



BUXTED

PARISH COUNCIL

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8th November 2022

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held in St Mary's Church Hall, Church Road, Buxted on Tuesday 8th November 2022 at 7.49p.m.

Present: Cllrs. Blandford (Chairman), Humphrey, Illingworth (WDC), and Rose.
Also present: ESCC Cllr. Galley and Clerks Beccy Macklen and Claudine Feltham.

Public : 2
A member of the public noted that he was pleased to see the subject of Fingerposts on the agenda and suggested the clerk contact the clerk to Hadlow Down to find out which contractor they use to also provide a quote and any grants available.

01/11/22 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
Apologies received and accepted from Cllrs Coxon, McQuarrie, Marshall, Roberts, and Wilson
Cllr Johnson was absent from the meeting.

02/11/22 **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS**
All councillors declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Ionides Trust by virtue of the parish council being managing agents of the site.

Cllr. Rose declared a prejudicial interest in any matters relating to the land west of Church Road (Beechbook Park due to having owned part of the application site)

03/11/22 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**
The minutes of the meeting held on 11th October 2022 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.

04/11/22 **ESCC/WDC REPORT**
Cllr Galley had no significant news from ESCC. However, he did report that the Fire Authority are currently balloting fire fighters regarding a strike after being offered a 5% pay rise.

He was also aware that parts of Buxted was flooded earlier in the week. The White Hart and houses close were flooded nearest the river Uck. The chairman commented that the rain has taken out the bridge parapets in Gun Hill. It was an exceptional amount to rain in a short space of time.

Cllr Illingworth reported no real developments on the Local Plan.

On a personal note, Cllr Illingworth said that he is now spending a lot of time in the

Ukraine running a charity and does not feel it would be right to stand for elections in May, so he will be stepping down. The Conservative Group has already appointed his replacement who we will be meeting in due course. He mentioned that it has been a great pleasure to serve the parish over the last 7 and a half years and he will miss it greatly.

The chairman thanked Toby and wished him all the best for his future ventures.

Britts Farm lights – update following further a question by Cllr. Galley

Following the previous meeting Cllr Galley referred back to ESCC to confirm that their response is a final decision. This was indeed correct. The lights would not be switched off permanently but there would be a switching off at 11pm rather than 1am. The Parish Council agreed that in this instance we would have to accept this compromise as ESCC have made it clear that the lights could not be switched off permanently on safety grounds. The clerk would advise the representative local resident.

Cllr Humphrey raised the issue of the traffic counter in FAD close to a proposed development, which appeared to have been installed without permission from ESCC (confirmed by Cllr Galley). Cllr Humphrey mentioned that the parish council pays a lot of money to have a traffic counter installed by ESCC, but others appear to have installed one without any permission or costs.

05/11/22

REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS & FINANCIAL RESERVES POLICY

The Parish Council reviewed both documents. The chairman of the Finance Committee Cllr Roberts was not at the meeting but made suggestions to delete paragraphs in the Financial Regulations relating to 1. The list of payments collated by the clerk/RFO for the year, 2. Orders letter and books for works/goods/services, 3. Amending the appraisal date for the clerks to December. Members **resolved to adopt** these changes.

No changes were made to the Financial Reserves Policy

06/11/22

READING ROOM PLANNING AGREEMENT/NEW HALL PROJECT – UPDATE FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Despite chasing both the WDC North Team Leader regarding the outstanding Section 106 Agreement and R. Horn from AiRS, no response has been received from either. The clerk would escalate these enquiries to a more senior person within each organisation.

07/11/22

OUTSTANDING MATTERS

Mobile Phone Coverage: Nothing to report

Public footpaths: Nothing to report

Trees: The clerk has contacted Broad Oak Tree Consultants to request the three yearly tree check of all council owned trees is carried out.

