

BUCKHURST HILL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BUCKHURST HILL PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.00pm on THURSDAY 26th SEPTEMBER 2019 AT BUCKHURST HILL LIBRARY, 165 QUEENS ROAD

041/19 **PRESENT**

Cllrs: Mrs S Patel (Chairman)
Mr J Barkham
Mr S Clark
Mrs J Forker-Clark
Mr S Neville
Mrs J Share-Bernia
Mr N Wright
Mr K Williamson

Also present: County Cllr Mrs V Metcalfe, District Cllr A. Patel, 2 Members of the public, Sgt Berwick, Mr Kevin Gay.

In attendance: Mrs E. Petyt-Start (Clerk) Mrs V Evans (Interim RFO/Deputy)

042/19 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were apologies for absence from Cllrs Ms G Reynolds, Mr B Nagpal, and Miss S Watson.

043/19 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from Members in any item on the agenda.

044/19 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

A member of the public spoke regarding the poor condition of the pavements in the Parish with particular serious concern for the High Road from Roebuck Lane to Russell Road.

045/19 **DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR PARTICIPATION**

County Cllr Mrs V. Metcalfe noted that although there had been some complaints during the road re-surfacing works she felt residents were mostly happy with the improvements. Cllr Metcalfe noted nine priority footpath schemes had been proposed to Essex Highways and she would consider others. She was pleased the Traffic Regulation Orders nominated schemes were coming into effect and that junction protection at The Windsors and Blackmore Road was being progressed.

Cllr Metcalfe noted that parking restriction schemes within the Parish required more discussion. Furthermore that she would challenge Cty Cllr K. Bentley on the information received on Item 14 that Street Lighting devolution could not target specific streets and lamps as this is contrary to previous information received.

District Cllr A. Patel informed the meeting the District had two new Strategic Directors in post.

He welcomed Cllr Mrs S. Patel to the position of Chair and congratulated the former Chair Mr N. Wright on a successful three years in this position.

Cllr A. Patel advised the meeting on his new portfolio for Community and Regulatory Services and in particular that he wished to engage with the Parish

Council on the promotion of Health and Wellbeing initiatives. He noted he had supported the recent Emergency Climate Change motion by District Cllr S. Neville. Also that there is a public health initiative for 'clean air' which places banners in areas of concern for high pollution levels

Cllr A. Patel advised the meeting District was consulting on Economic wellbeing currently and there is a review on Asset Management objectives. Also, that there is some excellent work taking place with the Dementia Action Alliance.

District Cllr S. Neville advised the Essex Highways website can advise where street lights are currently on. He also requested that the area around Buckhurst Hill Community Primary be designated as a Clean Air area and a banner erected. Cllr S. Patel suggested St Johns CE School be designated too.

District Cllr Mrs J. Share-Bernia advised the meeting North Weald Airfield had been designated as a customs base by the HMRC in the event of a no deal BREXIT. She informed the meeting she is Vice Chair of the Communications Standards Committee

046/19 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 25 July 2019 were agreed to be a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign them.

Agenda Items 11, Police Update and Item 15 – Chairman's Charity were brought forward but for clarity are minuted in original order.

047/19 **MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

The minutes of the following committee meetings were noted:

- **Planning & Environment:** 1st, 15th August, 5th, 19th September
- **Finance and Establishment:** 5th September (draft)
- **Recreation and Community:** although on the agenda had not yet been received

048/19 **CHAIRMAN'S AND CLERKS COMMUNICATIONS**

The Chair requested councillor volunteers for the Christmas on Queens Road event 6th December and noted the Comedy night 11th October was quickly approaching

There were no Clerks communications.

049/19 **REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr Mrs Forker-Clark had attended the Roding Valley Nature Reserve meeting. She shared the reserve was being persistently affected by illegal rubbish dumping, the reserve is attempting to prosecute offenders. Also it is trying to prevent David Lloyd Health Club members from parking and blocking access to the reserve with vehicles.

