

# BUCKHURST HILL PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE PARISH MEETING OF BUCKHURST HILL PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.00pm on THURSDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2021 AT BUCKHURST HILL LIBRARY

### PRESENT

Cllrs: Mr S Neville (Chairman)  
Mr S Heap (Vice Chair)  
Mr G Chambers Bagshaw  
Mrs A Hall  
Mrs S Goodfellow  
Mr D Saunders  
Mrs J Share Bernia  
Mr M West  
Mr K Williamson  
Mr M Vance

In attendance: Mrs E P Petyt-Start (Clerk)

Public: PC Morgan  
11 members of public

### **067/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence received.

### **068/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interests received.

### **069/21 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

A resident spoke in support of Item 15, the Memory Café.

A resident spoke regarding Item 11 b, representing a group raising concerns about recent road traffic accidents and speeding. A petition of 2600 signatures requesting traffic calming measures for the parish was highlighted.

Cllr A Patel requested to speak but was refused permission as he had not registered to do so.

### **070/21 DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR PARTICIPATION**

Cllr Patel wished to ask the Chair questions about the Parish Council. Chair directed Cllr Patel to report on his District Council work.

Cllr Share Bernia spoke about the District work of reinvesting into high streets.

Cllr Williamson explained his involvement with Planning South Sub committee.

Cty Cllr Vance provided an update on Highways issues noting the recent public meetings following the tragic road traffic accident. He advised new library consultation was imminent and explained the vision of the Portfolio Holder for

libraries.

**071/21**     **MINUTES**

The minutes of the parish council meeting held on 30 September 2021 were agreed as a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign them.

Cllr Williamson noted he took exception to the comments for absence as recorded in the previous minutes.

**072/21**     **MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

The minutes of the following committee meetings were noted:

- **Accommodation:** 7 October
- **Finance & Establishment:** 18 November
- **Planning & Environment:** 7, 21 October; 4, 11 November
- **Recreation & Community:** 21 October

**073/21**     **CHAIRMAN'S AND CLERK'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Clerk informed the meeting a letter had been received from members of the BH Conservative Group resigning from all committees and working parties citing motion for item 10)a) as reason for resignation. The group gave strong objection to this Motion naming it as a blatant attempt to censure factually correct information which its members believe to be in the public interest.

Thereby Cllr Chambers Bagshaw, Mr D Saunders, Mrs J Share Bernia, Mr K Williamson and Mr M Vance resigned from all and every committee and working party effective from 23/11/21.

Chair advised the Climate Change Action plan consultation ends 26<sup>th</sup> November. He provided an overview of the meeting with the Japanese Local Government Centre, saying it had been a most enjoyable event.

Cty. Cllr Vance enquired about communications. The Clerk advised the communication was dependent upon its type and relevance to a committee or Full Council. It was agreed responses from the Parish Office will be copied to councillors if they had been sent to them by residents.

**074/21**     **FINANCE**

The Council's financial position of central funds and personnel as at 31 October was noted.

**075/21**     **POLICE REPORT**

PC Morgan introduced himself to Council.

He reported Buckhurst Hill was probably the safest area, by crime statistics, in the District and spoke of current issues in the parish.

Since 27/09/21 the statistics were 2 burglaries, 1 non-residential; 1 missing person report; 3 nuisance reports; 1 robbery; 1 motor vehicle theft. There were 70 reports of crime in total most of which were domestic incidents.

An overview of the role of a beat officer was provided.

Thanks were made for the recent support from the Police in speed awareness for residents along Buckhurst Way.

It was advised that pet theft is a fallacy in the area.

**076/21**     **CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Code of Conduct and Confidential Information as prescribed in the Council's Standing Orders was discussed in detail with reference made to the meetings of 16 and 30 September and the BH Conservative Twitter and October newsletter published 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> October.

Members expressed opposing opinions regarding the published information about staff pay increases and discussed its worthiness or not of it being in the public domain on grounds of public interest.

Discussion was held regarding information published from the Personnel Committee; private session of the last Full Council; procedure for complaints handling by the Monitoring Officer and the separation of responsibilities of parish councillors and political party membership.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer complaint determination and the Monitoring Officer Appeal Determination was referenced.

#### MOTION

Proposed by Cllr Matthew West, Seconded by Cllr Simon Heap

This Council resolves to invoke 6.5 of its Standing Orders following breaches of clause 6.3 and 6.4 and Para 4 of the Code of Conduct relating to meetings held on 16 and 24 September 2021. It resolves to remove each individual member from a committee(s) represented in the breach as published on the BH Conservative Twitter and October newsletter.

Motion WITHDRAWN

**077/21**

#### **HIGHWAYS**

- a) An update of items from the last meeting was provided by the Clerk and Cty Cllr Vance
  - i) The Clerk informed the vacancy of School Crossing Patrol Officer had been re-advertised in the magazine and social media, resident's society and through St Johns school and church but unfortunately not applications had yet been received.
  - ii) Request for a speed survey along Buckhurst Way, Roding Lane and Loughton Way had been made to Cty Cllr Vance who noted this had not yet taken place with external agencies currently being consulted for this.
  - iii) A new crossing along the High Road adjacent to St Johns School has been requested to Cty Cllr and he had advised this was in progress through the Local Highways Panel. The LHP had recommended a speed survey to be taken up first.
  - iv) The SpeedWatch group has recruited a new co-ordinator and two volunteers. The co-ordinator is liaising with volunteers and they're waiting to be informed of the next training date.
- b) Discussion around strategy for introducing traffic calming measures within the parish took place noting the progression of speed surveys and projects sitting with the Local Highways Panel.

