

BUCKHURST HILL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF BUCKHURST HILL PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.02pm on THURSDAY 25 MAY 2023 AT BUCKHURST HILL LIBRARY

PRESENT

Cllrs: Mr D Saunders (Chair)
Mr R Kaul (Vice Chair)
Mr R Church
Mrs J Forker Clark
Mr S Neville
Mr M Vance

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

1 Member of Public

001/23 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

- a) Proposed by Cllr Vance seconded by Cllr Church and AGREED Cllr Saunders be elected as Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.
- b) Cllr Saunders signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Chairman of the Council.

The Clerk read a statement from the Chairman in his absence:

I regret that I am unable to be with you this evening as it coincides with the First Full EFDC Council meeting of the Civic Year. Rest assured that I will be representing the residents of Buckhurst Hill at this event.

It has been an absolute privilege to be Chair of the Parish Council. The amount raised for local charities by the hard work of the staff and all the volunteers at both the Platinum Jubilee and the Coronation Event was inspirational and I am immensely grateful to have been associated with this work.

I followed some excellent people who had led the Council on previous occasions and I am sure that my successor will continue in the same manner to support all residents to the best of their ability.

002/23 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Cllr Kaul was proposed by Cllr Saunders, seconded by Cllr Forker Clark

AGREED Cllr Kaul to be elected as Vice Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

(Cllr Neville arrived during this item)

003/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies for absence from Cllrs: Chambers-Bagshaw, Hall, Heap, Weinberg and Williamson.

004/23 REGISTER OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

It was noted that it is a legal requirement for Members to review their Registers of Interests and to complete and submit a new form to the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of any change. For practical purposes, the Registers are electronically returned to the Parish Office and sent to the Monitoring Officer at Epping Forest District Council.

(A member of the public arrived during this item)

005/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Forker Clark declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 19 by virtue of the applicant being known to them.

006/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

007/23 DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR PARTICIPATION

Cty Cllr Vance advised an application will be going forward to introduce speed restrictions on Epping New Road.

The Community Initiative Fund is now open again for this year. The Locality Fund is also open.

Essex Highways are prioritising potholes and pavements with an increased expenditure this year. £350,000 will be spent this year.

It was agreed the list of minor, major and carriageway repairs will be circulated to all members.

008/23 MINUTES

The minutes of the parish council meeting held on 30 March 2023 were agreed as a correct record and the Chair authorised to sign them.

009/23 CHAIRMAN'S AND CLERK'S COMMUNICATIONS

There was no communications to report from the Clerk or Chair.

010/23 COMMITTEES

- a) The Committees for the ensuing year would be Finance & Establishment, Recreation & Community, Planning & Environment, and Personnel.

Working Party
Accommodation
Climate Change
Parish Offices

- b) Members of Committees are detailed in Appendix A.

- c) Proposed by Cllr Saunders seconded by Cllr Church
Chair of Committees were elected and AGREED as follows:

Finance & Establishment

Cllr Vance

Recreation & Community

Cllr Forker Clark

Planning & Environment

Cllr Kaul

Personnel

Cllr Saunders (Chair of Council) as per standing orders

To note the Accommodation Committee regular items will be considered as part of the Recreation and Community Committee.

The Clerk advised that following a previous decision made at the Finance and Establishment Committee, Chair of Planning and Chair of Recreation and Community are required to be bank signatories, therefore the RFO will action Cllrs Forker Clark and Kaul addition to the bank mandate .

011/23 REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The appointment of Members to represent the Council at outside organisations was AGREED and is recorded at Appendix B.

012/23 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2023/2024

The draft calendar of the Council's meetings for the forthcoming year, circulated, was reviewed.

The Accommodation Committee will now become a working party. The Recreation and Community committee added 21st September 2023.

It was noted that the dates of individual meetings may change if necessary before summons had been given and preferably before notices displayed to the public.

Following amendments it was proposed by Cllr Church, seconded by Cllr Kaul and unanimously AGREED to adopt the draft calendar.

013/23 FINANCE

a) The Council's financial position as at 31 March, circulated, was noted. The RFO provided an explanation of the £49,000 variance noting reduction in staff costs due to reduction in RFO hours and no Deputy position; community grant fund receipt; increase in halls income and transfer to the general reserve fund.

b) The proposed Earmarked Reserves (EMR) for 2023/24 details circulated, were AGREED.

The EMR for Speed Indicator Devices having been Agreed, the Clerk will proceed and sign the agreement for their provision with Essex County Council.

014/23 AUDIT REPORT

The Audit Report, having been received and circulated was AGREED.

Once again no recommendations which is an excellent result.

015/23 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR)

a) The Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2023, Section 1, had been circulated. The Chair read out each of the internal control statements for councillors' consideration and response. It was unanimously AGREED to respond with a 'Yes to statements 1 - 8 and 'N/A' for statement 9 as the Council does not have any trust funds. The Annual Governance Statement was signed by the Chair and the Clerk.

b) The Accounting Statements of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2023, Section 2, had been circulated and were unanimously AGREED and signed by the Chair and shall be by RFO.

