

Buckden Parish Council Chair's Report October 2022

1) Council Vacancies

We had 2 vacancies and are actively seeking people to join us. We have had interest from 3 people and hope that they will attend the October meeting. Sadly Josh Harris has also now resigned as he has begun his teaching career, and this does not allow sufficient time for his Council duties, this brings the number of vacancies to 3.

2) Council meetings

The normal pattern of Council meetings has been altered in recent months. We held two extraordinary meetings; one to discuss a planning matter and the other to discuss a traffic calming proposal. In addition the decision was made not to hold a Council meeting in September as there would be a large number of Councillors absent. The reason for that is that we have a number of Councillors who are retired and the many of them take their holidays after the school holidays in September. Currently our Standing orders only require us to have 10 meetings a year, the practice has been to have 11 meetings with a break in August. The August break needs to continue as both Clerks have children of school age but I am proposing we should consider not holding a meeting in September as well.

Proposal : The Council will hold 10 meetings a year; meetings will not be held in August and September.

3) Forums and Meetings

As Chair I try where possible to attend meetings and forums for Parish Councillors

HDC Parish Forum

Ramune and I attended the HDC Parish Forum in July. It was excellent and a great opportunity to meet many of the Councillors that form the new administration and the officers, that until then, were only email addresses. It opened my eyes to the wide range of things HDC do actually offer. The new administration is in the process of putting together a Place Strategy and we are able to contribute to that. Hopefully there will be some follow up sessions, but it had really positive feeling and gives me some hope for future work with HDC.

Police Forum

Police and Crime Commissioner, Darryl Preston held a virtual Round Table for Huntingdonshire and Peterborough councillors on Monday 11th July.

This was the third round of regular meetings with Councillors and provided an opportunity for local issues to be discussed.

He also spoke about officer numbers and the recruitment process and reminded people about the importance of reporting.

There was also a very informative session on the Community Payback scheme and we should consider utilising this for projects. The contact details are: Felicity.Dunne@justice.gov.uk

4) Quarry Liaison meeting

I attend the Paxton Pits Quarry liaison meetings. The minutes are not yet available, but I attach the notes from the March meeting which have recently been circulated. There is a delay to the opening of the new footpaths in Diddington.

5) A1 meeting with National highways (NH)

The meeting was held 3rd October. There is still no update on the initial design for the Roundabout. It is clear that the design consultants and NH have some queries about the design which need to be answered by Pell Frischmann. There are no plans currently to remodel the roundabout plans in the light of the approval of the A428 Black Cat scheme but NH representatives were very aware of the potential impact this might have and they are intending to raise the issue.

6) Operation London Bridge

This is the name of the plan that is put in place in the case of the death of the monarch. Obviously this was used early in September and it enabled the Parish Council to respond as appropriate, including cancelling the scheduled Planning Committee meeting.

7) Thanks

On behalf of the whole Council I would like to thank Ramune for all her work on the Audit this year.