

BUCKDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk: Ramune Mimiene, Buckden Village Hall Burberry Road Buckden PE19 5UY. Tel; 01480 819407

Minutes of the Buckden Parish Council Meeting held on 12 May 2020 at 7.30pm **Online Meeting Only**

Present:

Councillor: Anne Howell-Jones, Chair

Councillors: Cllrs Caroline Underwood, Betty Millard, Pauline Steel, John Thelwall, Martin Hassall, Sue Ashwell, Dave Duncan, Stan Studd, Clive Gillam, Allan Jones

Clerk: Ms R Mimiene

CC Cllr P Downes

HDC Cllr H Masson

No members of the public

Due to the Coronavirus the Government has issued the regulations that gives local authorities greater flexibility in the conduct of meetings, including allowing members to attend remotely, and for public and press access to those meetings.

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 came into force on **4 April**. They apply to local authority meetings that are required to be held, or held, before 7 May 2021.

The Regulations were made by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020(1) and paragraph 36(1)(b) of Schedule 6 to the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011(2).

MINUTES

(2020-21) 05-518	Meeting protocol: Introduction to remote meeting process Buckden Parish Council's Virtual Meetings Arrangements for the public are now issued and will be uploaded onto the PC website.	DD
(2020-21) 05-519	Apologies for absence To receive and accept apologies for absence. Cllrs A Burbidge and K Render sent apologies for absence. No apologies were received from Cllrs J Mulcrone and E Scott.	
	<i>It was agreed to bring County and District Cllrs reports forward. From now this will be the standard order of the Agenda.</i>	
	<i>Cllr AJ joined the meeting</i>	
(2020-21) 05-520	County and District Councillor Reports. - To receive report from County Councillor P Downes. Report attached. Further updates will be circulated by CC Cllr PD. - To receive report from District Councillor H Masson. Report attached.	
(2020-21) 05-521	Open Forum – a maximum of 15 minutes is permitted for members of the public to address the Council. Members of the public may have up to three minutes each. Items to be addressed should be notified to the Clerk three working days in advance of the meeting.	
	<i>CC Cllr PD left the meeting</i>	

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(2020-21) 05-522	Declarations of Interest To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary and other interests, and the nature of those interests relating to items on the agenda. Cllr SA stated that there were no disclosable pecuniary interest in planning applications discussed tonight at Planning meeting. Cllr SA stated however that as she and her partner own a property on the same road (of 24 semi-detached lodges) she wished to declare a potential non-statutory interest. As the meeting was quorate without her she therefore absented herself from the discussion and decision-making re: 23 Watersmead Mill Road Buckden Reference: 19/01932/FUL	
(2020-21) 05-523	Chairman's update, report attached, Cllr A Howell-Jones - Volunteers, verbal update provided by Cllr C Underwood. A fewer people are seeking help and volunteers are looking after them. The list of shielded people has been received from County Cllr PD. - The use of Zoom proved to be a success – confirmed that PC will continue to use it, verbal update by Cllr D Duncan Cllr DD reported that PC held 17 Zoom meetings since the last PC meeting in April which is around 24/25 hours of conference calls in the past month. The cost is £13.99 pcm + VAT which is worthwhile. PC has a full license which has no limit. Public Access Rules for Zoom meeting are now set and a copy is with the Clerk. It will be uploaded onto the PC website. Proposal: To have the 2nd Zoom account Proposal: Proposed by Cllr MH, seconded by Cllr DD, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that the purchase of the 2nd Zoom account is approved. Carried. Voting took place re: Future meetings to be held via Zoom. Results were: 80% voted in favour of on-line meetings, 10% voted against and 10% abstained. - The Annual Parish Meeting/ Assembly will now take place in June via Zoom The Annual Parish Meeting/Assembly is required by the Local Government Act 1972 therefore NALC suggested that it is held either before or after another remote council meeting, it can be held as a separate remote meeting. Buckden chose to have this meeting in June. Reports to be received in advance as there will be no presentations Proposal to held Annual Parish Meeting/ Assembly in June 2020. Proposal: Proposed by Cllr AHJ, seconded by Cllr CU, all in favour and it was RESOLVED to held Annual Parish Meeting on 9 Jun 2020. Carried. - Annual Parish Council meeting – The requirement to hold the Annual Parish Council Meeting was removed. This means that Chair and Vice Chair and all Committees/Advisory Groups will carry on into the new Council Year. Advisory groups and committees will all remain the same. - Email protocol – Due to concerns about volume of emails received, it was agreed to mark emails either 'For action' or 'FYI' to indicate requirement.	Clerk All
(2020-21) 05-524	Minutes To agree and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14 April 2020.	