Road Safety:

- **Dog Bin FAD approval for costs for new dog bin in FAD** – the licence to excavate the highway and to install something in the highway has now been applied for. Costs for the whole project are estimated at £1250 which would include the licences, purchase of bin and installation - **agreed**
- **Milestones (requested by Cllr Humphrey)** – Cllr Humphrey wished to raise the subject of Milestones following a visit to Northampton where he spotted the parish markers. Would this be something the parish council would be interested in having for Buxted? The clerk questioned that in Wadhurst they

have been trying to install village gates and are only allowed to install plastic, so it would be unlikely that a parish would be allowed to install stone or metal milestones. The chairman commented that technically it would be quite a challenge to decide where they would go and is this more of a historical feature rather than something to install from new.

The subject of village gates was raised again but it would seem that there are so many rules and regulations and processes to go through to install them. Many parishes seem to have the same issues. It was suggested this be relooked at on the January agenda and further research will be carried out by the clerks.

Wealden Local Development Framework: A slightly tenuous link to the local plan but Cllr Illingworth wished to refer back to the communication from the Leader of WDC attacking the parish council following the publication of a statement to its parishioners. She claimed she was speaking on behalf of WDC and the conservative members, however Cllr Illingworth wanted to confirm that at no point did the Leader speak to Cllr Illingworth and she was not speaking on his behalf.

Cllr Rose asked if it is right that some new housing developments are being purchased by London housing associations for residents to relocate. Cllr Galley confirmed there are no deals with any London councils.

Property issues:

- **Fingerposts – update** – Unfortunately a second quote was not received prior to the meeting so this will be rolled on to the December meeting.

Communications Matters: Nothing to report.

08/11/22 CORRESPONDENCE

No priority correspondence

09/11/22 COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Finance Committee at which the 2023/24 budget will be discussed will be held on Tuesday 22nd November 2022 at Five Ash Down Village Hall at 7.30pm

10/11/22 FINANCE

- Payments:** On the proposal of Cllr. Humphrey seconded by Cllr. Rose, payments totalling £7,928.42 covered by cheque numbers 4934 and 4945 plus direct debits were approved.
- Bank reconciliations:** The clerk had circulated completed reconciliations for October which were signed
- Wealden CAB grant application** – no specific amounts were received from the CAB, so the clerk is still awaiting this information.
- Following consideration, the grant for £340 for a replacement cooker at FAD Village Hall.** Cllr Rose proposed, and Cllr Illingworth seconded, unanimously **approved**
- consideration of one-off cost of living payment to clerks** – Following discussions prior to the meeting between the chair of finance and the chairman, it was proposed by Cllr Blandford and seconded by Cllr Rose a one-off cost of £500 was **agreed** to be awarded to the clerks.

11/11/22 OTHER MEETINGS

No other meetings

12/11/22 MEMBERS QUESTIONS

After next PC meeting if we get attendance from councillors, we can retire to the Pig and Butcher for a Christmas gathering. The meeting to start at 7pm.

13/11/22 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

The meeting closed at 8.26p.m.

DATE RAISED	CASE NO	DESCRIPTION	OPEN/CLOSED RESOLUTION
<p>21/12/2020 ONGOING</p>	<p>00527587</p>	<p>Switching off of streetlamps in Britts Farm alleyway, or at least switching off one on 24 hours</p>	<p>21/12 – passed to officers 26/1 – still being discussed by officers 22/2 – resident advised that the orange light has now changed to a bright white light and is still on 24 hours (so worse situation) 10/3 – apologies from ESCC for slow response. Explanation of why lamp was changed to white light. Still looking at putting timers on lights 11/3 – Response by clerk. Crossed wires, we want the lights turned off not on timers. 23/3 – ESCC confirm they are still looking into being able to switch off lights 15/4 – ESCC confirmation that lights cannot be switched off for safety reasons but will be replaced with different bulbs and will not be on all night. Works will take place late summer 19/7 – clerk chased an email sent asking for further clarification as to why lights cannot be switched off 22/9 – clerk forwarded email to Cllr Galley to help chase 06/10 – ESCC response explaining why lights cannot be switched off and that new lamps would be better and can be fitted with guards 11/10 – local residents do not accept this response and still wish to have lights switched off. Clerk responded to ESCC with the suggestion of a site meeting to show that it is not a used footpath during the dark Jan 2022 – Highways officer offer to change lighting to reduced light and to switch off from midnight to sunrise. Residents do not agree to this and still want lamps removed or permanently switched off 7/3/22 – Highways agreed to make investigations with a view to removing lights 16/5/22 – Highways responded advising they require an anonymous survey of all residents of Britts Farm Road to prove it is what is wanted but they do not have the resources to carry this out. Clerk has asked exactly what format the questionnaire should be in so the PC/local residents would undertake task 25/5 – ESCC response they do not have an anonymous survey as they have</p>

