

BUXHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 20th July 2015 in the Village Hall

Present: Cllr David Steed Cllr Anne Hicks Cllr Jackie Taylor
Cllr Chris Hall Cllr Arthur Hicks

Paula Gladwell – Clerk 1 member of the public
County Cllr Penny Otton
District Councillor John Matthissen

Cllr Steed took the chair and welcomed Cllr Jackie Taylor to the council.

2015/696 **Apologies for Absence** – Cllr. Hubert Mitson, Cllr M Manning, PCSO Ryan Brunning,

2015/697 **Declarations of Interest** – None

2015/698 **Minutes of Parish Council Meeting** – It was proposed by Cllr Steed that the minutes of the previous Parish Council Meeting were approved with all in favour. The Parish Council Meeting minutes of 15th June 2015 were signed as a true record.

Meeting adjourned.

County Cllr Penny Otton – Cllr Otton gave her report. A meeting with Highways is planned to discuss the extension to the Bridleway along Forest Road. Cllr Otton has highlighted the questions Cllr Anne Hicks raised regarding insurance claims for damage to street furniture and bridges etc by drivers and they have confirmed that all claims are pursued if a driver is identified. No response has been received by Cllr Finch to concerns regarding verge cutting, therefore Cllr Otton has pledged to hand deliver a personal letter in the hope of getting some response.

Felsham has agreed to share a VAS so this project can hopefully go ahead with help from Cllr Otton's traffic budget and locality budget.

A new payment scheme will increase payments to foster carers where children have special needs but may reduce payment for some others, it is hoped that this will not put people off coming forward to foster as they are desperately needed.

Cabinet is this week to consider a joint research centre for the local records office and the University Campus Ipswich, this would involve a heritage lottery fund application. Kingsfield School has received a critical Ofsted letter and Cllr Otton is asking if special consideration can be given to helping this school which takes some of the most challenged children who have been excluded from main stream education. A visit to the Energy From Waste facility is booked for April 2016, the visit is challenging for anyone with walking difficulties but is very interesting, contact Penny if you would like to go. Finborough Road speed limit extension – despite several emails there is still no date confirmed when this will be considered.

District Councillor John Matthissen – Cllr Matthissen gave his report. The financial report for 2015 shows a substantial surplus of over half a million pounds compared with budget, in Cllr Matthissen's view this is under delivery of projects rather than efficiency savings. The delivery of projects and services has only been half completed with actual spend of £8million compared with budgeted £16million, this is far more than the usual shortfall caused by delays. The CEO has been given authority to go ahead with a limited review of the middle management structure. Suffolk councils have been preparing a similar bid to Manchester's "Northern Powerhouse" for possible devolution of things such as the ability to raise, allocate and borrow money, to have greater control over benefits and welfare and having a single Health and Care budget. This has to be submitted to Government by 18th Sept which does not allow any input from Parish Councils. There may be a role for SALC but it is not clear how this will work.

Police Report – PCSO Brunning’s report was given by the clerk – No crimes reported since the last meeting. 1 telephone call received regarding a concern for the safety of a young boy. Current SNT priorities were set on 2nd July and will cover Anti Social behaviour and Vehicle security with various initiatives to be carried out including Targeted patrols in ASB and car break in areas, property marking sessions and long term problem solving liaison with partners.

The next Area Forum meeting is at Elmswell Police Office on 8th October, members of the public are welcome and encouraged to attend. MS SNT have said goodbye to PC Annelly Miles who has moved on to dog handling and the new officer for Buxhall is PC Sarah George who is based at Needham Market. It is unlikely that an officer will be able to routinely attend parish council meetings anymore.

Public Session – It was suggested that in the event of an application for Conservation Area status residents should be given the opportunity to put forward their comments before an application was submitted. It was confirmed that residents will be consulted before any decision is made to take this forward.