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	Proposal: Proposed by Cllr AHJ, seconded by Cllr CU, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that the minutes are approved as the correct record of the meeting. Carried. To resolve any actions arising from the minutes of the Parish Council meeting. Welcome pack is now ready to be uploaded onto PC website. Climate Mitigation information will be published in the next newsletter.	CU and DD
(2020-21) 05-525	Finance Finance Reports attached, Cllr S Ashwell <u>05-525.1 Finance Report 1 - Updates to Finance Regulations.</u> <u>05-525.1/1 Adoption of Financial Regulations</u> Following review by the RFO and Chairman of the Finance Advisory Group (F-AG) proposed amendments were discussed on 21st April 2020 at a video meeting of the F-AG and subsequently updated. <u>Quarterly reconciliation of bank statements with Electronic Cash book (EDGE) statements</u> <i>The Financial Regulations require BPC to have a nominated Councillor (NOT the PC Chairman or an authorised bank signatory) to carry out reconciliation, checking that entries on all bank statements match entries on the 'Cash Book' - in our case the EDGE Finance system.</i> <u>Banking arrangements and authorisation</u> Paragraph 5.2 now reads: <i>"The RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation. The non-confidential payments schedule shall form part of the Agenda for the Meeting and, together with the relevant invoices, shall be presented by Council or Advisory group or Committee. The schedule of confidential payments shall only be presented to the defined sub-set of Councillors, in line with agreement for balancing data protection and oversight which was approved at the March 2020 Council meeting. Minute number (2019- 20) 479</i> <i>"One hard-copy of the statement of confidential payments and supporting details shall be available at each Council meeting, for inspection but only in line with Regulation 7.4. The Statement of Reconciliation of the bank account from which confidential payments are made shall also be available in hard copy at each meeting; Councillors can request sight of the confidential payments in line with the Council's Standing Orders and JPAG recommendation. The Council or Advisory Group or Committee shall review the schedule of non-confidential payments for compliance and, receive confirmation from the nominated Councillors that confidential payments have been verified. Council having satisfied itself shall authorise payment by a resolution of the Council. The approved schedule shall be signed and dated by the Chairman of the Meeting. A detailed list of all non-confidential payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of the meeting at which payment was authorised. Confidential, personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) shall be summarised to remove public access to any personal information, as required by data protection legislation."</i> 7.4 <i>"Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record (confidential cash book). This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:</i>	

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	a) by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know; b) by the internal auditor; c) by the external auditor; or by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.” Proposal: It is recommended that the Council approves the latest version of the Finance Regulations circulated with this Finance Report 1. Proposal: Proposed by Cllr SA, seconded by Cllr AHJ, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that the Financial Regulations are approved. Carried. <u>05-525.1/2 Approval of Direct Debits (Regulation 6.21)</u> In line with the Finance Regulations in April 2020 the F-AG members reviewed and approved the Direct Debits set up for payment from the Council’s current account (Unity Trust). <table><tr><td>Suggested addition:</td><td>Reason:</td></tr><tr><td>Pension Payments</td><td>Statutory payment under pensions legislation</td></tr><tr><td>Information Commissioners Office</td><td>Mandatory Annual Data Protection fee</td></tr><tr><td>Corporate Debit & Credit cards</td><td>Council required that these be settled in full each month</td></tr></table> Proposal: Following review by FAG members the Council is asked to approve addition of these classes of Direct Debit to the Finance Regulations. Proposal: Proposed by Cllr SA, seconded by Cllr CU, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that the DD are approved. Carried. <u>05-525.1/3 Approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS (Regulation 6.10)</u> BPC is required to renew these by resolution of the council at least every two years. Proposal: That Council resolves to continue use of BACS payments as the preferred method for bill payments other than those where Direct Debit arrangements are in place in line with Finance Regulations Proposal: Proposed by Cllr SA, seconded by Cllr PS, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that the above proposal is approved. Carried. <u>05-525.1/4 Management of PIN and Password details (Regulation 6.12)</u> The F-AG discussed this issue at its April 2020 meeting. Finance Regulations require that: <i>“where a computer requires use of a personal identification number (PIN) or other password(s), for access to the council’s records on that computer, a note shall be made of the PIN and Passwords and shall be handed to and retained by the Chairman of Council in a sealed dated envelope. This will <u>not</u> be required for a member’s personal computer used only for remote authorisation of bank payments.”</i> Proposal: That the Council delegates to the Digital and Communications Advisory Group the actions required to ensure this requirement is met in full and that completion of this task should be notified to the Chairman of the Compliance AG. Proposal: Proposed by Cllr SA, seconded by Cllr AHJ, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that above Proposal is approved. Carried. <u>Petty Cash (Regulations 6.19, 6.20, 6.21 &6.22)</u> <i>The Finance Regulations now read:</i> 6.21 “Any corporate credit card or trade card accounts opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk/RFO and named employees shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end.	Suggested addition:	Reason:	Pension Payments	Statutory payment under pensions legislation	Information Commissioners Office	Mandatory Annual Data Protection fee	Corporate Debit & Credit cards	Council required that these be settled in full each month	
Suggested addition:	Reason:									
Pension Payments	Statutory payment under pensions legislation									
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		D&C AG								

