

# BUCKHURST HILL PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BUCKHURST HILL PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.03pm on THURSDAY 1 OCTOBER 2020 VIA ZOOM

### 036/20 PRESENT

Cllrs: Mrs S Patel (Chairman)  
Miss G Reynolds (Vice Chairman)  
Mr J Barkham  
Mr B Nagpal  
Mr S Neville  
Mr K Williamson  
Mr N Wright

Also present: Cty Cllr V Metcalfe  
Cllr S Heap

Press: Mr D Jackman

In attendance: Mrs E P Petyt-Start (Clerk)  
Mrs K Lumb (RFO and Deputy Clerk)  
Mrs V Evans (RFO Emeritus)

### 037/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies for absence from Cllr Mrs J Forker-Clark and Cllr Miss S Watson.

### 038/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

Cllr Patel reminded members about the code of conduct, rules for debate and discussion at meetings. She requested all councillors to be involved in the business of the council and in so doing to observe the code of conduct.

### 039/20 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation

### 040/20 DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR PARTICIPATION

Cty Cllr Metcalfe provided an update on the work of the County Council within the parish. Specific projects discussed were the implementation of new NEPP schemes in Scotland and Amberley Road and the Epping New Road.

Cllr Metcalfe explained she had been in discussion with EFDC regarding consultation on the introduction of a residents parking zone to assist residents, particularly as she is aware of part petitions received and the displacement of parking following introduction of new schemes.

The ECC Locality Fund has received some nominations and Cllr Metcalfe urged members to submit applications as quickly as possible because the expenditure on accepted schemes is required by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. It was noted an application for BHFC has been successful with a scheme for new goal posts costing £2200.

Following some discussion Cllr Share Bernia agreed to lead on the provision of Electric Charging points in the parish, perhaps as a Locality Fund initiative.

Cllr Heap gave the opinion that the scheme for the Epping New Road needs to

be reconsidered.

Cllr Share Bernia provided information on her work with the business grant applications and advised she had become the Deputy Chair of the District Council. Cllr Patel congratulated Cllr Share Bernia on her new appointment.

Cllr Neville informed the meeting that now lockdown had been lifted and the restrictions of the pandemic were changing, that it's hoped the new EFDC appointments of Climate Change Officer and Sustainability Officer would be enabled to become effective. He noted two recently refused planning applications within the parish, had been referred to the Planning Committee South, and the Committee had now referred them to the District Development Committee.

**041/20**     **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 16 July 2020 were agreed as a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign them.

**042/20**     **MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

The minutes of the following committee meetings were noted:

- **Finance & Establishment:** 10 September
- **Planning & Environment:** 30 July, 13, 27 August, 10, 24 September
- **Recreation & Community:** 2 July, 24 September

**043/20**     **CHAIRMAN'S AND CLERK'S COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no communications to report.

**044/20**     **REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Chair provide information on the Local Councils Liaison Forum meeting at which the Community Champions project for EFDC was promoted. A request was made to consider new nominees for this position who could work with and be promoted by the Council.

The Chair advised the EALC AGM had been attended by herself and the Clerk at which three new Vice Presidents had been appointed. She briefly explained the membership fees BHPC pay to the EALC and suggested the training opportunities and membership benefits could be taken up more widely by members.

**045/20**     **FINANCE**

a) The RFO summarised the financial position of Central Funds and Personnel as at 30<sup>th</sup> August 2020, as circulated.

The finances are much as would be expected at the end of month 5 of the financial year. The second half of the precept should be received within the next few weeks. It is proposed include information on the Council's grant award scheme in the Winter Parish Magazine, as a reminder for local groups and organisations.

b) The financial impact of COVID 19 was noted.

Throughout lockdown, due to the COVID-19 situation, council has continued to support the regular hirers, keeping them fully informed with latest government guidance and working together to enable hirers to recommence their classes.