			<p>never carried one out before. Clerk to draw up a survey which will be circulated by a local resident</p> <p>9/6 – 13 anonymous letters hand delivered to 13 most affected residents</p> <p>26/6 – 9 letters returned. 61% agreeing lights should be switched off. Email to Roy Galley providing info before it is sent to Highways.</p> <p>20/9 – results of survey sent to ESCC. Notification of receipt and passed to Asset Management Team</p> <p>22/9 – Email received from Asset Management Team advising they are not therefore able to agree to completely turn off or remove the streetlights from this location. However, they are happy to reduce the lighting time from the current switch off time of 1am to 11pm to reduce the impact on residents adjacent to the path.</p> <p>1/11/22 – Cllr Galley confirmed after discussion with ESCC that this is the final decision. Local residents is not happy with this decision. Parish Council to consider any further action at its meeting on 8/11/22</p>
21/01/2021 ONGOING	00539076	Blocked drain outside St Mary's Church, Church Road, Buxted	25/1 – passed to officer to investigate
17/02/2022		<p>A272/Budletts Lane is deteriorating again and needs resurfacing. It is now becoming dangerous when vehicles are trying to avoid potholes are going onto the wrong side of the carriageway.</p> <p>Etchingwood Lane is absolutely dreadful</p> <p>Millwood Lane is getting terrible towards the timber yard.</p>	Roy Galley visited each site with Highway Steward
28/03/22	00673252	Licence application to install a dog waste bin on highway verge in Five Ash Down	<p>28/3 – application for licence submitted to ESCC – confirmation received and passed to Licencing department</p> <p>28/6 – No response received from Licencing so a chasing email sent</p> <p>August 2022 – site meeting with ESCC to agree location of new bin.</p> <p>September 2022 – Location agreed with WDC. Clerk completing licencing forms for ESCC</p> <p>November 2022 – Costing being agreed at PC meeting and payment for licence being made</p>

Ionides Trust Update:

- 1. Play equipment repairs and maintenance** – cost implications to Ionides Trust – revised cost based on the PC decision in October were requested. A revised quote was received that afternoon which reduced the costs from £18,828 to £10,966 and now included the removal but not replacement of the cantilever swing and repairs to the zip wire.

Touchwood also included an annual maintenance quote of £2,736

Costs agreed by the Ionides Trust. Keys to padlocks in George Rose and all to be returned. It was also agreed to the annual maintenance costs to be reviewed after the first years' work.

- 2. Buxted Bonfire Society – request for a grant for two Christmas events** - a grant of £500 is requested from the Ionides Trust to help fund two events. These being the switching on of the Christmas Tree which would also include a grotto, stalls, BBQ and Bar, and to support the Santa Sleigh visiting the village on two evenings. It was unanimously agreed to support these events and award the grant as requested.

3. Cllr Roberts – feedback from meeting with Scout leaders

- Agreed not to progress 'joint' approach to hall and hut facilities.
- Cllr Roberts was given an outline floor plan of the proposed new Scout Hut showing the current hut, proposed hut, and leased area.
- Funding being sought from Youth Investment Fund and no 'head office' involvement sought or required. The Scouts are optimistically hoping to start work in 6 months following a pre-application discussion with WDC.
- Would obviously also need the consent of the Ionides Trust.
- The path that was previously discussed with IT would be great, but it isn't a necessity.