016/23 RODING VALLEY RECREATION GROUND – GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

a) An update on the legal position with regards to the existing arrangement for grounds maintenance in the RVRG was received. There is no challenge on the legal requirement from EFDC.

b) A discussion regarding the future arrangement for grounds maintenance in the RVRG was held.

It was suggested not to withdraw from making payments at this point in time and noted this 'saving' would be ring fenced and have to be returned to EFDC as it had been budgeted for if this Council decided to no longer pay for the works.

Members agreed to consider the detail of the current specification and defer this item to the next meeting. Selecting items from the schedule may be considered.

017/23 RODING VALLEY HALL DEVELOPMENT

- a) The Clerk advised the detailed design for the Halls Development scheme had not yet been received. Chair confirmed some elements required feedback to the architect from the working party.
- b) It was decided to request more information from the Insurance company namely i) why underpinning was not included in the repair schedule quote ii) What does the policy indicate regarding time limit for settling the claim iii) It is not prepared to accept the low cash settlement offer of £25,000
- c) Information on repayments for a PWLB loan was received

018/23 LINDERS FIELD GATE REPAIRS

There was no information available to be discuss this item.

019/23 GRANT APPLICATION

The application was discussed in detail with reference being made to the limitations of the grant funding policy, specifically that funds may NOT be used for staffing costs and this should be explicit for applicants and those successful.

Proposed by Cllr Saunders, Seconded by Cllr Kaul,

A grant application of £1000 for Jenna Wilkins Foundation was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED.

The meeting moved into private session for the remainder of the items to be discussed (Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960)

020/23 HORNBEAM ROAD PLAYGROUND

- i) A briefing note from the Clerk was received and considered
- ii) Members considered the tender document proposed for the new playground. Members requested the addition of three case studies in the tender document. The benefit of a consultant was discussed but on this occasion it was decided it wouldn't be required.

With amendment, the tender document was AGREED.

- iii) Outline designs and initial consultation information from a range of contractors was noted as received.

021/23 FULL COUNCIL ITEMS OF CONCERN

- a) There was no items of concern
- b) Items for the next meeting –
Epping New Road speed restrictions
Chairman's Charity

Members may request agenda items at any time.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.31PM.

Chairman

Date

APPENDIX A

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP 2023-24

Council Chair Cllr David Saunders
Council Vice Chair Cllr Rashpal Kaul

FINANCE & ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE

Cllr Mr M Vance (Chair)
Cllr Mr R Church
Cllr Mr R Kaul
Cllr Mr S Heap
Cllr Mr D Saunders
Cllr Mr A Weinberg

RECREATION & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

Cllr Mrs J Forker Clark (Chair)
Cllr Mr G Chambers Bagshaw
Cllr Mr R Kaul
Cllr Ms A Hall
Cllr Mr S Neville
Cllr Mr D Saunders
Cllr Mr K Williamson

PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Cllr Mr R Kaul (Chair)
Cllr Mrs J Forker Clark
Cllr Mr S Heap
Cllr Mr S Neville
Cllr Mr D Saunders
Cllr Mr M Vance
Cllr Mr A Weinberg
Cllr Mr K Williamson

CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING PARTY

Cllr Mr S Heap
Cllr Mrs J Forker Clark
Cllr Mr S Neville
Cllr Mr D Saunders

ACCOMMODATION WORKING PARTY

Cllr Mrs J Forker Clark
Cllr Mr S Heap
Cllr D Saunders
Cllr Mr M Vance
Cllr Mr A Weinberg
Cllr Mr K Williamson

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Cllr Mr K Williamson (Chair)
Cllr Mr R Kaul
Cllr Mr A Weinberg
Cllr Mr D Saunders

PARISH OFFICES WORKING PARTY

Cllr Mrs J Forker Clark
Cllr Mr S Heap
Cllr A Weinberg
Cllr Mr K Williamson

CLERK TO THE COUNCIL
Mrs Liz Petyt-Start

**RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER
(LOCUM)**
Mrs Caroline Carroll

APPENDIX B**PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES 2023/2024**

ORGANISATION	REPRESENTATIVE(s)
Larger Local Councils' Forum	Chairman Parish Clerk
Local Councils' Liaison Committee and Essex Association of Local Councils' (Epping Forest)	Chairman Parish Clerk
Bedford House Community Association CIC	Cllr Mr M Vance
Passenger Transport	Cllr Mrs A Hall Cllr Mr S Neville Cllr Mrs J Forker Clark
Police Liaison	Cllr Mr S Neville Cllr Mr D Saunders Cllr Mr M Vance Cllr Mr K Williamson
Roding Valley Nature Reserve	Cllr Mr R Church Cllr Mrs Forker Clark Cllr Mr S Heap
Rural Community Council of Essex (AGM)	Cllr Mr M Vance
EFDC Standards Committee	Cllr Mr R Kaul
SpeedWatch	Cllr Mr S Neville