Meeting resumed:

- 2015/699 **Planning** – There were no applications to consider.
- 2015/700 There were no MSDC decisions to note
- 2015/701 **Clerks Report** – The Bank mandate needs to be completed again for some signatories.
- 2015/702 There has been no feedback from the MSDC Playing field inspection.
- 2015/703 The Garnham Salter Trust document states that the Parish Council as a member of the trust may send one representative to the meetings. It was agreed that Mr Proctor be asked if he would continue as the PC representative.
- 2015/704 The website is now up to date with all the requirements of the new Transparency Act.
- 2015/705 The insurance company have asked for confirmation of the assets to be covered at renewal time. It was agreed that a review of the play area equipment and the benefits of covering it for all risks should be carried out.
- 2015/706 MSDC have asked for confirmation of the position of Buxhall with regards to an Emergency Plan, it was agreed that no project to create an Emergency Plan would be actioned at this time. The clerk will respond to MSDC Emergency Planning Group to this effect.
- 2015/707 The contractor for resurfacing the car park cannot carry out the work until next spring at the earliest. It was agreed that this would have to be ok unless an alternative comparable quote could be sought from a contractor who had capacity to do it sooner.
- 2015/708 **Finance** – The clerks Financial Report for July 2015 was approved.
- 2015/709 The following payments were approved proposed by Cllr Arthur Hicks, Sec Cllr Hall with all in favour: Clerk’s salary June
- 2015/710 MSDC Election costs £87.50
- 2015/711 ICO notification £35.00
- 2015/712 **Correspondence** – Following receipt of a local landscape gardeners advertising leaflet it was suggested that alternative quotes be sought for grass cutting on the playing field for next season, it was confirmed that in the past it had been very difficult to find contractors with the gang mowing equipment necessary to keep the football pitch in order however enquiries would be made before the next growing season.
- 2015/713 There were no comments to further tabled correspondence.
- 2015/714 **Housing Needs Working Group** – Cllr Anne Hicks reported that a meeting had been held with Sunila Osborne from CAS and various sites around the village had been highlighted. Sunila will ask MSDC planning officers to give their feedback on these. It was noted that the process had not really been able to move forward at the meeting as no one from MSDC had attended. Cllr Matthissen suggested that he intervene and encourage housing and planning to allocate officers to prioritise Buxhall’s Housing need.
- 2015/715 **Application for Conservation Area status** – Discussion took place regarding the procedure for applying to MSDC for an appraisal of a conservation area for Buxhall.

The process would involve considerable investigative work and justification to put together an application that would enable the planners at Mid Suffolk DC to agree to a formal appraisal and subsequent Conservation Area. It was agreed that council would like to pursue this further but would like the input of all residents before embarking on the application. It was suggested that an article be placed in the Broadcast and on the website inviting comments and thoughts on whether Conservation Area status was something that Buxhall wanted, needed or should have. It was also agreed that all residents that may be directly affected as they lived in the proposed area should be given as much information as possible in order to make an informed decision about whether they were supportive of the idea or not. This could be done via a letter box drop and reply slip process.

Results of any consultation process would be considered at the next meeting before consideration of an application.

2015/716 **Provision of a Vehicle Activated Sign** – Unfortunately highways officers have been unable to suggest any positive alternative sites for positioning the VAS, they asked that consideration be given to Mill Road adjacent to the Crown however they did suggest that this site would not have a high success rate. It was agreed that the expense to erect the poles in Mill Road did not warrant a site therefore we only have one site in Brettenham Road. It was agreed that as this has always been the main area of concern the project should still go ahead. Cllrs Taylor and Anne Hicks will attend a demonstration of the two types of sign recommended by SCC Highways together with representatives from Felsham Parish Council in order to decide on the model to purchase.

2015/717 **Motion to exclude temporarily the Public and Press** - It was resolved to exclude the Public and Press pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed concerning staff salaries.

2015/718 **Review of Staff Contracts** –Following discussion regarding the annual review of the clerks salary and contract it was resolved to make no changes. Suggestion was made that an appraisal system should be implemented and information regarding the criteria for scale points sourced.

2015/719 **Matters to be brought to the attention of the council** – Questions were asked regarding the position with the village sign, it was confirmed that although the parish council take responsibility for ownership of the sign the land it stands on is privately owned and upkeep of the grass has been voluntarily taken on in the past. This year that has not been done and concerns have been expressed that the area looks untidy and unkempt. It was suggested that other volunteers be sought to take on grass cutting in this area if possible.

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on Monday 21st September 2015, 7.30pm at The Village Hall