

# BUBBENHALL PARISH COUNCIL



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## **Minutes of the meeting of Bubbenhall Parish Council Held on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 7.30pm At Bubbenhall Village Hall**

Cllrs present :     Jan Lucas                    (Chair)  
                         Jim Roberts  
                         Joanne Shattock  
                         Sam Baker  
                         Bob Powell  
                         Stephen Cooper

In attendance :     Louise Baudet (Locum Clerk)  
                         Cllr Wallace Redford (District)  
                         Cllr Trevor Wright (County)  
                         PCSO Sharron Underwood  
                         4 residents

### **22/22     Apologies for absence**

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Win Nwachukwa  
RESOLVED :     that the apology for absence be received and accepted  
Cllr Pam Redford (District) also sent her apologies to the meeting.

### **23/22     Public participation**

There were no items raised at this point in the meeting.

### **24/22     Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest on Agenda items.

## **25/22 Minutes of previous meetings**

RESOLVED : that the minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2022 (public minute), having been read and circulated, be signed as a correct record subject to the amendment of minute 12.5 to reference the Trough under the pump, spelling of Cllr Baker and Tony Sproul, minute 11/22 and 14.3 re refund to C Goddard

Councillors noted the minutes of the Landfill Liaison meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022

## **26/22 Request to Hire Football facilities**

Standing Orders were suspended to allow for public participation on this Agenda item. The Chair clarified on some of the questions discussed at the previous meeting regarding the request from Ryton Star FC to hire the football facilities in Bubbenhall. Councillors then heard from Wayne Goddard, a resident who for the last 5 years has voluntarily provided football coaching for the young people of Bubbenhall at the pitches on a Sunday morning. He has received grants to deliver this community initiative and it has shown many benefits in increasing children's confidence and skills. Councillors recognised the huge value to the young people of Bubbenhall and wished them to continue to have access to this. Dual use was discussed and Councillors were concerned about the wear and tear on the pitch and maintenance costs, so agreed that priority should be given to a locally delivered provision for young people in the parish. It was

RESOLVED : that the Parish Council do not approve the request from Ryton Star FC to hire the football facilities and that the Clerk write accordingly to confirm.

## **27/22 Progress reports/information**

- 27.1 Litter pick – Councillors were informed that the recent litter pick by volunteers had been successful and a further one would be organised the beginning of October. It was noted that there seemed to be less litter in the parish.
- 27.2 Update on merger of Stratford and Warwick District Councils – Councillors were informed that the merger was no longer being pursued
- 27.3 Update on flooding at Sweet Briars – there had been no progress since the previous meeting and the Chair requested for an update from the County Council to be sent to him
- 27.4 Update on A445 request for street lighting – Councillors were informed that this would cost in the region of £3954 for lamp posts to be installed on the opposite side to the houses on the A445. Cllr Redford would enquire about possible grant funding to see if it meets the criteria, referencing the Rural East Community Fund criteria of Rural environments and safety ; it would also help identify Bubbenhall as a residential village. The Parish Council has some earmarked reserves that could contribute towards the cost. Councillors agreed that they should now consult residents to see if they want the lighting installed and Cllr Baker agreed to undertake this. Cllr Powell would also contact Alistair Rigby at County Council to discuss.

- 27.5 Village Green update – Cllr Baker would chase up the signs for the Village Green from Signs Express. The Chair was currently looking at sourcing new external Christmas Lights (60m, 120 colour LED lamps with rubber insulation – c£480) due to the existing ones being faulty and if feasible from a safety perspective the current ones could possibly be used indoors at the Village Hall. Steve reported on the weekly checks and highlighted maintenance issues eg overgrowth/branches, tile from bus shelter as well as discussions/planned meeting with Long Itchington PC regarding maintenance of the pond. Councillors discussed the water leakage down the road, possibly from an underground spring, which can make the road icy and dangerous in the winter – Cllr Wallace Redford agreed to progress this issue with County Council.
- 27.6 Green Shoots update – it was reported that more saplings have been ordered, some of the dead trees have been removed so they don't fall on the saplings and the condition of others are being monitored, volunteers continue to support with planting, watering and weeding etc. Work to plug gaps in hedge continues and it was agreed that any wood chip from the playing fields could be put around the trees in the Autumn to depress the weeds. There was a discussion regarding legal ownership of the hedge as it was felt it needed a professional assessment ; the Chair would contact a local resident Mr Grimes to see if he knew who owns the hedge and field, and possibly check with Land Registry. Continuing the discussion about the Green Shoots project, it was reported that ideally the next stage of the project would see bidding for funds to create Information Panels ; one to explain about the Green Shoots project and acknowledge the contributors and volunteers, and a second panel with an educational focus. Councillors supported the suggestion of some Information Boards and also a bench for the area.
- 27.7 Skills audit – the Chair reported that he had four responses to date and agreed to re-send the link. It was suggested that in addition to questions around skills, it would be good to ask about Councillors areas of interest as well.
- 27.8 Climate Emergency Plan update – nothing further to report since last meeting

## **28/22 Planning**

There were no planning consultations to respond to.