The documents circulated, showed the impact on income loss for both Halls for the period April to September 2020 inclusive.

Income loss on the Halls for July to September is almost a third of what we saw in the previous 3 months (April – June £12k+), the reasons for that are we have started to see the income returning in the July – September period and that it also covers the summer holiday period, when many of our hirers take a break.

The regular hall hirers have started to return to their meetings, with the estimated fees bringing in almost half of the anticipated income for the period. The other half being lost due to lockdown and hall hirers note being able to manage and meet risk requirements. The information circulated showed the dates of return, and a comparison for the period if the Halls had been open for the whole period compared to the same period last year.

In addition the comparison year on year for one off hirers was shown and noted that unfortunately with current restrictions, these cannot resume at this time.

**046/20 FORWARD PLAN**

The Clerk presented the forward plan and there were no questions or queries on the content. The Chair requested more detail to be provided on the plan.

**047/20 POLICE REPORT**

A report having been received from Inspector Mitchell was noted.

The Clerk advised members the Police were unable to attend meetings on zoom as this virtual meeting platform was not supported by Essex Police.

**048/20 CLIMATE CHANGE EMERGENCY**

A motion to take action on climate change was received, proposed by Cllr Neville seconded by Cllr Barkham

1. To declare a climate emergency acknowledging the urgent need for local and global reductions in carbon emissions.
2. To recognise the influence the Parish Council has and resolve to do everything within its power to reduce carbon emissions.
3. To commit to follow Epping Forest District Council and work alongside it to become carbon neutral by 2030.
4. To encourage and support the wider community to meet the target also.
5. To task a small group to work on proposals on how to achieve this.

The motion was AGREED.

All members present agreed to form a working party to develop proposals to achieve the resolutions.

**049/20 RODING VALLEY HALL CAR PARK**

Having discussed the existing arrangements for the opening and closing of the Roding Valley Hall car park, members AGREED to alter, on a trial basis, the available times to

Monday to Friday 9am to 5.30pm, Saturday 9am to 2pm

This would be reviewed at the next Council meeting and take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020.

**050/20 COMMITTEES**

- a) The requirement for additional member(s) of the Planning and Environment Committee was agreed
- b) Cllr Patel proposed Cllr Wright, seconded Cllr Nagpal

**051/20 LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME**

It was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to apply for the Foundation Local Councils Award.

**052/20 ANNUAL RETURN**

The RFO provided a summary report on the Annual Return. She noted that the challenge of working through the early weeks of lockdown and getting to grips with working remotely and the impact that had on our processes. She shared the whole of the office team were really delighted with the timescales achieved in completing the year end return and not needing to utilise the extra time permitted due to the lockdown situation.

External Audit – a clean audit of our Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the 2019/20 financial year, and all statutory notices have been published

Internal Audit – The year-end audit had been completed, and the two recommendations made were already in the process of being addressed

**053/20 ESSEX HONOURS**

The request from the Lord Lieutenant of Essex from the EALC Chairman, to support the National Honours scheme was considered and supported.

It was AGREED to promote the scheme using the Parish Magazine. Furthermore it was noted nominations may be facilitated via the parish office.

**054/20 POLICY REVIEW**

- a) The draft Retention and Destructions Policy was AGREED.
- b) The review of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and HR Policy was noted

**055/20 WOOLLARD CENTRE MAINTENANCE**

The budgeted expenditure of circa £7,200 on roof repairs at the Woollard Centre was approved.

The preferred contractor was proposed by the Clerk. It was AGREED Cllr Williamson was delegated to provide decision upon the contractor and to review the quotations before appointment, with note to a period of warranty.

**056/20 FULL COUNCIL ITEMS OF CONCERN**

- a) There were no items of concern
- b) There were no future agenda items suggested

Members gave their grateful thanks to Mrs Evans for her hard work over the years for BHPC, noting all that she had experienced during this period and wished her an enjoyable retirement.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 20.45PM.

Chairman .....

Date .....