problem. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would use the Devon County Council online facility to request a bin for that piece of road, and also the corner by Tape Lane where rainwater flowed across the road.

IT

- b) Geoff mentioned the uncut hedges along the road to Fenny Bridges. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would write to the landowner to ask if this could be done.
- c) Clare had responded to an enquiry by a resident about the building of a granny annexe, and pointed out that any planning decision by EDDC would be based on their criteria.

IT

6. Finance and Governance

Balance at bank £8154.47 at 1st January 2023.

- a) Payments approved **UNANIMOUSLY**-

Ian Tucker (Clerk's Pay quarter Sept-Dec 2022)	£67.38	IT
Doug Cowan (Hire of venue for Jan PC meeting)	£30	

- b) The request to EDDC for the Precept for 2023 – 24 was discussed at length. It was finally **AGREED** unanimously that it should remain at £3170 (in effect a lower amount with inflation taken into account). The Clerk will send our request to EDDC Finance.
- c) It was **AGREED** that a reserve account should be opened to hold monies for larger expenses, such as re-surfacing the area around the war memorial.
- d) It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would liaise with the BCA about making an annual contribution to the production of the Bugle.

7. Councillor Philip Twiss – Report

A happy New Year to all of you, where I'm pretty sure it won't be too difficult in one way or another to have a better one than last year, where Devon County Council is doing everything possible that it can to help and support our communities, in partnership with very many stakeholders across the County.

Back to school advice issued by UKHSA

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) reports that flu and coronavirus are currently circulating at high levels, and are likely to continue to increase in coming weeks, according to High numbers of scarlet fever caused by

group A streptococcus, also continue to be reported. Professor Susan Hopkins, Chief Medical Adviser for the UKHSA emphasises that it is important to minimise the spread of infection in schools and other education and childcare settings as much as possible. If your child is unwell and has a fever, they should stay home from school or nursery until they feel better and the fever has resolved. Lessons learned during the epidemic about the importance of good hand hygiene is also key, so practice regular handwashing at home with soap and warm water for all of the Family remains sound practice. Catching coughs and sneezes in tissues then binning them is another simple way to help stop illnesses spreading, as well as adults trying to stay home when unwell and if you have to go out, wear a face covering. Flu vaccination is still available for all eligible groups and is the best protection against the virus. There has been a good uptake in older age groups but vaccination among young children remains low. Flu can be very unpleasant and in some cases can lead to more serious illness. Getting children vaccinated protects them and others they come into contact with. Eligible children include for free vaccination are:

- those aged 2 and 3 on the 31 August 2022
- all primary school-aged children
- some secondary school-aged children

Keep your New Year resolution with the help of One Small Step

The beginning of a new year can be a great opportunity to create a new habit. One Small Step has many options for support to help you keep your resolution in 2023, or inspire you to make the change. Studies have found some of our New Year resolutions will struggle to make it past 12 January, but with the support of others, we can make them last much longer. One Small Step is a free lifestyle service, funded by Devon County Council to support the health and wellbeing of Devon residents. There are friendly advisors who can help you plan lifestyle changes and support you to maintain a healthier weight, stop smoking, drink less or become more active. Flexible support means they can help you focus on small achievable steps to fit in with your lifestyle and routine. You can reach them by calling 01392 908 139, take a look at our website at www.onesmallstep.org.uk or fill out a contact form. DCC also has a team of stop smoking practitioners, so if you are thinking about stopping smoking, and you can also text them by messaging QUIT to 60777. There is 12 weeks of behavioural support on offer, along with Nicotine Replacement Therapy.

Devon's continued support for the people of Ukraine

Devon County Council has given a measured welcome to a Home Office announcement that will see additional payments made to host households participating in the Homes to Ukraine programme. Under the new terms, the hosts of Ukrainian guests who have been in the UK for over 12 months will be eligible for the increased national 'Thank You' payment of £500. The current national amount is £350 per host. This increased national amount is available until month 24 of the guests stay in the UK. But councils will see government funding reduce from £10,500 to £5,900 per guest to provide wraparound support for new arrivals from 1 January 2023. They will however have access to additional funding to help mitigate homelessness, and to help councils with housing responsibilities acquire housing for people

fleeing conflict from Ukraine and Afghanistan. In Devon, more than 1,000 people have put themselves forward to be sponsors with over 500 more confirming their interest in becoming a future host. This has meant that over 1,600 citizens from Ukraine have arrived since Russia first invaded the country in February 2022. Devon County Council will continue to work closely with local councils, voluntary and local community organisations to support both hosts and their guests.