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Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff or Councillors should not normally be used to make purchases on behalf of the council. In exceptional circumstances where this is necessary for the efficient management of council business then prior authorisation shall be sought from at least one Councillor not directly involved in the transaction and the purpose recorded by the requestor; that record to be submitted with any request for reimbursement, in addition to evidence that the payment was made as planned.

6.22 The RFO does not hold a petty cash float¹. Requests for payments made other than with the council's cards or via their bank accounts and in line with these regulations shall be forwarded to the RFO with a claim for reimbursement; such reimbursement shall be made via internet banking only.

Petty cash payment cannot be accepted other than in exceptional circumstances. Where cash is handed to the Clerk a written receipt will be given and the cash will be paid into the council's current account at the earliest possible opportunity"

As set out in the agreed March 2020 "Risk Assessment - Transport & Handling of Cash" the Chairman, Finance-AG is working with the RFO, and with those groups who have historically given prizes in cash, to identify and agree alternative which can be managed by the Clerk using other means e.g. vouchers or authorised payments using internet banking.

05-525.2 Finance Report 2 - Proposals and finance matters for information

The letter from BPC internal Auditor circulated to PC. Guidance is provided. The auditor suggested two options for completing the mandatory independent Internal Audit and signing the AGAR forms for submission to the external auditors.

05-525.2/1 Proposal: Council is asked to approve a request to the auditor for BPC to act in line with Option 1 if possible, i.e. delay her work until the lockdown has ended.

Proposal: Proposed by Cllr SA, seconded by Cllr BM, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that the above proposal is approved. Carried.

If Option 1 seems not to be practical, if necessary, it was agreed to consider the Option 2:

05-525.2/2 Proposal: Council is asked to delegate authority to the RFO, Chairman Finance-AG and Chairman BPC working together on the method to be used to meet this mandatory requirement if it later becomes apparent that lockdown will not be ended at a time to make that appropriate, allowing for subsequent actions which the Council must take in relation to the AGAR report.

Proposal: Proposed by Cllr SA, seconded by Cllr CU, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that the above proposal is approved. Carried.

05-525.2/3 Proposal: That the AGAR submission and the Internal Audit Report will be completed at the earliest opportunity and presented no later than July 2020 for consideration at that full Council meeting.

Proposal: Proposed by Cllr SA, seconded by Cllr CU, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that the above proposal is approved. Carried.

Note: External Audit, update:

¹ Ref Approval to change in petty cash transaction approved by council in November 2018 and subsequent reconciliation and closing of petty cash float arrangements from 01 April 2019.

See also Financial Risk Management Policy, Appendix 4 approved by council March 2020 including minimising whenever possible the use of cash.

