

Buckden Parish Council Chair's Report November 2022

1) Flooding

Yet again the village has had a flooding issue. On 20th October there was a very heavy downpour which lasted a number of hours. This time the Lion was particularly affected. It seems as if the fact that drains had not been cleared meant that excess water ran down the slope in front of the Lion and in through the door. Cllr Jones had moved some sand bags to the High Street end of Taylors Lane and these were utilised but they were insufficient to stop the flow of water. The two pumps were not immediately available as the house hold where one was housed the resident was not available and the Clerk was not sure who had the other one. Cllr Jones retrieved the second pump from the resident in Silver Street who had already deployed it that morning and went to the Lion and helped them pump the water out. He has subsequently cleared the drains outside the pub.

It is excellent that we had the pumps so we had something to offer. The Flood group won't be able to meet at the moment as Cllr Thelwall is away so we as Council need to consider discuss lessons learnt

Learning points

- We need the pump(s) to be available, housing one at the Lion will help with that
- We need to relocate the pump from 91 High Street to a nearby resident who is more available and has a mobile phone number.
- Cllr Jones has provided the Clerk with a copy of the information about those people who have had or are now in possession of both pumps. The Clerk, Assistant Clerk and key councillors need to have that information readily available.
- We need to purchase additional equipment to make the pumps we have easier to deploy.
- We should ensure we have supply of sandbags available with clear information about where they can be found.
- We should point out there is only a limited number of pumps for emergency community use and previously there were none. Pumps are available to buy (give details), as in extreme weather conditions availability can become restricted. In the case of single properties that are liable to regular flooding it cannot be the responsibility of the council to supply a pump on a regular basis. These pumps are widely available for anyone to purchase at a reasonable price, on line and retail outlets. Details; Dirty water Karcher SP7 submersible pump £149.99 on eBay.

Cllr Jones has proposed some additional purchases, which can be made the Climate Change Mitigation AG budget.

Another dirty water Karcher SP7 submersible pump to keep as "always available"	£149.99
• 8 x Flood warning cones 40cm @£8.20	£65.60
• 2 x Additional 7mtr flat 38mm diameter shorter section hoses @ £15.17	£30.34
• 4 x Cable anti-trip rubber trunking @ £8.50.	£34.00
• 2 x 90 degree 30mm (check) Silicone corner routing guides for hose @ £13.06	£26.12
• 2 x 45 degree 30mm (check) Silicone corner routing guides for hose @ £13.06	26.12
• 2 x 0.25m straight 30mm (check) Silicone connecting sections for hose @ £11.57	£23.14
• 10 x 41 to 38mm Herbie Clip® Plastic (Nylon) Hose Clamp.	£9.64
• 25m Extension lead.	£28.79
• 50 x Hessian Sand bags (without sand)	£32.91
• Ton sand £35.00	
Total approx.	£427.69

2) Bus Routes

We have received a press release from the Combined Authority informing that the Combined Authority Board has approved the outcomes of the tendering process for withdrawn bus services

The key points are:

- Approval has been given for new contracts with bus operators to run services on almost all of the routes which Stagecoach East announced would be withdrawn from October 30.
- The decision was made by the Combined Authority Board on Wednesday (October 19). On September 20, Stagecoach East announced they were pulling out of 18 services completely and reducing a further 5 significantly. The Combined Authority went out to urgent tender with potential operators the following day with the aim of continuing as many of those services as possible.
- The current position is that 17 of the 18 services cut by Stagecoach, along with all of the five reduced services, have all received quotes from new operators. The remaining route, service 39, has been covered apart from the section between Chatteris and March. However, the Combined Authority continues to be in discussions with operators about covering this service.
- For legal reasons around the tendering process, the Combined Authority is not yet able to confirm which bus operators are the preferred bidder for each route and nor is it able to confirm the route timetables. Operators and new timetables will be confirmed at the end of what is called a standstill period lasting 10 days. This is a legal requirement attached to this tendering process which allows suppliers an opportunity to challenge any decision. That means the names of the bus operators and timetables can only be made public from October 25. Timetables may change as a result of the tendering process. New contracts with bus operators will run until the end of March 2023.
- Route 66 is included in the routes which have received tenders from bus operators .

We will supply more information as and when we receive it.

3) Christmas Lights

It is disappointing to have to inform the Council that the plans for the Christmas lights will be rather different from the original proposals. All the Councillors and the Clerk who met with the contractors were clear that the quotation that would be sent to the Council for the planned display would include all costs, including electrical fitting. It has now come to light that due to the departure of a key member of staff at the company that we were not given full information about the requirements for the display, or the fact that the quote did not include the electric work. The planned fixed motifs require far more infrastructure than the buildings can accommodate, and the costs of installation would be too great. Cllr Packham has worked very hard to find an electrician who can help us and we will purchase from Blanchere strings of lights in white and a Merry Christmas sign, so similar to last year's layout, but white and hopefully more reliably installed. The good news is that this means the costs will be slightly less. Cllr Jones has suggested that the Parish Council may wish to consider taking a stall at the Christmas Lights switch on. **Please can all Councillors consider this** and we can decide at the meeting.

4) Cycleway

HDC have confirmed the 100k strategic CIL funds to be spent by May 2023

- CCC confirmed that they had received the design and the preliminary costs for the improvements to the cycleway back from Milestones.
- The costs are in excess of what were originally estimated and there is every likelihood that BPC will need to utilise the £88 contingency fund that it has put aside.
- CCC will apply for additional ITB funds but of course success in that is not guaranteed
- CCC will be looking at the costs of the scheme to see if there can be any savings made.
- CC explained costs could increase if substructure issues were discovered when trial holes are dug.
- The scheme will not be necessarily be completed by May 2023.
- CCC will update me when they have reviewed plans and costs.