BUCKLAND FILLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes
Community Day Centre, West Heanton
Thursday 10th March 2022, 7.30pm
Present, Cllr A Pett (Chair), Cllr D Balsdon, Cllr J Salter, County Cllr A Saywell, Selina Woollacott (Clerk)

1. Apologies, Cllr A Nethacott, Cllr T Bond, District Cllr R Wiseman, PSCO Baker.

2. Declarations of interest
2.1) Councillors are reminded of the need to keep their Register of Members' Interests forms up to date. None.
2.2) To declare interests in matters on the agenda. Cllr Balsdon for item 11.

3. Open Session for members of the public to speak.
3.1) Discussion of matters raised by members of the public. No members of the public present.

4. Reports
4.1) Report from County Councillor Saywell

Help for Ukraine Still lots of work going on behind the scenes but 'Team Devon', including DCC, the District Councils and Devon Association of Local Councils have pledged to work together to support Ukrainian refugees seeking sanctuary in the UK, in particular those with relatives in Devon. Individually, councils have also taken steps to cut Russian links, such as through contracts for energy provision. And any few remaining investments within the Devon Pension Fund, linked to Russian assets, are being sold off quickly. Ukrainian and Polish Authorities have also asked for financial/charitable contributions rather than donations of equipment etc as they have already been inundated with offers of help.

Storm Eunice As you all know, Storm Eunice caused severe disruption and damage, with winds reaching up to 100mph in some places. The Highways Network Operations Control Centre took almost 1,300 calls during the storm period and a team of 150 Highways Officers, contractors and more than 70 tree surgeons cleared debris including rocks, trees, and branches from minor roads. Over 400 trees were uprooted. Gritters also had to be deployed due to falling road temperatures. There were extensive power outages across Devon, and in particular Torrington Rural. I am well aware of the issues we had locally and I raised this with the Emergency Planning Team at DCC who passed this onto Western Power Distribution, though DCC does not have the power to reprioritise WPD's restoration plans. At the peak of the storm on Friday, WPD were dealing with over 60,000 premises across Devon and Cornwall, and nearly 10,000 of those were registered as Priority Customers. DCC's Incident Management Team took the decision to proactively contact certain groupings of people known to DCC Adults and Children's services, where they potentially would be vulnerable if left with no power. This happened, and a number of welfare issues were successfully resolved.

Further Patching Works, Buckland Filleigh Dip Highways have confirmed that the works on 30th March – 4th April is to carry out the patching to remove the 'pond' outside of the Dip and also to carry out patching on the rest of the road for surface dressing in 2023.

A386 landslide Works are progressing well; early uncertainties over "lead times" for material supply have been resolved without causing delay, which is positive. Based on current progress on site and thanks to the requested increased resources and weekend working, the specialist contractor's latest programme of works indicates that we should be able to take the lane closure off in the early part of the week commencing 04/04/22.

When not dealing with landslides, storms and power outages, the major work this month has been setting and approving the new DCC Budget for the 2022-23 financial year. In summary, the revenue budget will increase to £629 million, with a 10.5% increase (£29.6m) for Adult Social Care, 10.8% (£17m) for Children's Services. Since the provisional budget was produced, it had been possible to include another £1 million on drainage and potholes and maintain £329,000 to support community groups. In addition, there would be an £8 million contribution from the NHS to help deliver adult and social care.

DCC's Council Tax precept will increase by 2.99% (the lowest since 2015).

While funding has increased for services, it has been an extremely tight budget to set. DCC is taking nearly £23 million out of reserves to help balance the budget, and according to our Chief Executive, 76% of DCC's expenditure goes on just over 3% of Devon's population. I hope that gives you an idea of the challenges we face. There is a huge demand on our Adult and Children's Services as we now come out of the pandemic. Demographic pressures are also increasing our spending, with an ageing population and adults with disabilities, health conditions, learning difficulties, etc. living longer. Our aim throughout as a Council and Administration is to protect the young, the old and the vulnerable. And that will remain… but I also want to see ways we can ensure we do this in the future without necessarily spending more than three quarters of our budget on just 3% of the population. That will be the big challenge in the coming years/decades….

Free School Meal Vouchers Families of nearly 19,000 children in Devon have been sent supermarket vouchers this February half-term thanks to one-off government funding that DCC have used to continue our drive to combat holiday hunger in the county. Over the past year, DCC have invested over £4.7 million worth of government funding on providing nearly 140,000 supermarket vouchers for families who qualify for free school meals so their children don't go hungry over the school holidays. Securing additional one-off funding means the scheme is able to operate again over the upcoming February half term break and Easter holiday, with vouchers worth £15 per child per week automatically sent to families of children currently receiving free school meals to help them buy food.