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	<i>AGAR now received. PC fall into the category of AGAR Part 3 (Basic Level Review) for authorities which received Income or Expenditure exceeding £25,000 in 2019/20</i> 05-525.2/4 Proposal: Council is asked to approve payment of the BVHT grant as a single payment ASAP and the Scouts' grant in September, as they have requested. Proposal: Proposed by Cllr SA, seconded by Cllr BM, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that the above proposal is approved. Carried. Risk Assessments in relation to new Assets For the new MVAS units, the Financial Risks Assessment has been completed and required action initiated. The operational risks assessments are being prepared and implications will be managed once the MVAS unit is in place. This meets the Financial Regulation 17.1. Investment of BPC Reserves The document issued sets out the draft principles for investments of BPC cash assets, details of BPC reserve funds available at 31 March 2020 and interest rates available on accounts currently used. Information on BPC cash assets presented to PC. Available Interest The recommendation from the Finance AG Chairman and RFO was accepted, to move up to the full amount (£83,160 of business savings funds from the NatWest business savings account (access only via branch and post) to business savings accounts with Nationwide Building Society. • Nationwide offers better interest rates than the current business savings account and much simpler access (online) to funds and information. • It is proposed that a mixture of instant access and term deposits will be made, after consideration of when funds may need to be accessible. • Once invested the distribution of the BPC business savings will be reported to Council. 05-525.2/5 Proposal: Council is asked to approve the proposed way forward and confirm the Finance Advisory Group's view that a fuller investment strategy is <u>not</u> required at this stage. Proposal: Proposed by Cllr SA, seconded by Cllr AHJ, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that the above proposal is approved. Carried. 05-525.3 To note Cashbook and Bank Balances as at 30 Apr 2020 No bank reconciliation was carried for April. The year-end needs to be fully closed. To note income received in Apr: • 1st Part of Precept for £69,528.00 is now received on 21 Apr 20 • CIL funds for £49,779.63 received on 28 Apr 20. • The Grant for the Village Green project for £5,225.00 received on 29 Apr 20. • £140.00 Income received from Allotments. • £58.80 received for adverts in Roundabout. Noted by PC. 05-525.4 To approve 12 May 2020 Payments for Sanction Confidential staff payments have been reviewed by the staffing committee. It was noted that BT bill is higher than usual, but it is the additional £23.00 paid for rerouting the phone calls from PC office landline to PB mobile phone. • Total payments for Sanction for May 2020 was £9,040.22. Proposal: Proposed by Cllr SA, seconded by Cllr BM, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that the May 2020 payments are approved. Carried.	RFO with Chair of FAG & Chair Clerk
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(2020-21) 05- 526	Compliance Advisory Group, Cllr C Underwood Report attached Proposals to the Council from the Compliance Advisory Group, that the Council approve and adopt: - The revision of Standing Orders to include the provision of virtual meetings Proposal: Proposed by Cllr CU, seconded by Cllr SA, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that Standing Orders are approved. Carried. Health and Safety Policy Proposal: Proposed by Cllr CU, seconded by Cllr SA, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that H&S Policy is approved. Carried. Safeguarding Policy and Procedure Proposal: Proposed by Cllr CU, seconded by Cllr SA, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that Safeguarding Policy and Procedure are approved. Carried. Disciplinary and Grievance Policy Proposal: Proposed by Cllr CU, seconded by Cllr SA, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that Disciplinary and Grievance Policy are approved. Carried. PC are working towards GDPR. Digital Communications Group reviewed the documents. It was suggested to finalise the draft GDPC documents and adopt at the next meetings. Media Policy reminder Responding to Facebook posts It was advised that Councillors do not respond to Facebook comments via PC Facebook page. If Councillors do express their opinion and are responding via their personal Facebook account, they were asked to make sure that it is their personal opinion expressed. Code of Conduct the annual plan advises review of Code of Conduct in May. The chair of CAG and the Clerk reviewed the document and noted that it is no update is required. HOWEVER, it was noted that a number of DPIs on the HDC website are out of date. No changes to Code of Conduct. It was noted that several forms are out of date. Cllrs were asked to keep the DPIs up to date. Clerk to re-circulate the template and ask Cllrs to review. Proposal: Proposed by Cllr CU, seconded by Cllr AHJ, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that Code of Conduct approved. Carried. Proposal to the Council: All councillors to check their Declarations and send any revisions to the Clerk by the end of the month. Agreed. Proposed dates for meetings: Calendar dates attached It was suggested to have Annual Parish Meeting in June. Proposal Councillors approve meeting dates for Council year 2020 2021 To have the Annual Assembly in Jun 2020 (instead of Apr 2020). Proposal: Proposed by Cllr CU, seconded by Cllr BM, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that the Calendar dates are approved. Carried.	CAG All Clerk All
(2020-21) 05-527	Rights of Way and Trees Advisory Group, Cllr C Underwood, Report attached Questions on report received	

