

Minutes of Bures Hamlet Parish Council Meeting
Monday, 14th March 2022
held at Bures Community Centre at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs M Baker, C. Ellis, K McAndrew, B Raymond, R Shackell, M Welch, J Aries (BSMPC and Parish ROW Officer)
In the Chair: Cllr R Shackell
Also Present: Mrs J Wright (Clerk), and 3 members of the public

01/03/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Cllr Monk (Covid-19). Apologies accepted by those present. Apologies also received from Cllr Scattergood (BDC) and Cllr Schwier (ECC).

02/03/22 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.

03/03/22 MINUTES

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 17th January 2022 (previously circulated) were duly approved and signed as a correct record.

04/03/22 PUBLIC FORUM

15 minutes maximum public participation

3 minutes for individual contributions unless agreed by Chairman

There were 3 members of the public present.

A resident drew attention to the National Grid consultation on the Bramford to Twinstead Project which is due to close on the 21st March and encouraged members to respond and vote for the proposed Route 5 with preference to undergrounding. The resident also encouraged the parish council to link with the Stour Valley parishes to give greater weight to its response. The Clerk noted that BSMPC is linked with 5 local Suffolk parishes and therefore the suggestion for BHPC to link with the Stour Valley parishes appeared a sensible move. The Chairman agreed to discuss the matter further at Agenda Item 9 (c).

District and County Councillors:

Both District and County Councillors were not in attendance to present a report owing to illness and Covid-19. However both have been invited to attend the Joint Annual Parish Meeting to be held on the 31st of this month.

05/03/22 HIGHWAY MATTERS

a) Local Highway Panel (LHP) requests for consideration to submit:

1) Pedestrian crossing at Colchester Road: Questions remained as to whether there is a feasible point where a crossing may be placed. A third party has recently undertaken a traffic survey for the village however members agreed to continue with its proposed follow up traffic count this spring to support a LHP application to ECC.

2) Safety improvements at Mount Bures junction: Residents keen for the parish council to revisit the previously refused LHP request to improve safety at the junction. Clerk following up with Cllr Schwier and Mount Bures Parish Council. 'Traffic free route' sign to promote a safer walking route still to be installed at the junction down to the Mill. Request for a hard standing at the junction remains on the LHP agenda.

3) Reflective bollards: A resident has requested reflective bollards to be installed on the right hand verge at the top of Lamarsh Hill to prevent further verge damage from vehicles travelling at speed. The resident agreed to gain evidence for an application to be submitted to the LHP.

4) 30mph extension for Lamarsh Hill: Cllr Aries had kindly circulated letters to residents in the local area outlining proposals to submit a LHP request to ECC to extend the 30mph restriction to the village gateway. Many residents in full support of the proposal. Cllr Aries to draft the application with the gained evidence. Draft to be submitted to the County Councillor for approval prior to submitting to the LHP.

5) Upgrade of VAS: The Clerk advised that the cost to upgrade the current VAS (Vehicle Activated Sign) at Colchester Road to a SID (Speed Indicator Device) will cost in the region of £3,500. The parish council can either apply to the LHP or apply for a grant. Members agreed to proceed with investigating available grants.

b) Parking matters:

1) Use of station carpark: The Chair still to follow up with Greater Anglia on option to lease the carpark to improve parking space for the village along with the suggestion for electric charging points to be installed.

2) Station Hill parking: Cllr Schwier confirmed that the hatched markings at Station Hill must be kept clear and are in place to prevent vehicles creating two lanes at the junction. Enforcement of vehicles parking within the hatched area is under the remit of the North Essex Parking Partnership. A resident has suggested the parish council should submit an application for double yellow lines. However members agreed to place notices on offending vehicles advising no parking within the hatched areas.