050/19 **FINANCE**

- (a) The financial position of Central Funds and Personnel as at 31 August 2019 was noted

051/19 **FORWARD PLAN**

The Clerk provided an update of the Forward Plan. Councillors noted the desire to continue to advertise for both Police Special Constables and PCSO particularly with the forthcoming departure of the PCSO. Also, councillors looked forward to receiving a proposal for the playground/outdoor gym.

052/19 **POLICE UPDATE**

Sgt Berwick gave an overview of the crime reduction over the summer months compared with last year, this covered the period 1/7/19 to 31/8/19.

Burglary of Houses - 8 this year (down 2 from last year)

Burglary other (sheds/garages/businesses) - 1 (down from 9 last year)

Robberies - 2 (down from 6 last year)

Theft of Motor vehicles - 5 (down from 19 last year)

Theft from motor vehicles & interference with motor vehicles - 20 (down from 25 last year)

053/19 **LIBRARY**

- a) The Chair informed the meeting an initial communication meeting had taken place with County Officers and Cty Cllr Barker following on from the publication of the County Library Strategy and the Parish Council's Expression of Interest. An information pack is anticipated along with a valuation for the property at which time a working party may be convened to discuss how to proceed.
- b) The Clerk advised the legal agreement had been received regarding the surrender of the lease for the old office and store room. Alongside this a new SLA for the use of the library by the Parish Council had been agreed in draft. The Clerk was delegated to sign both agreements.

054/19 **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

Councillors provided comments to the draft document. Discussion noted that any future project requiring capital expenditure would require financial modelling.

Following minor amendments, the revised Financial Regulations were UNANIMOUSLY agreed.

055/19 **STREET LIGHTING**

- a) The Clerk advised an officer from District had provided information following Council's agreed request for the devolution of the Parish street lighting costs. Information is "The agreement would cover the whole of the Town/Parish Council area, there is no flexibility for Town/Parishes to select certain streets and would be for 7 days a week for 4 years, starting 1st April 2020. The individual Town/Parish cost will be reviewed annually by Essex County Council and it has to be Town/Parish wide.
- b) Noting this updated information, specifically that it contradicted with that previously received, it was UNANIMOUSLY agreed to reject the reinstating at this time. The Clerk was requested to inform the District this contradicted with previous information and specifically it was known lighting columns may be programmed individually. Furthermore, councillors expressed thanks to Cty Cllr Metcalfe that she would be taking up this matter with the County Highway Portfolio holder.

056/19 **CHAIRMAN'S CHARITY**

The Community Manager from PACT for Autism gave an excellent presentation of the Charity's work and involvement with families and individuals. The aim of PACT is "to improve living, working, social and leisure opportunities for autistic people and their families where they can feel included and valued for who they are"

Councillors expressed their delight to be raising funds for PACT for Autism this year.

057/19 LOCAL PLAN

Cllr Williamson noted the Inspector’s Interim report had been published. The report indicated the development of TFL land would be subject to height restrictions. Regarding Powell Road, sensitivity would be given to Linder’s Field. However there was no listing for Lower Queens Road as a site specific matter.

058/19 ITEMS OF CONCERN

- a) i) All items as regularly discussed at the meetings of the Planning and Environment Committee.
- ii) Attendance at Whipps Cross Hospital Public meeting

- b) Neighbourhood Watch was proposed as an item for the next meeting

It was unanimously AGREED that the meeting move into private session for the next item to be discussed (Public Bodies [Admissions to Meetings] Act 1960).

059/19 RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER/DEPUTY CLERK

The Clerk’s preferred candidate for the post of Responsible Finance Officer was proposed to Council. The candidate had been selected following a recruitment process which involved a full competency based interview and second stage meeting with members of the Personnel Committee.

The appointment was UNANIMOUSLY agreed.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked those present for attending and closed the meeting at 20:45hrs

Chairman

Date