

Minutes of Bures Hamlet Annual Parish Council Meeting held virtually on Monday, 18th January 2021 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs M Baker, K McAndrew, D Monk, B Raymond, R Shackell,
M Welch, Cllr L Norton (BSMPC), Cllr J Aries (Parish ROW Officer)
In the Chair: Cllr M Welch
Also Present: Cllr D Finch (ECC), Cllr W Scattergood (BDC), Mrs J Wright (Clerk),
Mrs C Holbrook (Internal Auditor) plus 1 member of the public

01/01/21 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

It was resolved that Cllr Shackell be elected as Chairman. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office to be duly signed following the virtual meeting.

Cllr Shackell thanked Cllr Welch for his time in Office as Chairman and Cllr Welch subsequently thanked all members for their valued support during that time.

02/01/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies received.

03/01/21 ELECTION OF OTHER OFFICERS

Cllr Baker was nominated as Vice-chair and she duly accepted.

Cemetery Authority: Cllrs Baker, Ellis and McAndrew.

Sportsground Committee: Cllrs Monk, Shackell, Raymond and Welch.

Community Centre: Cllrs Baker and Monk agreed to attend along with the Clerk on rotation of meetings during the year.

Tree Warden: Cllr Baker.

Parish Rights of Way: Mrs Jan Aries.

Planning: All members.

EALC & BALC: Chairman and Clerk.

Appointment of other responsibilities:

Transport: Cllr Welch, First Aid: Cllr Welch, Emergency Co-ordinator: Clerk.

Joint Working Parties:

Highways, Parking and Street Lighting: Cllr Baker and Cllr Shackell

Retail: Cllr Ellis

04/01/21 DECLARATION/REGISTER OF INTERESTS/DISPENSATIONS

To receive any 'pecuniary' or 'non-pecuniary' interests and dispensation requests.

No interests declared and no dispensation requests put forward.

05/01/21 MINUTES

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 16th November 2020 (previously circulated) were approved as a correct record. To be duly signed following the virtual meeting.

06/01/21 PUBLIC FORUM

15 minutes maximum public participation

3 minutes for individual contributions unless agreed by Chairman

There was 1 member of the public present with no matters raised.

District Councillor Report: Cllr Scattergood to join the meeting shortly and respond to relevant matters arising on the agenda.

County Councillor Report: Cllr Finch commented on the following:

- a) Covid-19 infection rates decreasing over the County. ECC working with the NHS on the rollout of vaccinations. Test and Trace operating well across the County.
- b) Essex County Tax Levy to remain as per 2019/20 budget however there would be a 1.5% increase in Social Care provision. ECC had sound financial reserves.

Cllr Finch was asked if he could clarify whether the administering of the vaccinations was by alphabetical order. He considered it to be in vulnerable priority order.

Cllr Finch left the meeting at this point.

07/01/21 POLICE

- a) No particular matters raised with Essex and Suffolk Community Policing Teams. Crime rate currently low.
- b) Speed Watch – Cllr Aries reported that following the announcement of a third national Covid-19 lockdown restriction all Speed Watch Teams had once again been stepped down. She would be notified when the team would be able to recommence operation. Cllr Aries noted to members the high numbers, 5,000 plus, of reported driving offences during December in the County.
- c) No police representative in attendance as per current force directive. Police information circulated as and when received. Newsletters circulated and available online and parish council website.

08/01/21 HIGHWAY MATTERS

a) Parking issues:

- 1) Bridge Street was a busy section of the B1508 through traffic with current waiting time restrictions for vehicles. The Clerk had approached residents at the request of members to discuss options on moving regularly parked vehicles from the highway to give a smoother movement of traffic and attempt to avoid backup at the end pinch points. This would also allow room for drivers to park for short periods to use the Delicatessen and Roses General Store. Members considered that some parked cars was a good traffic calming measure and created a buffer for those waiting to enter the shop during Covid-19 restrictions. The parish council would continue to monitor the situation. The Clerk advised that NE Parking Partnership had agreed to re-paint the current faded restriction line and had offered to hold 1 – 1 virtual surgeries with the Clerk or Council members only from February.
- 2) Colchester Road parking to continue to be monitored during the busy summer visitor period as many residents unhappy with volume of parked cars. The Chairman asked for views on parking to be forwarded for discussion at the next parish council meeting.
- 3) Network Rail had confirmed that its contract with NCP would continue with no changes being made to the current charging arrangements. However Network Rail is happy to work with the village with regard to adhoc applications for outside core commuting hours e.g. Market events.

