

BULKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Mrs F A Price 1 The Croft Urchfont Devizes SN10 4RT

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm
Wednesday 10 January 2018

Present: Cllr Mrs A Read in the Chair

Cllrs P Bennett, RG Elliott, S Kerslake, Mrs K Lock, and I Pendlebery

Cllr J Seed – Wiltshire Council

1 member of the public – Ms Penny Morgan-Elliott for **Playing Field** and related matters to be discussed after Item 4 – no other members of the Public so no **Open Forum**

Clerk Mrs F A Price in attendance: the Clerk confirmed that she intends to step down as soon as the Year End Accounts are complete and have been passed by the Auditors.

The Chairman opened the Meeting at 7.37, with

1. Apologies for Absence Received and accepted from the Police

2. Co-option to fill Cllr Vacancies – Cllr Bennett's Proposals on Procedure:

Cllr Seed clarified – Bulkington Parish Council has followed the correct procedure in advertising vacancies, and does not have to notify Wiltshire Council of the outcome unless an Election is requested;

in that case Wiltshire Council must be informed of the result of the vote.

Cllr Bennett insisted that Wiltshire Council must *always* be informed:

Cllr Seed said that the Monitoring Officer states that the Parish Council's actions are legal and correct.

Cllr Bennett then cited Guidance for Councillors that reporting to Wiltshire Council is good practice,

and added that entries in the Register of Interests are out of date and should be corrected by the Clerk.

Cllr Seed stated that an entry in the Register is entirely the responsibility of the Councillor concerned -

the Clerk has no business correcting entries, and nor has anyone else – when Cllr Bennett continued to

demand that the Clerk deal with entries Cllr Seed repeated, emphatically, that he was wrong. The Chairman added that “Guidance” is not mandatory.

1. 3. Declarations of Interest, Dispensations: Cllr Mrs Read for Village Hall; Cllrs Kerslake and Mrs Lock

for matters concerning the Playing Field – may speak, but not vote if there is any pecuniary interest;

Cllr Elliott for the Planning Application – may answer questions but not vote.

1. Minutes of 15th November 2017: Accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman, with corrections:

[a] Playing Field : Cllr Kerslake proposed a Portakabin *not* Portaloo

[b] Correspondence: the Chairman clarified why her vote was not counted – no casting vote needed.

[c] Finance: headed paper for Councillors' letters on the PC's behalf -

a “template” has been made available without charge, so no purchase is necessary.

[d] Playing Field: Queries about Contracts etc – see next item - **Open Forum/Playing Field**

1. Playing Field:

Ms Morgan-Elliott spoke to clarify the remit of a recently-formed Committee which replaces the original:

the new Committee will concern itself with the Playing Field and activities generally in the village – the members wish to work with the Parish Council on any areas where they can be of help, and would like

the Parish Council's endorsement and support.

The Chairman welcomed this news, which she said augured well for the future.

Cllr Kerslake wants clarity on the maintenance of the Play Equipment – who owns it? Are there any other limitations on the use of the Playing Field?

Cllr Bennett suggested all such matters were for the Cttee, but added that the Parish Council owns both

the Field (under the late Mr W Breach's Deed of Gift) and the Play Equipment, which was purchased with the help of grants.

The Clerk confirmed that this was correct

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1. Playing Field: contd

Ms Morgan-Elliott agreed that the Cttee would need to bring matters of expenditure to the Parish Council for its agreement – at which point Cllr Bennett insisted that there were problems with the November 2017 Fireworks and that they were *not* covered by the Parish Council's Insurance. [Clerk referred him to WALC, who negotiate all the PC's Insurance cover and arranged Special Event Cover on this occasion]

Cllr Kerslake said there must be a clear statement on what repairs are needed on Play Equipment – and who paid for those recently done. [Clerk referred him to the latest RoSPA Report.]

Cllr Seed said the Cttee should write an up-to-date Risk Assessment; it could then identify needs and possibly apply for grants.

The Chairman - the RoSPA Report should be used to draw up a list of repairs etc in order of importance.

Cllr Seed suggested that Cllrs Kerslake and Mrs Lock be authorised to draw up a list of repairs, costed, and the PC could then apply to Melksham Area Board for a grant.

The Parish Council agreed,

without a vote.

Ms Morgan-Elliott asked if volunteers could go ahead with planting and gardening work meanwhile -

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Lock

Seconded: Cllr Elliott

All in Favour

1. Reports, Correspondence:

- ◆ Cllr Bennett's Footpath Report already circulated – he drew attention to Stiles on Bulkington 5, not compliant with National Standard. Cllr Seed has consulted the Rights of Way Officer, who said compliance is *not* necessary, and in all such matters Wiltshire Council is reliant on landowners.

The landowner should be approached to find out how the stile in question could be made compliant.

The Rights of Way Officer also confirmed that a guard of blue pipe over electric fence wire is acceptable.

On wheelchair access the advice is that if some footpaths can be made navigable, this should be done, but it is highly unlikely that this will apply to all – and wheelchairs may not cross land containing livestock.

Cllr Bennett asked whether landowners must get permission to put in new stiles – Cllr Seed said this is not necessary, adding that most landowners work to enable access.

There followed some discussion about the merits of “kissing gates” over stiles –

Cllr Bennett would like to write to landowners asking them to replace stiles with kissing gates

– Cllr Seed advised a cautious approach and emphasis on any kissing gates being *stockproof*. Checking on whether landowners have made any such replacement must be tactful.

Cllr Pendlebery said Wiltshire Council agreed to deal with a related complaint he made some time ago – so this is the right thing to do.

A Proposal that the Cllr with Footpath responsibility should draft any letters on these matters for the Chairman to sign was **agreed** by all, without a vote.

- ◆ Cllr Pendlebery reported consulting former Councillor Calum Ogilvie about the Emergency Plan: he will remain on the Committee, with all current members. The whole Plan, now on the website, will be formalised as soon as possible. Storage for such items as “gel bags” needs to be looked into, and the grit bins will be repaired in due course.
- ◆ Parish Steward – Cllr Bennett is in contact and asks that all suggested tasks be passed to the Steward through him.

Cllr Pendlebery said that various benches need refurbishment – should Cllr Seed be consulted about the possibility of a grant to help with costs?

6. Section 137 LGA 1972: No new Application received.

7. Finance:

Received since last Meeting		
Date	From	£
17 Nov 17	Reimbursement ex-VAT cost of Fireworks	515.00
11 Dec 17	Interest on Deposit Account	0.38

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7. Finance contd:

Paid since last Meeting				
Date	Payee	Amount £	[inc VAT]	Chq 000
15 Nov 17	Royal British Legion – Wreath + Donation	50.00	[-]	192

Authorised at this Meeting				
Date	Payee	Amount £	[inc VAT]	Chq 000
10 Jan 18	RW & HC Breach – hedgecutting - Playing Field and Fullwood Lane	168.00	28	193

The PC should have over £1,500 in its Current Account after this payment..

The bill for PF grasscutting (£840 - no VAT) has yet to be presented:

the Clerk was instructed to write to AW Services, terminating the contract and requesting their final bill.

The Clerk circulated Estimates for 2018-19, and suggested a small rise in Precept to £4,850 in view of generally rising costs.

Cllr Seed said that in his opinion and following Wiltshire Council's decisions, a rise would be advisable, and after some discussion, particularly of the Reserves, the PC proceeded to vote:

Bulkington Parish Council Total Precept Requirement for 2018/2019 : £4,850.00

Proposed : Cllr R G Elliott

Seconded: Cllr R Bennett

In Favour : 5

Against: none

Abstained: 1 [Cllr Mrs K

Lock]

The Precept Request was signed by the Chairman and the Clerk/RFO;
to be sent by post to Wiltshire Council on 11 January 2018.

9. Planning:

The PC briefly considered an Application which it had been impossible to respond to by the required date
in December – Cllr Seed pointed out that Wiltshire Council must consider all comments received before its own decision date later in January:

Application 17/11670/PNTEL

Communications mast and associated equipment on land at Home Farm, Mill Lane

Cllr Elliott declared his interest as owner of Home Farm and withdrew from the room.

Many objections had already been made, mostly by email, on grounds of

- Intrusion on the view from houses in Mill Lane
- Extra traffic during the construction period
- Possible interference with domestic telecommunications – radio/TV, landline and/or mobile phone, etc.
- Cllrs felt that no convincing case had been made for moving the mast – which is for Emergency Police/Fire/Ambulance communications – from the earlier position at Leaze Farm.

The PC unanimously decided to **Object** to the Application and the Clerk will inform Wiltshire Council.

The PC agreed to consider Application 17/12123/FUL – erection of a new cow-housing unit [on land off Mill Lane] for Mr Rodney Meatyard of Keevil Wick Farm – on Wednesday 24th January.

(Clerk to try to establish why this Application is to be considered by Bulkington rather than Keevil)

Cllr Bennett gave his Apologies for the 24th.

10. Any Other Business:

None for discussion at this Meeting, which ended at 9.55pm –
the Chairman remarked that this was well beyond the normal time, and should be avoided in future.

Next Meeting 21 March – to include Year-End Accounts as far as possible