3) Maltings Close parking: Contractor vehicles have been parking on Station Hill while remedial works at Nos 21 – 25 Maltings Close are taking place. As works scheduled over several months, the Clerk contacted the builders and Cllr Schwier in an attempt to establish a solution to ease the traffic hazard at the junction near the railway bridge but to no avail. It is agreed to continue monitoring the situation.

c) ECC Surface Water Assessment Scheme: Following the new pipework and drains at Bridge Street, Station Hill and Colchester Road, flooding still occurring at Bridge Street after heavy flash flooding. ECC Highways confirmed they have identified a potential broken pipe and repairs in hand along with further minor works to be undertaken.

d) Low level light at Station Hill: Clerk still to gain residents views as to whether installing a low level light along the footpath will ease the poor lighting issues.

e) Items on hold for comment:

1) Station Hill tree root: Still waiting on second tree root to be treated when funding allows.

2) Bridge Street: Repainting of the yellow lines remains on the NEPP future works list.

06/03/22 PLANNING

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

b) Applications requiring consideration at this meeting:

Application 21/03550/HH: No 15 The Paddocks CO8 5DF – revised drawings only – members have no comments to make.

c) Ferriers Lane site: The parish council has submitted a response to Planning Application No. 22/00199/FUL objecting on a number of grounds. In particular that the site is outside the Village Envelope, overdevelopment and serious safety concerns for pedestrians and other users of the bridleway. Members raised concerns regarding the continuing sewerage run-off from the site. Clerk to follow up again with EA and arrange a site visit.

d) Progress on transfer of Brook Field Grove:

1) Land searches: 5 land searches to be undertaken by Hewitsons on behalf of the parish council. Agreed by members. The Clerk has written to BDC to follow up with Clarion Housing regarding access in to the site.

2) Maintenance Agreement: A draft maintenance agreement has been drawn up for future use and maintenance of the land. BHPC to take possession from BDC with BCLT to maintain on behalf of BHPC. BSMPC to be third party to the agreement therefore allowing the land to be fully enjoyed by all Bures residents. Members accepted the draft agreement.

3) Budget Plan: Where any costs, not covered by grants or donations need to be met then these to be shared between the 3 parties. The parish council accepted the draft budget plan.. Clerk to forward to the other two parties for their approval.

4) Resolution Agreement: The following resolution is agreed and to be included in the Transfer – ‘The purpose of the village taking on stewardship of the land is the creation of a Community Woodland for recreational purposes and the enjoyment and wellbeing of villagers’.

5) Tree planting: 800 tree whips have been received via a Woodland Trust grant. 10% of the costs met by BHPC. Planting by volunteers and children from the primary school commenced on the 10th March. Project very successfully organised by Ken Jackson of Bures Transition Group. One resident has concerns regarding her rear garden boundary being exposed to the Community site. Ken Jackson to kindly plant extra hedging along that section.

Cllr Aries asked if the parish council would purchase a dog waste bin for the site. Agreed. Thanks expressed by all members to Geoffrey Probert for taking on the legal costs of the transfer and for his expert advice on matters requiring attention.

e) Other planning matters for discussion:

1) Land south of Penlan: A new entrance on to the site has been created. Clerk has written to the Enforcement Team as the original application for the site was rejected by the Planning Inspectorate in 2019. Clerk agreed to request an update.

2) Vacant garage site: The garage site remains unsold. The parish council wrote to BDC and to the developer's agent regarding safety at the site. The Enforcement Officer visited the site, however did not deem it unsafe. It is noted that the developer has a timescale of up to 3 years to erect the hoarding.

3) Old Bus Depot site: Application No. DC/22/00754 for the site now on the Babergh Planning Portal for comment. Extraordinary Meetings of the two parish councils scheduled for Thursday 7th April at 7.30pm at the Community Centre. Deadline for comments agreed to be extended to 11th April by the Case Officer

4) Cuckoo Hill site: The application to reduce the height of Plots 5 & 6 agreed by Babergh DC with stringent conditions attached. An Application for Discharge of Conditions for DC/21/00745 Condition 9 (Monitoring Inspection Protocol) approved by BDC. Flooding issues continue to be reported to Officers by neighbouring properties.