## **29/22 Finance**

### **29.1 Report of Internal Auditor**

Councillors received the report of the Internal Auditor and the following recommendations were highlighted:

- Minutes should be numbered sequentially and pages should also be numbered and contained within a bound format
- Minutes should detail approved accounts for payment individually with supplier and agreed amount for payment

- All payments should be supported by Invoices and initialled to authorise by the Parish Council (Clerk and Councillor)
- Financial Regulations not dated and dates not updated annually following Annual meeting
- Records do not evidence monthly bank reconciliations, review and approval of cash book, reconciliation, payments and receipts by a Parish Council member biannually. Reconciliation not reported and minuted to Parish Council.
- Payment controls – supply invoices not signed to indicate supply received, where required purchase orders/quotes not attached to invoices. No evidence to show which Council members authorised payments and payments not given voucher numbers. Minute numbers recording authorisation of payment not recorded
- Budget and monitoring done annually and not quarterly
- No payroll records provided
- Asset register out of date (2017/18) and no evidence that assets are checked bi annually
- Breakdown of income received required
- No evidence that reconciliations are provided to the Council and approved.
- No evidence in minutes of amendments to Clerks salary and related discussions – increases not reflected in forward budget planning
- Insufficient recording of receipts to enable Internal Auditor to undertake receipt testing as required by Audit regulations
- Quotations received should be documented within Council minutes, along with details of review and approval
- Bank balances should be provided quarterly at a minimum to the Parish Council
- Receipts should be documented and reported to the Parish Council
- Accounts should record receipts separately, identify what they are in relation to and if in line with budget
- Bookkeeping records should be checked regularly for accuracy by PC
- No record of management of internal financial controls by the Parish Council
- No evidence that statutory obligations have been met with regards to submission of payroll data to HMRC under Real Time Information or evidence of Council meeting statutory obligations as employer. No evidence in minutes of payroll obligations being met. Identified potential risk of penalties.
- No record of assessment of employers obligations being met regarding pension provision and actions taken – no record of ongoing review
- No evidence in minutes of benchmarking against budgeted income and expenditure

As the Parish Council is exempt from External Audit, under the Transparency Code the Parish Council is expected to publish a number of items in the public domain. Whilst most of the requirements are met the Parish Council should also meet the following requirement for publication :

- annual governance statement
- internal audit report

RESOLVED : to accept the report of the Internal Auditor and adopt the recommendations for action as outlined in her report.

29.2 Parish Council Asset Register

The Clerk circulated the last approved register from 2018. Clarification was given regarding the value of items on the Register to be the cost of replacement and that unlike business accounts there are no depreciation figures ; the Registers main purpose being to ensure the Council has adequate insurance in place to cover replacement costs. Cllr Baker agreed to go through the Asset Register and provide updated information for the Parish Council to adopt.

29.3 Risk Assessment

This had been circulated prior and it was agreed that the Clerk would liaise with Chair to update

29.4 Accounts for payment

Councillors received details of accounts for payment as detailed below :

Ruth Roberts Accountancy - Audit 2020/21	£265
Treesafe - removal of tree	£960
Cllr Baker – reimbursement weedkiller & tape	£34.57
Mrs Baudet – Locum clerk (Dec to March	£2229.40
Mrs Baudet – reimbursements (case, stationery, printing)	£93.89
Warwick District Council – litter bin emptying	£110.41
Doug Evans – Zoom Jan 22, March 22	£28.78
Cllr Bob Powell – reimbursements (Green Shoots)	£200
WALC – annual subscription	£237
Jan Lucas – Reimbursement website domain	£19.32
NS Booth Electrical – Christmas lights	£265.30
Cllr Jan Lucas – reimbursement website hosting	£61.98
Heritage & Sons – overhanging branch	£498
Eon – DD electricity for April and May	£13 per month
C Goddard – Handyman for April and May	£72 per month
Direct debit set up for annual payment of Open Spaces Society membership as agreed at previous meeting for £45	

RESOLVED : that the accounts be authorised for payment by bank transfer

29.5 End of Year Accounts

The end of year accounts for 2021/22 were circulated prior to the meeting and authorised by the Clerk and Chair, to be sent to the Internal Auditor to enable the accounts to be audited.

29.6 External Audit

The Clerk reported that notification had been received from PKF Littlejohn giving notice of external audit. As the Council have turnover of less than £25k the appropriate paperwork would be completed to request exemption, however an Internal Audit would still be conducted to meet the requirements of the Transparency Code.