b) Potholes: Numerous potholes throughout the Bridge Street/Station Hill area had been reported to ECC Highways and awaiting repair. Clerk continuing to follow up.

c) Flooding:

- 1) The Clerk continuing to work with ECC Highways and the Flood Agency to ease the flooding at Colchester Road. Jetting of drains completed. ECC SWAS in system. Clerk to forward photographs and information of flooded properties to the Flood Agency. The parish council's stock of sandbags had been distributed to properties in need.
- 2) Flooding at the junction to Mount Bures had been reported to ECC Ref 2693852.

3) Flooding at top of Colne Road reported. Cllr Baker considered that a blocked pipe under the highway may be restricting the water flow. The Clerk reported on the County Broadband works at Colne Road and had followed up with the Essex Watercourse Officer on whether laid cables may restrict future ditch clearance. She was continuing to follow up on both matters.

Cllr Scattergood joined the meeting at this point.

Cllr Scattergood reported that several District Council Officers were either shielding or isolating which resulted in a slower response to matters of concern. However she advised that the Waste Team were working to capacity. She was asked by members whether the consultation outcome for the currently leased land to the rear of Cambridge Way would be reviewed. Cllr Scattergood agreed to get an update from Officers.

d) Water Lane pipe/pothole: The Clerk had met onsite with the ECC Highway Engineer and a works order now in place to repair the damaged pipe and make good the highway. Works scheduled for 23rd February.

e) Essex-wide bus shelter project: The project aimed to bring together a unified bus shelter estate to provide better bus infrastructure use and encourage use of sustainable transport across Essex. Clerk to confirm parish shelter sites and complete license applications.

f) Station Hill footpath: ECC Highways has agreed to ramp the footway over the tree root damage. Waiting for works to be scheduled into system.

g) E54 Pedestrian crossing: The parish council is still waiting on the Public Inquiry outcome as to whether the crossing would be closed to pedestrians. Final decision pending from the Secretary of State for Transport. Cllr Welch agreed to check for any update.

h) Crossing at Colchester Road: Speed Watch team to assist volunteers to gain data needed to support a LHP request for a crossing point near the Millennium gate entrance. Working Party to follow up when Covid-19 restrictions lifted.

i) Gateway entrance signs: Being followed up jointly with BSMPC. It was considered that gateway entrance signs at Colchester Road, Nayland Road, Sudbury Road and Cuckoo Hill may have the desired effect of reducing traffic speed.

j) LHP requests update: 1) Bus stop at Mount Bures junction – still waiting on design to determine if the gradient is appropriate for the provision of a hard standing.

2) Provision of 2 bollards to protect a fire hydrant at Colchester Road transferred to the 2021/22 programme of works.

09/01/21 PLANNING

a) All applications received and comments made to date as per attached list.

b) Applications requiring consideration at this meeting:

20/02131/FUL Butlers Farm, Colne Road CO8 5DN – retention of 2 dwellings –applicant had been unable to obtain a Certificate of Lawfulness for the dwellings. Members unanimously agreed to support BDC in its continuing objection to the various planning applications for Butlers Farm.

c) Other planning matters reported on:

Vacant garage site: Application 20/01933/FUL – to demolish all buildings, remove all hardstandings and erect hoarding to site frontage remained pending. Parish council had submitted a request for a condition to be agreed limiting time for hoarding to be in place.

Land to rear of Cambridge Way: Following a recent consultation on use of the land residents had subsequently received a letter from BDC Head of Asset Management advising that the current agricultural use would continue as the consultation had not identified a clear, suitable alternative use. Cllr Scattergood continuing to support the village for an alternative use.

Tenter Field site: The estate is being currently managed by the Tenter Field Management Company Ltd and would be handed over to a Resident's Association in due course. The estate to remain unadopted by ECC and the Management Group to install lighting as appropriate.

d) Local Plan Section 1 update: Cllr Scattergood reported that BDC had received the final report from the Planning Inspector. The Inspector's recommendation to retain the housing target for Braintree at an annual average of 716 homes to be put before the next meeting of BDC Full Council for agreement.

Cllr Scattergood left the meeting at this point.

10/01/21 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

Current contract with JPB Landscapes Ltd due to expire on 31st March 2021. It was agreed not to put out for tender on this occasion and to review the contract at the March meeting.