8. Councillor Alasdair Bruce – Report

Apologies for not being able to make Wednesday's meeting and apologies for not having very much to report on. I have chased up a number of outstanding issues with planning which relate to Buckerell, but as I write this on Monday, I have not had anything back. The issue of lack of contact has been raised at a number of other Parish meetings in my ward both by myself and the parishes concerned. The main cause appears to be EDDC's lack of ability to hold on to staff, aggravated by a number of agency staff being employed by EDDC but who are not based in the southwest. There does not appear to be an easy fix for this at present.

I note the comments expressed in the Parishes report on the strategic plan consultation. With particular regard to solar farms I am very concerned at how hard it has become for a community to fight any development of this kind, and nothing in the plan seems to address this. My political group will be seeking to challenge these types of development during the next district council cycle by drawing on successful oppositions from around the UK. In addition, I will be bringing up the subject of the lifespan of these panels and their inability to be recycled. The mass dumping of these panels seen in the USA must become part of our planning assessment when considering any future solar farms. If properly accounted for I suspect the benefits in the UK will not be outweighed by the negatives.

9. Planning

- a) 22/2653/Sunningdale

Draft comments prepared by Clare were discussed, and it was **AGREED** that the Clerk would submit a summary of objections to Planning at EDDC.

IT

- b) 22/1513/FUL Otters Pocket

The approval of this application despite the objections of Buckerell Parish Council was noted.

- c) Response to Local Plan Consultation.

The following comments were submitted by Buckerell Parish Council in response to the consultation –

“Buckerell Parish Council welcomes the chance to comment on the Regulation 18 consultation on the emerging East Devon Local Plan.

It supports the overall strategic spatial strategy set out in Policy 1, which is to guide new development to the most sustainable locations within the district. It is noted that Bucknell is not included as a settlement within that policy and that is supported due to the lack of facilities within the village and the restricted road network serving the village. Its designation as countryside maintains its current status as set out in the adopted Local Plan.

The Parish Council does note that the overall level of housing set out in Policy 3 is based on the current version of the National Planning Policy Framework. With the recent publication of the proposed revisions to the NPPF, released on 23rd December 2022, there is a case for pausing work on the local plan review in terms of housing numbers, to allow the implications of the changes to national policy to be fully worked through. In particular the fact that the standard method is only now to be an advisory starting point for establishing housing requirements. The constraints of having two AONBs in the district faces greater pressure on the remaining areas of East Devon, particularly from Buckerell's perspective at the eastern half. It is noted that the current housing figure is solely derived from using the standard methodology. Once the NPPF has been updated, then the overall housing number can be re-visited, so that pressure resulting from new homes on the district's services and infrastructure, which residents of the parish need to access, can be reassessed. It is noted that a number of District Council's across the country are pausing work on their local plans whilst the implications of the new policy approach is worked through.

Buckerell Parish Council is concerned that specifically identifying areas on the Proposals Map, which include all of our parish, as being suitable for solar energy, places an unwelcomed presumption in favour of solar farms, potentially in our parish. The Parish Council would prefer to see that area of search removed, to be replaced by a criteria-based policy. Defining an area of search offers developers unnecessary in principle support for such installations which could radically change the appearance of the countryside within the parish and East Devon as a whole, particularly when viewed from the higher ground such as Hembury Fort .

Buckerell Parish contains a number of farms which are not just important for the rural economy, but also play a major role in maintaining the landscape

quality of the parish. However, the Parish Council does not consider Policy 46 which presumes against allowing extensions, alterations and outbuildings to agricultural dwellings can be justified and could restrict the farmers ability to meet the changing needs of their family, especially as these properties would enjoy permitted development rights, in any event. The policy appears to be inconsistent with Policy 50- Housing for Rural Workers, which does allow minor works to such dwellings, without the requirement of a reassessment of need.

The Parish Council looks forward to be able to comment on future versions of the Local Plan."

10. Roads Report

See item 5 with reference to grit bins.

11. Trees, Footpaths, Hedgerows and Drains

See item 5 with reference to hedge cutting.

12. Defibrillator and VETS scheme

a) It was **AGREED** that Wendy Wayne should be commended for her 3 years of checks on the AED, and Clare will buy her some flowers as a gesture of thanks from the Parish Council

CS

b) It was **AGREED** that the Parish Council will run a refresher session on using the AED and the VETS scheme in the spring.

CS /
IT

13. Village Maintenance

a) It was noted that Peter Gent had formally taken over from Steve as our village maintenance person.

b) Ian explained the options for providing some interpretation at the village pump. A budget of around £500 was **AGREED** and Ian will pursue the making of the panel, and the re-painting of the black casing.

IT

c) Options for replacing or repairing the Parish Noticeboard were discussed. It was **AGREED** that the best option would be to obtain some self healing rubber pinboard backing and repair the board. The cost would be in the region of £150.

IT

14. Matters for next meeting

a) Jubilee Oak - Plaque	AB
b) Quotes for resurfacing around War Memorial	HH

15. Date of next Meeting

The next meeting will be Wednesday 15th March 2023