Cty Cllr Vance explained he'd been advised the 2600 petition was not in a format accepted by County but that he would nonetheless take it on (to County)

- c) SpeedWatch

#### MOTION

Proposed by Councillor Ken Williamson Seconded by Councillor Jo Share-Bernia

Following requests from the residents of Buckhurst Hill, this Council is anxious that the previous SpeedWatch initiative be reinstated with all possible haste. This Council believes that the quickest way forward is to approach the previous volunteers who have been trained to use the equipment to find a leader for the new group in conjunction with the new Volunteers who have come forward and

that any necessary training is put in place at the earliest opportunity

Motion WITHDRAWN

d) Vehicle Activated Signs

MOTION

Proposed by Councillor David Saunders Seconded by Councillor Marshall Vance

After consideration and requests from the residents of Buckhurst Hill this Council agrees to purchase VAS (Vehicle activated signs) Cameras, or SIDs (Speed Indication Signs) Cameras, and the necessary equipment to enable them to be moved to different locations within the Parish, the number of cameras and the sites to be agreed by the Planning and Environment Committee.

Motion UNANIMOUSLY agreed.

Budget for this project to be agreed through the annual budgeting process.

**078/21 RELOCATION OF PARISH COUNCIL OFFICES**

(1) The relocation of staff from the office back into the library space which was allocated within the library was discussed.

It was noted the space was vacated as it was unsuitable due to health and safety issues and was too small. ECC should improve their building (and the PC) can't rush staff back in.

(2) Options on how parish staff can be more available and visible to the general public was discussed. Feedback was received from Councillors that many residents had complained they didn't know how to contact the parish council.

Comment was given that an area which is accessible and residents and staff are happy with should be found.

(3) The architect building contract was discussed and views were expressed that the library is a good location for councillor surgeries.

It was suggested parts of the library could be redeveloped and the building developed as a community hub. A member suggested funds could be diverted from the Parish Council to refurbish the library. Another member commented this would have to be with benefit to the PC as the building belongs to ECC. A suggestion was made to engage a surveyor to look at the feasibility of returning the parish office to the Library.

The Clerk noted the Stack had been suggested previously with ECC showing no interest in progressing the idea.

Cty Cllr Vance commented he'd asked the County Portfolio Holder to provide advise on this matter but there is no money to have the library refurbished at this stage. A condition survey has been requested but it will be very difficult to find money to upgrade the library.

MOTION

Proposed by Councillor Jo Share-Bernia Seconded by Councillor Ken Williamson

This Council agrees that after confirmation from Essex County Council that the Library in Queens Road will be retained for the foreseeable future, and following requests from local residents, urgent measures are put in place to return the Parish Council Staff and Offices to the Library premises.

Motion WITHDRAWN.

It was AGREED to set up a working party to discuss the RELOCATION OF PARISH COUNCIL OFFICES

**079/21**     **GRANT APPLICATION**

Members UNANIMOUSLY agreed to award a grant of £1000 to SPARK (Worth Unlimited)

**080/21**     **HALLS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

Having received recommendations from the Accommodation Committee in relation to the Halls development project from 7<sup>th</sup> October. It was AGREED by majority to adopt the recommendations as given.

- a)     NOT to Demolish Roding Valley Hall and use the space for something else
- b)     NOT to commence a new feasibility and options appraisal for the future of the halls
- c)     To continue with the plan to rebuild RVH with slight modifications, review the architects design and agree changes
- d)     NOT To repair and improve both the RVH and the Woollard Centre and to continue to provide spaces for rent and some library facilities - not a fully stocked library.
- e)     NOT to consider the library for development and develop it as a community hub
- f)     NOT to rebuild RVH like for like
- g)     The motion to consolidate the halls provision or to retain both halls was withdrawn
- h)     To re-open the RVH and re-start operating two halls. The RVH should re-open in full (subject to confirmation of being structural sound and safe) for the duration of 2022 with a review to be undertaken in autumn 2022.

**081/21**     **MEMORY CAFE**

Continuing support of the Memory Café by means of complimentary hire of the Roding Valley Hall once per month for the ensuing calendar year was UNANIMOUSLY agreed.

Council was invited to attend the Christmas Café on 10<sup>th</sup> December.

**082/21**     **TUMBLE TOTS**

A proposal to reduce hire charges for Tumble Tots on Saturday at Roding Valley Hall was considered.

Following a discussion and noting intention to be fair to all hirers, council AGREED reluctantly NOT to reduce the charges for Tumble Tots.

**083/21 COMMEMORATION OF HRH DUKE OF EDINBURGH**

MOTION

Proposed by Councillor Gavin Chambers Seconded by Councillor Jo Share Bernia

After serious review and to avoid conflict within the Council, this Council agrees at this time not to pursue the installation of a memorial to commemorate the public life of HRH the Duke of Edinburgh

Motion UNANIMOUSLY agreed.

**084/21 STANDING ORDERS**

- i) Proposed amendments to the Standing Orders was discussed
- ii) It was AGREED to adopt the revised Standing Orders

**085/21 ITEMS OF CONCERN/NEXT AGENDA**

- i) Items of Concern
  - i) Declarations of Interest declared at the Personnel Committee 16<sup>th</sup> September
  - ii) Supporting Information for Personnel Committee
  - iii) Review dates for Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
  - iv) Cllr Redelinghuys proposed the division between the members was very sad and apologised to residents for this behaviour
- ii) There were no items for the next agenda

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 21.06PM.

Chairman .....

Date .....