11/01/21 BURES PARISH PLAN:

a) Entrance gates: Joint initiative with BSMPC. Investigating sites, design and costs.

b) Light at Parsonage Hill: Waiting on Tenter Field Management Group's response as to whether it would be providing a light at the entrance into the site. If yes then the parish council may not need to supply a light on the hill. Parish owned light P3 along the Paddocks footpath needed to be upgraded. Quotations to be sought for consideration.

c) Roses General Store: Shop now open and receiving a positive response from the village.

d) Climate Emergency Conference: Both the Clerk and Cllr Ellis to attend the Conference hosted by the EALC on 28th January. Cllr Jackson to do a short presentation on Climate Change Bures initiatives.

e) Health & Wellbeing Plan: Cllr Jackson advised that Health & Wellbeing is included in the 2020/21 Bures Parish Plan. She had drafted a Health & Wellbeing Plan specific to the perceived needs of the village and invited other members to take the draft forward.

12/01/21 ITEMS FOR UPDATE, REPORT AND FOLLOW UP AS REQUIRED

a) Open Spaces Action Plan review: The 2020/21 Plan to be updated. Members considered the current plan and agreed to remove any reference to Bures Common as various improvements had now been completed. It was also agreed to include provision for a waiting shelter on the Essex Knoll.

b) FP finger posts: A £300 Locality Award towards installing fingerposts had been approved. Clerk following up with ECC on locations for the fingerposts.

c) Normandie Way hedge: The hedge had been lowered at the request of the neighbouring property. However further works had since been requested. Cllr Baker advised that the hedge would now be severely cut back reducing the need for the contractor to return until the autumn or following spring.

d) Volunteering initiative: The initiative to be put on hold until Covid-19 restrictions lifted. Cllr Baker considered the parish council should be seen to be proactive in the village Residents to be asked to put forward suggestions for a works list. Clerk to investigate costs of tabards.

e) Parish Council Foundation Award: The parish council has been awarded the Foundation Level accreditation. Owing to Covid-19 restrictions the EALC was unable to hold an Awards Ceremony however the Clerk and Cllr Monk had submitted photographs for publication in an awards newsletter. Framed certificate received and to be located in the Community Centre entrance foyer.

f) Pizza retailer: To commence trading Friday evenings from February at the Essex Knoll.

g) Alternatives to Glyphosate: Both parish councils had undertaken a review of action on Climate Change and in particular the use of glyphosate. The contractor had trialled 'New Way' as an alternative in other parishes and had investigated 'Foamstream' but the initial outlay was too costly. Members agreed not to investigate further for the time being. The contractor to trim and weed pull as necessary.

h) 'Poo Fairies' initiative: Members were raising awareness of dog fouling by offering free dog poo bags and handing out leaflets at the Saturday markets. It was hoped a more friendly approach may improve the continuing dog fouling problems in the village. Next market March 13th. Members also noted on the issue of discarded facemasks.

Cllr Ellis left the meeting at this point.

13/01/21 RIGHTS OF WAY

a) The Parish ROW Officer's report had been circulated and noted.

Items referenced in particular from the report:

1) Footpath 5 – Ferriers Farm to Hornes Green – ECC advised that it would not proceed with the proposed diversion route owing to objections from Alphamstone and Lamarsh residents. Cllr Aries reported that walkers continued to use the unauthorised lower woodland walk which becomes increasingly boggy during wet weather. Some walkers were clearly using the alternative headland path (proposed diversion). The Definitive Map Team requires a decision from the parish council to request ECC to process the Order or withdraw it. One of the objectors has suggested the parish council should contest the right to use the lower valley path on the grounds of continuous use for over 20 years. However this would result if successful in the parish council adopting the route and responsible for its future use.

The parish council agreed it did not want to proceed with contesting the right to use the lower valley path and agreed to request ECC to proceed with the diversion order as proposed.

Clerk to write to the Definite Map Team accordingly.

2) FP30 – Complaints regarding the perceived narrowing of the footpath adjacent to Tenter Field had been referred to ECC ROW Officer. Complaints regarding the gravelled surface off Colne Road had been referred to the Site Manager. No further update.

b) The Enforcement Officer advised that the current works at Ferriers Farm Barns was not within his remit. He suggested that any offences relating to the Wildlife Act should be reported to Essex Police.

c) ECC PP3 Scheme – Shirley Anglin PP3 Co-ordinator was keen to liaise with the parish council on the benefits of the scheme. A meeting still to be arranged. Fingerpost requests being followed up with ECC.