Covid Update I hope this is a promising 'sign of the times' that I have been able to leave this update until last. Key message is covid has not gone away and advice is still to stay at home if you test positive and only come out if negative on day 5 and day 6. Covid rates in Devon have increased but hospitalisations remain low/stable.

As ever, any other issues you'd like me to look into please let me know.

Parish Councillors had questions for Cllr Saywell about the DCC Budget and the amount of money spent on Adult social care and children services. How and where the money is spent and how can DCC change this in the coming years.

Cllr Saywell left to attend another meeting.

4.2) Report from District Councillor Wiseman. No Report.
4.3) Report from PCSO Baker. No Report.

5. Approve Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 13th January 2022. The minutes were sent out prior to the meeting, all councillors agreed the minutes were correct, Cllr Pett signed the Minutes.

6. Urgent matters raised by the Chairperson which are not included in the agenda. None.

7. Finance
7.1) Bank Account Balance and update on accounts. At the 17th February 2022 the account had a balance of £11,011.31 all chqs have been presented and funds have left the account. £1,000 is set aside for the bench. Funds available to use £10,011.31.
7.2) Archive boxes and tape. Splitting the cost with Shebbear PC, Chq for Clerk £14.98, Clerk is starting to sort through the archive files in the filing cabinets at the Village Hall to drop off to the North Devon Record office. Once sorted, the Clerk will take them to the record office in Barnstaple. All Councillors agreed the amount, chq signed.

8. Website. Clerk is unable to access the website, Clerk will ask Cllr Bond if they can spend half an hour before each meeting updating the website together.

9. Update on installing the bench on the road between the Glebe and Parson Cottage. The highways form has been sent off to Highways. Clerk will update Councillors with the outcome from Highways when she hears.

10. Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

10.1) Beacon. Councillors would like to register to light a beacon on Cllr Nethacott's land. Councillors discussed if it should be a public event or private. Due to insurance, health and safety etc decided to keep it private. Clerk to discuss with Cllr Nethacott the location of the beacon for the registration.

10.2) Update on event and memorabilia. The Church and Village Hall committee are planning to meet on the 14th March to start planning, the idea is a lunch with some wine and perhaps bubbles for a toast. The committee have asked if the Parish Council would consider providing £200 funding toward the cost of the event. Councillors discussed and decided they are happy to provide £200 towards the cost of the event and would consider more even upto £500 if the Committee needs it and can show what the money would be used on. The Parish Council would like the event to be accessible to all in the parish. Clerk to inform the Village Hall committee of the above.

11. Review of Planning Applications in Buckland Filleigh and adjoining parishes.

1/0082/2022/FUL Highmoor Plantation Lodge Shebbear Devon EX21 5JD, Extension of and change of use of existing woodland shed to form 1no. holiday let. No Objection from the Parish Council. No discussion at the meeting, no extra comments.

11a) Planning granted permission.

1/1322/2021/LBC and 1/132/2021/FUL Duck Pool Cottage Workshop Sheepwash Devon EX21 5PW Conversion of Existing Outbuilding (Workshop) to Holiday Cottage. Permission Granted.

12. Footpaths and Roads

12.1) Update on Galmington road, West Lodge road, ditch to West Heanton, Horseshoe Bridge, and drain cover. Clerk has been taking photos and reporting the potholes and road surface at Galmington and West Lodge. The gully/ditch at the road going from Horseshoe bridge to West Heanton also the road surface is getting bad on this road as well. The puddle at horseshoe bridge seem to have gone, Clerk did ask for the road to be swept and the runoff gully cleaned so that the water on the road would go down into the stream. However since Storm Eunice there is a lot of debris from the fir trees on the road being washed down to Horseshoes bridge. Clerk will keep an eye on the above. The drain has been reported.

12.2) Update of Footpaths, P3, Dog Stile. Clerk has completed and returned the P3 funding forms. Thank you to Tracey for walking the footpaths and reporting issues to the Clerk. A new footpath finger sign will be put up at the end of Challhanger lane. Clerk and contractor have talked about the dog stile and a self closing gate was suggested but the landowner is not keen on having a self closing gate.

13. Correspondence email to councillors prior to the meeting.

Thank You from Citizen Advice for the grant.

Clerk has also received a thank you from Little Bears Pre School, the work on the outside area roof has been completed thanks to the grant from Buckland Filleigh Parish Council.

Clerk thanked the Councillors for the gift they gave her, and informed them she had used the gift voucher.

Clerk has received the road closure notice which Cllr Saywell reported on and has emailed it to all councillors. Road from Sedgewell cross to Filleighmoor gate. 30th March - 4th April.

14. Matters for inclusion in the next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 12th May 2022. On the same night the annual meeting and parish meeting will be held. Councillors asked if the Clerk can find out if Parish Council can give a donation to a Help for Ukraine fund/charity.

Meeting Closed at 8.40pm

Selina Woollacott, Buckland Filleigh Parish Clerk.
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