

DRAFT MINUTES

2020/034

CUDDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held by Zoom Video Conference Monday 28th September 2020 at 6.00pm

PRESENT: Ken Birkby (KB), Ken Brown, (KMB), Julia Ridout (JR), Lorraine Stevens (LS), Ravern Stevens (RS), Ken Trew (KT), Andrew Vickers (AV), Venetia Davies (Clerk and RFO). Cllr Judy Brandis (JB), Cllr Paul Irwin (PI), Cllr Ashley Waite (AW) and Cllr David Lyons (DL) were also present.

Parishioners: There were two Parishioners present.

NB: Action points highlighted.

Parishioners Question Time

There were no questions.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Approval of Minutes – Monday 24th August 2020.

The Draft Minutes of the August meeting were **agreed** as a true record. **ACTION: CLERK to prepare a paper copy. KB to sign.**

3. Matters Arising

- **Village Maintenance/Administration**
 - Water on Dadbrook Road – treatment & ownership of ditch for clearing (PI)
 - 'Slow Down for Horses signs'/Steps to reduce speed - Low Lane (PI)
- **GDPR Legislation. (LS/CLERK)**
- **Local Parish Infrastructure Priorities and Future Workshops.** To inform Andy MacDougall, BCC of infrastructure priorities once results of Village Survey and Traffic Survey are known (KT)
- **New Christmas Tree Lights (KB)**
- **Right of Access over VAHT land to Playing Fields.** Letter requesting this be resolved between AVDC and VAHT being dealt with by the Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer, Maria Damigos. (KT/CLERK)
- **Green Future Bucks.** Grants of £2,500 are available for Parish Councils for projects such as Community Orchards and Owl boxes.
- **Village Fete.** Impact on village societies who received donations from the fete fund. **ACTION: CLERK to agenda for the October meeting.**
- **Crown PH.** Sarah Andrews is no longer tasked with managing Assets of Community Values. The nomination (submitted 15.05.2020) is now with Helen White, Buckinghamshire Council.
- **PCSO Ken Stephenson.** KB to meet with Ken Stephenson.
- **Rectory Homes/Environmental community projects.** Councillors have emailed KB/KT with ideas thoughts. Meeting date tbc
- **Footpath Map.** Thanks to the work of Chris Long, Paul Ridout and Julia Ridout, the footpath map is ready in draft form. **ACTION: JR to circulate draft to Councillors and proceed to print on approval.**
- **Tree Asset Register/Inventory.** The Honey Locust tree that is on Parish land to be included.
- **PC Governance.** **ACTION: KMB/CLERK to agree Financial Regulations and upload.**
- **Brookfield Farm, Aylesbury Road** - removal of roadside hedgerow. Buckinghamshire Council has issued an Enforcement ref: 20/00421/CONB and an initial investigation is taking place by Buckinghamshire Council.
- **5G article.** KMB commented on connection issues and installation costs.

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared. All Parish Councillors have declared an interest in the Neighbourhood Plan.

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5. Access to Southways

Ken Birkby (KB) informed the meeting that Access to Southways had been an issue for a long time and one that had not been communicated well by the Parish Council. Whilst a meeting had been held with Chris Blumer (CB) to discuss the issue of parking on the Village Green in October 2019, the content of the meeting was not followed up with a written summary. KB apologised for this error and also that the PC Minutes did not also sufficiently outline the discussions of the subject. Ken said it was important to set the background at this meeting so that the issue be minuted in its entirety to ensure complete transparency.

Southways is a property abutting the north side of the Upper Green with a pedestrian gate to access the front door. The village green abuts the curtilage of Southways and the roadside. There has been a variety of tracks at various times across the Green; early in the 1900s the track adjacent to Southways was one of crushed stone. At some point, tarmac was laid in front of Southways; it is not known when, or by whom but it had deteriorated. The PC registered the Village Greens as common land in 1969 and registration was confirmed in 1972. Only one right of access was registered at the outset which was Old Forge Cottage. The village Byelaws, of 1980, prohibit the driving and parking of vehicles on the Greens.

In 2016/17 Buckinghamshire County Council relaid the footways around the Green and also squared off and covered the irregular and poor quality tarmac in front of Southways. The Parish Council did not ask for this nor give permission for this to be done on Parish Council land but neglected to take action. Eventually, as traffic and parking built up in the village, CB started to park on the tarmac surface and the Parish Council received several complaints from various villagers. In September 2019, the Parish Council resolved that it would ask CB to desist from parking on the Green. KB met with CB to discuss the matter and CB immediately complied with this. The Parish Council instructed the tarmac to be removed, except for a pedestrian path to Southways gate. In July 2020, CB wrote to the Parish Council claiming the right to have vehicle access to the gate at Southways, for loading and unloading, on the basis of the original track access, and also that the tarmac should be reinstated. Photographs and old maps were included.

Up to July 2020, the Parish Council was unaware of any claims to rights of vehicle access, as there had been no further requests for a legal easement nor any challenge to the Byelaws. KT took a comprehensive search through the records and archives, consulted Bucks Council and also an expert at the Open Spaces Society, who concluded that there was insufficient evidence either way to come to a clear conclusion about rights of access, without going to tribunal. Neither parties wanted to enter into a legal case and there have since been informal, without prejudice, discussions to ascertain if there is common ground on the proposals put forward by CB. CB said that the major factor had been that the digging up of the access had come 'out of the blue'. The access had been there for 160 years.

The Parish Council voted on the proposals suggested by KT and LS in response to CB's requests and unanimously voted to:

- Grant an Easement/Legal agreement to Southways to allow vehicular access for loading and unloading a vehicle for occasional use. Any prescriptive right would then fall away.
- Surface area. Whilst CB originally asked for the area to be returned to tarmac, it was agreed that this was not a suitable material for a village green. The Parish Council agreed to put back the area of hardstanding in gravel/aggregate up to the face of the Southways wall. It was felt this would be more in keeping with the character of the village and be softer than the original tarmac.

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- White Lining. 3 metres along the drop kerb at the road frontage to deter parking at the access point. This will allow access to be able to drive or reverse into the space and the combination of both the material and white lining would indicate an access.
- Timing for loading/unloading. It was agreed the wording will be 'up to one hour'. The Easement/Legal agreement to deal with the personal loading/unloading issue and the issue around tradesmen (plumbing/chimney sweep, etc)

ACTION: CLERK to forward draft minuted resolutions to CB. Parish Council to draft and agree the exact wording of the Easement/Legal agreement with CB.

6. VALP and Neighbourhood Plan, KT

VALP planning officers have confirmed that once the new Bucks Local Plan has been adopted, VALP will cease to exist and be superseded by the Bucks Local Plan. The latter will not, as previously suggested, provide only a strategic 'umbrella' over the District Local Plan. This has emphasised the importance of completing the Neighbourhood Plan. The Steering Group is aiming to produce a draft consultation document to the Parish Council with a view to starting the formal consultation at the end of October, so that it can be completed before the Christmas break. Modifications will then be made to the Consultation document, taking account of comments/objections, and signed off by the Parish Council for formal submission to Buckinghamshire Council in the New Year. The Draft Neighbourhood Plan will then be assessed by an Independent planning Inspector, amended to take account of the Inspectors recommendations and a Final Neighbourhood Plan submitted to a village referendum for approval.

7. Traffic Plan

- **Build Out, RS.** Access for large agriculture vehicles will be covered by the Build out. There will also be a channel for bikes to go through. Village name plates will be installed by 29th September 2020. Works to commence w/c 5th October 2020. RS is awaiting a new PID that will cover the cost of the detailed design and implementation of the scheme. A road closure will not be necessary. **ACTION: CLERK** to raise Purchase Order for works on receipt of PID. **PI** to chase Peter Smyth, Network Improvement Team, to ensure works and timings are not delayed further.
- **TAG 2, Peter Spence (PS).** The quarterly report to the Parish Council, prepared by PS, was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. An HGV survey was carried out in conjunction with Chearsley Parish Council on Thursday 25th September and the results are being analysed. Concerns were expressed over the government's plans to stop pavement parking. A better understanding of how the government will deal with this issue in rural areas will be sought.

8. Tree Asset Register/Inventory

- **Trees on Parish Council land.** Prints of drawings of Cuddington settlement have been ordered from Buckinghamshire Council which will aid the tree asset register/inventory/tree management plan (as advised by the Parish Council's insurers). One tree in the centre of the playing field car park and another on the right-hand entrance to Bernard Close have died and will be removed (agreed with the CPFA). **ACTION: KB** to remove trees. A replacement tree (for the removed horse chestnut) and its location needs to be decided in consultation with a tree specialist (possibly from Bucks Council and/or Chiltern Rangers) and tree wardens. Suggested funding (village sponsorship, grants or contribution from Rectory Home's proposed environment project) to be researched. It was noted that the last advisable date for winter planting is 31st March 2021.
- **Tree Wardens.** Tree wardens have increased, and a number are taking over communications from Peter Spence in Village Voice and elsewhere. The way in which a mapping process may

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work has been suggested by one of the tree wardens and will be shared with the PC and its asset register work. PS reminded the meeting that works on a tree in the Conservation Area, above a specific size, requires permission from Buckinghamshire Council. DL informed the meeting of the *Releaf Project* in Haddenham and will circulate details. The tree planting scheme at the playing fields was briefly discussed. Out of 240, only 58 samplings survived. A separate watering hole and a group of volunteers was recommended for future planting and watering.

9. Footpath CUD013

Efforts to talk to a Buckinghamshire Council officer regarding a response to the online enquiry made for Footpath CUD013 (pedestrian safety and diversion), have been unsuccessful. **ACTION: KB to send copy of enquiry to Paul Irwin who will forward to Claire Hudson for a response.**

10. Correspondence

- Email from Parishioner regarding traffic on Aylesbury Road that mounts kerbs and ignores white lines, 'slow' road markings and speed signs. PS has circulated a note regarding this issue to TAG 2 and will share it with a wider group. It was noted as a real issue for people living in Cuddington and lobbying will continue through the various forums.
- Diverted footpath CUD013. Villagers from Cuddington and neighbouring villages have complained to the Parish Council about the diverted footpath. The Parish Council has written to the householder and a reply has been received saying the footpath remains open but due to the risk caused by Covid19, an alternative path has been created. The issue is being raised with the Rights of Way Officer (see Item 9) and will be followed up accordingly.

11. Reports from Councillors attending meetings and outside organisations including CPFA, and Haddenham and Waddesdon Community Board meeting (24.09.20) and subgroup meetings.

- PS attended the Community Board meeting and the Freight subgroup meeting, both held online. Both were very useful. Freight 'rat runs' between the A418 and the A41 through Waddesdon are recognised and ways to alleviate the problems are being considered. JB highlighted the ongoing issues with parking and Chiltern Railway.
- **Highways and Road safety, KB.** The subgroup is represented by 7 different parishes. All 35 villages that are part of the Haddenham and Waddesdon Community Board have received a speeding survey. The response deadline is 2nd October.
- **Cycling and Walking, KMB.** Ways of improving cycleways and walkways are being discussed including a walkway from Stone to Haddenham and Haddenham to Thame.
- **Environment and Green Spaces, JR.** Apologies.
KB reminded the meeting that interested people can join Community Board meetings.
ACTION: KB to publicise Community Boards in Village Voice.
- **CPFA AGM, KB.** The current Chair and Secretary were re-elected. A new treasurer is being appointed. The Committee has resolved to remove the *dugout* which has been attracting anti-social behaviour and littering. The car park is being marked out to encourage sensible parking.