14/01/21 FINANCE AND AUDIT MATTERS

a) Internal Audit Review meeting held on 23rd November 2020 – Cllr McAndrew, Cllr Shackell, Clerk and Internal Auditor in attendance. Notes from the meeting circulated to all members and held on file. Carolyn Holbrook, Internal Auditor advised that she would attempt to attend regular meetings of the parish council and to keep updated of legal briefings.

Business Premium A/C balance: £8,962.98

Community A/C balance: £3,118.22 (when all cheques paid)

b) Finance & Budget Monitoring Report – circulated, noted and attached.

c) Bank reconciliation report dated 6th January 2021 – circulated, noted and attached. Corresponding bank statements – circulated, noted and attached. To be duly signed by the Chairman and non-signatory member following the virtual meeting.

d) BDC precept request duly signed and presented – noted.

e) Parish Band D rate and percentage increase - noted

The Clerk noted on the following: A Change of Signatory Mandate to be completed. She was attempting to recoup some of the ECC FP32 closure costs.

15/01/21 CLERK'S REPORT PLUS ANY CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FOR ACTION

This had been previously circulated (attached and placed on website).

16/01/21 PHYSICAL RISK ASSESSMENT

Cllr Monk had circulated her report prior to the meeting. Weeds to be removed from the paving at Colchester Road bus shelter. Flytipping at Colne Road to be cleared. Git bin to be checked.

17/01/21 REPORTS

Bures St Mary PC: Cllr Norton reported on the following: Parish council had agreed to purchase a moveable SID. A change of use for the Tawneys Ride garages still being investigated. Planings for The Croft end and The Cut still in hand. Quiet Lanes initiative progressing. Next meeting to be held on 21st January 2021.

Cemetery: Cllr Aries had circulated her report prior to the virtual meeting. Cemetery all in good order. Luxstone Stonemasons to commence a full risk assessment of all memorials when current Covid -19 restrictions eased. Cemetery fees for burials and ashes interments waived during this difficult time. Laurel hedging along St Edmunds Lane boundary to be reduced. An Extraordinary meeting to be held to discuss the quotations for improving vehicular access.

Sportsground: Cllr Welch had circulated a report from the Committee meeting held on 14th January. Skateboard ramp refurbishment still ongoing with costs being investigated. Portaloo provision at the recreation ground agreed. Trampoline and fencing installed. Slabs to be laid at the side entrance. A Working Party had been appointed to consider paddleboarding and sale of refreshments at the recreation ground.

Community Centre: Cllr McCrory had circulated a report from the Community Centre Management Committee meeting of 13th January. Electrical survey to be completed during the school February half term. £3,320 had been raised via the recent appeal for funding support. Roof repairs completed. Noah's Ark continuing to run a full schedule but with half children numbers.

Transport: Nothing of note to report.

Station Adopters: Mary Turner had circulated her report on behalf of Bures Station Adopters. Some gardening tasks being done. The platform lights have been dimmed slightly. Ideas for a mural on the wall of the car park still being investigated. Virtual meetings being held with Greater Anglia and other station adopters.

Tree Warden: Cllr Baker noted on a tree application for No. 23 Bridge Street and advised she had no objections to the proposed works to reduce the silver birch tree.

Bures Primary School: The Chair of Governors reported that the school currently remains open for only the vulnerable children and children of Key Workers. The school held a 'Break the Rules Day' and raised £300 for Children in Need. Reports are placed on the parish council website.

Bures Common Land Trust: Gill Jackson, Secretary had circulated a report from the Trust's 9th AGM held on 17th December 2020. A 2020 BCLT Newsletter had been circulated to the list of supporters at the beginning of January. New information and noticeboard installed. Trading on the Common was fully discussed. As a non-profit organisation, providing permanent pitches and charging rent for them is against the Orders of the charity.

18/01/21 INFORMATION EXCHANGE/NEXT AGENDA ITEMS

Cllr Monk asked members to consider attending the Saturday markets on a rota to allow parishioners a more personal approach when raising matters of concern.

Sewerage leakage at Ferriers Lane unresolved. Clerk to report to EA again.

19/01/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 15th March 2021 to be held either virtually or at Bures Community Centre.

Future dates booked: Joint APM (TBA) AGM 17th May, 19th July, 13th September, 15th November.

The meeting closed at 9.51pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date: