

# BUCKHURST HILL PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BUCKHURST HILL PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.00pm on THURSDAY 6 DECEMBER 2018 AT BUCKHURST HILL LIBRARY, 165 QUEENS ROAD

### 074/18 PRESENT

Cllrs: Mr N Wright (Chairman)  
Mr B Nagpal (Vice-Chair)  
Mr S Clark  
Mrs J Forker-Clark  
Mr S Neville  
Mrs S Patel  
Ms G Reynolds  
Mrs J Share-Bernia  
Mr R Sparrowhawk  
Miss S Watson  
Mr K Williamson

Also present: Cllr Mrs V Metcalfe (Essex CC)  
Cllr G Chambers (EFDC)  
Cllr A Patel (EFDC)  
Cllr S Heap (EFDC)  
Mr A Young (BHRS)  
4 Members of the public

In attendance: Mr K O'Brien (Clerk)

### 075/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

### 076/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

### 077/18 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Cllr Metcalfe spoke on a range of items:-

- Essex Highways had instigated a new scheme whereby County councillors could request potholes of local importance to have priority. 10 potholes before Christmas and 10 after Christmas. She had liaised with BHPC on the matter and the first list of ten had been forwarded to Highways.
- Palace Gardens – Residents Parking Permit Scheme has been approved.
- The Windsors – A waiting restriction scheme was to be instigated during 2019.
- Amberley Rd – concerns that the scheme will not reach a high enough assessment score.
- Epping New Road – Extension to existing yellow lines agreed.
- One way system Stag Lane/Church Road will be consulted upon but concerns remain of the consequential displacement.

Cllr Metcalfe also spoke about item 16 (Library):-

- The ECC Future Library Strategy, classifies the Buckhurst Hill Library as a tier 4 Library i.e. Service Provision to be withdrawn.
- Along with District and Parish Councillors, she will fight the closure.
- Consultation on the ECC proposals has started and will continue until February 20th. Only after that will any final decision be made.
- A Consultation “Drop-in” session will take place in the Library on January 24<sup>th</sup> between 10am and Middy.
- There is likely to be an uphill battle ahead, so the need for a “Plan B” will be essential.

Cllr Chambers congratulated the Parish Office Team on the content of the recent Parish Magazine, especially as it had needed to be compiled in a very short timescale. Cllr Chambers also spoke in relation to agenda item 16 (Library), including informing the meeting that he was applying to have the building listed.

A member of the public spoke in relation to the proposed closure of the Buckhurst Hill Library.

Mr Young spoke about the forthcoming commencement of the Buckhurst Hill Memory Café. There are currently 30 volunteers signed-up to help. Mr Young also thanked the Parish Council for their support and assistance in setting-up the Memory Café.

**078/18**     **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 27 September 2018, circulated previously, were offered to be agreed as a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign them. However, some Councillors informed the Clerk that they had not received their minutes of this meeting. The Clerk undertook to investigate and ensure that the minutes were circulated asap.

*At this point in the meeting, the Chairman brought agenda item 16 forward but for consistency it is recorded in its originally listed order.*

**079/18**     **MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

The minutes of the following committee meetings were noted:

- **Planning & Environment:** 4 and 18 October, 1, 15 and 29 September (draft).
- **Finance & Establishment:** 15 November (draft).
- **Accommodation:** 4 October (draft).

Councillors informed the Clerk that they had not received the minutes of the 6 September Finance & Establishment meeting, as stated they would be. The Clerk undertook to investigate and ensure that the minutes were circulated asap.

**080/18**     **CHAIRMAN'S AND CLERK'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Clerk had received correspondence from the EFDC Local Plan Independent Examiner regarding the Local Plan Examination "hearings", scheduled to commence on February 12<sup>th</sup>.

The Clerk had also received a document from a resident of Queens Road regarding the proposed closure of the Library.

**081/18**     **REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

**EFDC Social Isolation Project:** - Cllr Share-Bernia had attended a meeting in relation the EFDC Social Isolation Project, which had been very informative. There are more meetings planned for the New Year and outcomes would be fed back to Councillors.

**082/18**     **FINANCE**

The financial position of Central Funds and Personnel as at 31 October 2018, circulated, were noted.

**083/18**     **RISK MANAGEMENT**

The Clerk explained that due to prevailing pressures (seasonal and other) on the Parish Office Team, the review of the Risk Register had not quite been finished. He promised to have completed by the January Full Council meeting. It was unanimously agreed to defer until January.

**084/18**     **HR POLICY**

The Clerk sought the Chairman's agreement to treat items 11 and 12 as one, to which the Chairman readily agreed. The Clerk then informed Councillors that as a consequence of very recent events, our HR advisors had recommended some further changes to the proposed HR Policy. Some of these changes themselves may result in some amendments being required to Standing Orders. The Clerk is liaising with our HR advisors and is proposing to bring recommendations to the January 2019 Full Council meeting.

**085/18**     **STANDING ORDERS**

See minute FC084/18.

**086/18**     **POLICE REPORT**

The Clerk had circulated the latest report provided by Inspector Tom Mitchell of Essex

Police. The main points in summary were:

- 171 crimes reported in Buckhurst Hill in October and November as against 177 for the same two months in 2017.
- 23 Thefts from motor vehicles, mostly tools stolen from work vans or where property was left on display.
- 3 Robberies – 1 an attempt with the victim threatened on Palmerston Rd, another was a man who got out of a taxi near Palmerston Rd and had his possessions stolen after being bundled to the floor and the final one was a car that was advertised for sale and whilst testing the car the suspect pushed the owner out of the way and drove off.
- 27 Dwelling Burglaries - a seasonal increase which occurs in the run up to Christmas and when the clocks go back each year. Most Police time is spent on the Burglary issue. There are 2 crimes less than last year which was 29 offences. There has been an increase in the use of RING doorbells which are good at providing intelligence and descriptions/pictures of suspects but they have also caused a small increase in reported crime that would otherwise have gone unreported/unknown.