## **28/22 Planning**

There were no planning consultations to respond to.

## **29/22 Model Code of Conduct**

Councillors received and considered the Model Code of Conduct as adopted by Warwick District Council and it was

RESOLVED : that the Parish Council adopt the Model Code of Conduct

## **30/22 Matters relating to Youth Space and Recreation ground**

30.1 Request from Ryton Star FC – this had been dealt with earlier in the Agenda

30.2 Playground inspection reports and routine inspections of play equipment – Cllrs Roberts and Baker reported that the grant request had now been submitted to FCC. A site meeting had been held . Three quotations have been obtained however prices continue to increase due to economic factors, particularly around rising costs of steel and transportation. It was noted that Benson Parish Council had used an assessment grid which had assisted in deciding how to grade and choose equipment, and it was hoped to get a copy of this to use. It is intended to choose equipment which is more challenging with colours that are stimulating It was agreed that the Cllrs would form a small sub Committee to enable quick decision making by delegating powers for consideration of quotations and managing the funding applications. Awarding of any Contracts would need to be approved by the Parish Council with the Chair and Clerk signing any documentation, as per Financial Regulations.

## **31/22 Highways and Footpaths**

31.1 It was reported that the BT boxes on the A445 were ‘tagged’ again with graffiti and this had been reported to BT Openreach who will arrange for cleaning. There had also been a tag on the Skate Park and PCSO Sharron Underwood commented that this was normally a way of marking county lines and she would investigate.

31.2 It was noted that the Police cones on the A445 were disappearing; it was hoped to do a Speed watch by the end of the month. There followed a discussion around various ‘speed apps’ which concluded with the agreement that the calibrated equipment was the most recognised and reliable source of monitoring speed. The speed monitoring at Pitt Hill was discussed, however Councillors felt this was not the right location as the cars slow down at this point.

31.3 There were discussions regarding the existing hedge (Orchard Way – entrance to Ryton Pools) that could have a row of hedge saplings which would provide a

natural barrier; Cllr Wright advised that permission would be needed from County Highways and he would investigate how to apply.

- 31.4 Standing Orders suspended. A resident highlighted ongoing difficulties with traffic on Stoney Road due to a number of factors; overgrown hedges, new buses which are bigger than the older type, more larger vehicles and poor visibility. There have been problems with vehicles being unable to proceed in opposite directions and near misses. Cllr Wright said that he would investigate if anything could be done with the hedge.

## **32/22 Information items**

Communications – Councillors received details of communications received

## **33/22 County and District reports/Police report**

- 32.1 County Councillor report – the following points were reported on:
- \* Covid infection rates still increasing although no deaths for 7 days; no factors to indicate why some areas have higher rates than others. Hospitals are 94% full and there is a backlog of elective surgery ; there continued to be issues around discharges and care packages.
  - \* Cabinet approved the 20mph speed limit policy which means that Parish Councils can put forward what parts of their parish they would like to see this and why they consider it necessary. The request will then be assessed and costed before being added to a waiting list for when Councillor funding is available. Copy of Policy Statement will be on website. It was noted that only 16 out of 248 Parish and Town Councils in Warwickshire responded. Cllr Powell would canvas views regarding scheme in Bubbenhall.
  - \* 554 Ukraine families have been matched with sponsors in Warwickshire although none of those families have arrived due to Visa's not being issues. Arrangements such as DBS checks, fire safety checks, payments, family support, welcome packs etc. were briefly outlined.
- 32.2 District Councillor report – the following points were reported on :
- \* District would be administering £150 rebate to residents who pay Council Tax by direct debit to help with energy costs. It was noted there were many scams and residents should be made aware to only deal directly with District Council
  - \* Charging for Green bins was causing a number of enquiries and it was explained that emptying of green bins is not a statutory requirement, hence the District are charging for this service. An email would be circulated to residents to make them aware
- 32.3 PCSO Sharron Underwood
- There were only a few items to report since 21<sup>st</sup> February ; one motor theft and ongoing issues around lorry number plates. There had been a burglary in Southam Road.

**33/22**    Matters relating to the parish from Councillors and Clerk

- \* The Chair had met with residents regarding the siting of a memorial bench – family to supply and install.
- \* Segro Liaison meeting 9<sup>th</sup> March
- \* Cllr Shattock requested that future financial requests from the Village Hall are submitted well in advance of meetings to enable Councillors to fully consider.
- \* Rights of Way/footpaths – Councillors discussed a small area of fenced land which cuts across a Public footpath ; the number of the footpath is required.

**34/22**    **Confidential matters**

Public and press excluded to discuss personnel matters.

**35/22**    **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting would be held on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022 at 7.30pm

**36/22**    **Termination of meeting**

The meeting closed at 9.50pm

Signed ..... (Chair)

Date .....