12. Contributions from Buckinghamshire Council Councillors

- **Cllr PI.** The recent Environment and Green Space subgroup meeting was extremely positive. A survey is being compiled for the 35 villages in the Community Board group. A Green Future Bucks workshop is being held on 13th October by Zoom. **ACTION: PI to email CLERK with details.** There is funding available from Bucks Council and Chiltern Rangers.
- **Cllr AW.** Social Isolation subgroup. More members are invited to join this group, currently just 4 members North of the Ward. The aim of the group is to extend the services of the Council and establish a street association. Grants of up to £15,000 are available for 'pocket parks'; useable areas of derelict land.

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- **Cllr JB.** Number of coronavirus cases are still low but have risen to 88 from 68. Weekly rate of cases is 16.2 people per 100,000 The Council has distributed £90m of grants to businesses as a result of Covid19. Unemployment rates have risen from 1.7 to 4.7% (10,000) with the biggest increase being young people
- **Cllr DL.** Bucks Council's new Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy is seeking views from residents and organisations through two surveys. The response deadline is 9th October 2020. Residents' survey <https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/environment/ccag-public-survey-2020>. Organisations' survey <https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/environment/ccag-org-survey>. A lot of communities are calling for 20mph. Haddenham is to have a temporary 20mph scheme in a part of the village.

13. Planning

- **20/01948/APP and 20/01949/ALB Beam Cottage, Lower Church Street, Cuddington, HP18 0AS** Conversion and extension of existing ancillary residential outbuilding. Notification of minor amended plans received.
- **Government White Paper: Planning for the Future**, KT has submitted a draft response, agreed to be submitted as a Parish Council response, to Councillors for comment. Cllr Ashley Waite acknowledged that the plans would speed up the planning process but with changes to business use, development rights and the planning structure. It would reduce the scope for objections particularly at the Examination stage of Local Plans. KT agreed that 'speeding up' will mean less consultation. AW also stressed his concern about planning applications not being in keeping with surrounding areas, and that there was a big push to increase housing stock. **ACTION: COUNCILLORS to submit any additions to KT's suggestions by Friday 2nd October 2020 to meet deadline submission of 15th October 2020.**

14. Clerk Salary, a salary increase, agreed in line with pay scales 2020-21 (Level 18), was noted.

15. Finance

- a. **Balance from Minutes of previous meeting** (27th July 2020): **£39,093.16**
 - **Receipts: £0.00**
 - **BACS Debits: £0.00**
 - **Balance of Bank Account: £39,093.16** (as at 15th September 2020)
Available Funds: £39,093.16
- b. **Orders for Payment: £6,313.46**
 - **Venetia Davies - £458.37** (£415.36 + £14.39 (Monthly Zoom Subscription Pro Plan) + £15.00 (Use of Home) + £13.62 (£11.35 + £2.27 VAT) (No dogs in playground).
 - **Venetia Davies - £166.66** (back pay April to August 2020)
 - **Simon Brown - £665.00** (green cutting £275.00 (23.8, 01.9, 07.9, 14.9, and 22.9) £390.00 verge cuttings)
 - **Neal Waters - £200.00** (playground cutting 24.08, 01.09, 07.09, 11.09, 22.09),
 - **Four Seasons Tree Care Ltd - £3,564.00** (£2,970.00 + £594.00 VAT) Works to Horse chestnut trees.
 - **Came and Company - £1,259.43** (Parish Council Insurance – Long Term Agreement until 30th September 2021).**BALANCE: £32,779.70 (Available Funds less Orders for Payment).**
- c. **Management Report.** September report circulated.

16. Items for Information. Vehicle activated signs have been serviced and are all working.

17. Date and Time of Next Meetings:

Parish Council: Monday 26th October at 6.30pm by Video Conference.

Parishioners are invited to the meeting but are required to email the Clerk at cuddingtonpc@gmail.com for a Zoom meeting ID number and password.

*The Parish Council meet on **the last Monday of every month** (or the 4th Monday in the event of a Bank Holiday Monday).*