The Police have also done

- Operation Meteor - crime prevention by the CSP and Essex Police Crime prevention tactical advisers, who have deployed to the Buckhurst Hill area over the last few weeks. They have been giving advice in relation to burglary and general crime prevention.
- Operation Rose - a massive operation within Epping Forest and part funded by EFDC where there were 25 people arrests in relation to gang drug dealing and the associated acquisitive crimes. This made national TV news and of the 25 arrested a couple were from Buckhurst Hill but the majority from Hainault area. These people were obviously committing crime and dealing within Buckhurst Hill and the rest of Epping Forest and it will hopefully have a long term beneficial effect on the area. The plan is to go for Criminal Behaviour orders on the offenders to assist in preventing them coming into the area or associating with other offenders.
- Operation Zambia – targeting auto-crime. A unit dealing primarily with stolen cars and car parts. Also the distribution of Faraday bags funded by the CSP to try to prevent keyless car thefts.
- Operation Agile -robbery prevention operation- extra patrols with BTP around the tube stations. This is ongoing and is now done by the specials at weekends. This resulted in a number of arrests and a drop in offences.
- Operation Worker - burglary patrols on the peak days of Thursday/Friday and Saturdays. The default patrol area is Buckhurst Hill & Chigwell and over the last 2 weeks we have seen offences for the whole of Epping Forest drop from 30 three weeks ago to 21 two weeks ago and 11 last week.

Kai (PCSO) is continuing to work well in preventing crime and recovering stolen vehicles as well as highlighting issues to be targeted within Buckhurst Hill. The public engagement team have also mentioned that Kai is doing a very popular coffee with cops

**087/18 WINTER PRESSURES**

There was a full discussion on the ways in which the effects of snow and/or freezing temperatures may be addressed for this and future winters. As a consequence it was unanimously agreed that:

Salt be located at the Roding Valley Hall as well as the Woollard Centre.

A review take place as to where salt bins could be located strategically for future years. (There was some thought that this exercise had been done some years ago and that a map existed showing locations – The Clerk to investigate).

**088/18 PLAY IN THE PARK 2019**

The Clerk confirmed that EFDC had agreed to his request that the “Play in the Park” scheme be extended to include Hornbeam Recreation Ground in addition to the Roding Valley Recreation Ground. The Chairman thanked the Clerk for arranging this.

**089/18 LIBRARY**

- (a) Councillors began discussing a proposal from Cllr Neville that called for the Parish Council to facilitate a Public Meeting concerning the proposed closure of the Library. During this discussion an amendment was moved (Cllr Nagpal) and seconded (Cllr Reynolds). Following further discussion relative to this amendment the Chairman called for a vote on the amendment:

“That the Parish Council support the Public Meeting concerning the proposed closure of the Buckhurst Hill Library being arranged by our County Councillor and West Ward District Councillors”.

For: 6. Against: 3. Abstained: 2

The amendment was carried and became the substantive motion that was subsequently voted upon.

For: 6. Against: 3. Abstained: 2.

The motion as amended was carried.

- (b) Councillors discussed at length a proposal from Cllr Neville that the Parish Council applies to have the Library building registered as a Community Asset. The Clerk was asked to explain to all attendees what the registering of the Library as a Community Asset meant and what the registration process entailed. After further discussion, the following motion was moved (Cllr Neville), seconded (Cllr Sparrowhawk) and voted upon:

“That the Parish Council apply to have the Library building registered as a Community Asset.”

For: 8. Against: 2. Abstained: 1.

Motion carried.

#### **090/18 SPECIFIC POINTS OF THE LOCAL PLAN**

Councillors discussed the recommendation of the Finance & Establishment Committee (FE 016/18), that the Parish Council challenge EFDC on the Local Plan and to use the “Ear Marked Reserve” for the purpose it was originally allocated for. Alternatively to return to residents the monies “ear marked” for this project via the precept. The Chairman called a halt to the discussion, not least because there had been a lot of discussion on this matter during the September meeting.

Cllr Neville did suggest an amendment to the recommendation but failed to get a seconder. The following motion was subsequently moved by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr Nagpal and voted upon:

“That the Parish Council challenge EFDC on the Local Plan and to use the “Ear Marked Reserve” for the purpose it was originally allocated for”.

For: 5. Against: 6.

The motion failed.

The Clerk correctly pointed out that the second part of the original recommendation had not been addressed. It was subsequently proposed by Cllr Share-Bernia, seconded by Cllr Patel and then unanimously AGREED that this matter be deferred to a future meeting, so that it can be considered again by Finance & Establishment.

#### **091/18 COMMUNITY HALLS**

It was unanimously AGREED that in the light of recent developments, including that of the Queens Road Library, the agenda item be deferred to a future meeting.

***The committee moved into private session for the remainder of the items to be discussed (Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960.***

#### **092/18 RFO/DEPUTY CLERK**

The Clerk explained that the RFO/Deputy Clerk was still unwell and it also remained unclear as to when she would be likely to return to work. Our HR advisors had been consulted and kept up to date on developments. No further news on the RFO/Deputy Clerk’s prognosis was expected until early January 2019. In the meantime Val Evans (previous RFO/Deputy Clerk) had agreed to return on a one-day-a-week basis in support of the Clerk until the situation of the RFO/Deputy Clerk became clearer,

There being no further business the Chairman thanked Members for attending and closed the meeting at 21:05 hrs.

Chairman .....

Date .....