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(2020-21) 05-527	To Consider Planning Committee Report, Cllr S Ashwell Verbal update on the Planning Meeting 12 May 2020 provided by Cllrs SA and BM. Noted by PC.	
(2020-21) 05-528	To Consider Update from Large Planning Committee, Cllr M Hassall Committee did not meet. Model of the Roundabout has been produced and is expected to be back from the consultants around 15 th June. 40m/hr limit between the Roundabout and Stirtloe Lane is not in place yet. This will be raised at the next A1 safety meeting. It was also agreed to include on the Agenda the possible Southoe cycle track linking the village to Paxton Flyover.	
(2020-21) 05-529	General Purposes and Cemetery Advisory Group, verbal update by Cllr B Millard Noted by PC.	
(2020-21) 05-530	Climate Change Mitigation Advisory Group, Cllr A Jones No report	
(2020-21) 05-531	Highways and Road Safety Advisory Group, Cllr E Scott No report Dates re: the works for the Perry Rd LHI scheme received. Clerk to check re Mill Rd scheme feedback as PC seem not to have anything in writing confirming that the bid was successful, it was only reported by CC Cllr PD.	Clerk
(2020-21) 05-532	Allotments Advisory Group, Cllr S Studd, Report attached Plot Inspection Plots inspection was carried out on the weekend of 25 th April. Most plots were in good order. Three letters issued to tenants requesting they tidy-up their plots. However, some leniency will need to be shown due to the current lockdown. Projects All projects on hold due to lockdown. Advisory group meeting Advisory group meeting to be scheduled to review outcome of plot inspection	SS
(2020-21) 05-533	Digital Communications Advisory Group, Cllr M Hassall Website updates Noted by PC.	
(2020-21) 05-535	Correspondence received None outstanding	
(2020-21) 05-536	Neighbourhood Plan, Cllr A Howell-Jones Current Status - Plan is complete subject to proof reading, photos etc. - Community Action Plan almost complete - Statement of Consultation complete - Basic Conditions Statement out for review by ACRE. - CIL Proposal attached for discussion and agreement. Context A good document that reflects Buckden's requirements. There may be further requests for amendments from HDC and Gladmans.	

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	Referendum not until 2021. Currently in discussion with HDC about what this means for CIL. Plan to submit to HDC for inspection by end May. 05-536.1 Proposal: That BPC give the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group delegated authority to submit NP prior to our next meeting. Proposal: Proposed by Cllr AHJ, seconded by Cllr CG, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that the above proposal is approved. Carried. 05-536.2 Proposal the we put the Approved Community Action Plan on the website Proposal: Proposed by Cllr AHJ, seconded by Cllr SS, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that the proposal is approved. Carried. Report on CIL funding available for BPC was issued. It is very unclear due to uncertainty about the Silver Street development and the timing of approval of the BPC NP. Therefore, a list of possible projects is set with an indication of the potential cost. These can be further prioritized when the amount of CIL funding is known.	NP AG NP AG
(2020-21) 05-537	Communication, Cllr A Howell-Jones Update Cllr AHJ will provide a monthly update for the village newsletter.	AHJ
(2020-21) 05-538	EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw, Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.	
	Confidential update provided. Proposal: Proposed by Cllr AHJ, seconded by Cllr BM, all in favour and it was RESOLVED that the Annual Salary Review is approved. Carried.	
(2020-21) 05-539	Date of the next meeting on 9 June 2020 at 7.30pm DATES FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS - COUNCIL YEAR 2020 -21 Council Meetings the second Tuesday of every month 9th June 2020: - Annual Assembly/ Annual Parish Meeting from 7pm to 7.30pm - Full Parish Council Meeting at 7.30pm as usual 14th July 2020 - Full Parish Council Meeting AUGUST no meeting 8th September 2020 - Full Parish Council Meeting 13th October 2020 - Full Parish Council Meeting 10th November 2020 - Full Parish Council Meeting 8th December 2020 - Full Parish Council Meeting 12th January 2021 - Full Parish Council Meeting 9th February 2021 - Full Parish Council Meeting 9th March 2021 - Full Parish Council Meeting 13th April 2021 - Full Parish Council Meeting 27th April 2021 Annual Parish Meeting/ Assembly	

Meeting finished at 9.03pm

Signature

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