07/03/22 JOINT BURES NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

a) NHP update:

1) Advertising: Leaflets circulated. Advertising via social media and parish magazine. Community engagement events scheduled for the next Saturday market on the 9th April and at the Community Centre on the 10th April. 2 banners being made to advertise events.

2) Website: A NHP website now up and running. Need to encourage residents to use the site.

3) Housing Needs Survey: Survey delivered by volunteers to all households in the village. 127 return responses online to date. Deadline for return is 27th March. £25 vouchers offered for the 1st, 20th and last return received. Volunteer risk assessment in hand as per parish council insurance liability.

4) Steering Group: Steering Group minutes dated 11th January, 8th February and 8th March accepted by the parish council. Wider Group minutes of the 25th January also accepted. Next Wider Steering Group meeting scheduled for 22nd March.

5) Spending Plan: Accepted by the parish council. The NHP accounts running via BHPC accounts. NHP grants being applied through Groundwork UK.

08/03/22 Joint Parish Plan 2021-22:

a) Bures in Bloom: Volunteer group set up. It has been agreed that 4 half barrels will be placed on the approaches into the village. One of which will replace the dilapidated tub at Normandie Way. Funding from Babergh DC Locality budget approved and funding also to be applied from Cllr Scattergood's Councillor budget. Essex Highways to be approached regarding whether a flower trough could be placed at corner of Station Hill leading round to Colchester Road. Members agreed to donate £50 towards the project.

b) Bures Climate Change: Cllr Fairbairn investigating sites suitable for electric charging points. 2 possible sites being the Nayland Road carpark and Bures Station carpark. Initial Expression of Interest submitted to the Plug in Suffolk Community Grant Scheme. First round heavily oversubscribed and the application delayed to second round of bids.

c) Suffolk Community Foundation Grant: BSMPC has received a £1500 grant from Suffolk Community Foundation to supply hardcopies of Welcome Packs providing information to the local community about services available in the village and to progress a Good Neighbour Scheme for the village. A 'parent' group needed to run the GNS as the parish council cannot under the requirements of the grant. A group of interested volunteers meeting to follow up.

d) Joint Heath & Wellbeing plan: Plan being followed up with BSMPC. Draft plan in progress. Suggestions for Dementia and Health & Wellbeing events being investigated. Grants for cycle racks also being investigated. Virtual meeting with interested parties in hand. Community Information session arranged for Tuesday 22nd March from 10.30am to 12.30pm. All residents welcomed.

09/03/22 ITEMS FOR UPDATE, REPORT AND FOLLOW UP AS REQUIRED

a) Queen's Platinum Jubilee: An event at the community centre and on the recreation ground planned for Thursday 2nd June. Activities to include refreshment stalls, fire display, firework display and children's workshops and games. Glassware and commemorative mugs will be on sale. Street parties encouraged for the following Sunday. Costs and risk management via BSMPC. Bunting kindly being made by volunteers from the Wednesday Craft Club with material costs met from the parish councils budget. Members agreed to donate £200 to the costs of the event.

b) Tree to mark the Jubilee: Members agreed to look at possible sites to plant a commemorative tree and discuss again at the next meeting.

c) National Grid consultation: Matter referred from the Agenda Item 4 Public Forum. Members agreed to support Route 5 with preference for undergrounding. It is also agreed to link with the Stour Valley parishes and the Clerk to confirm this with Twinstead Parish Council and submit a response to NG as agreed.

d) P3 Scheme: Parish Council to enter into a Service Level Agreement with ECC in the summer of 2022. Map showing sections of the agreed paths for including in the SLA submitted. Application progressing with the ECC PRoW Officer.

e) BH Speed Watch: Cllr Aries reported that the Speed Watch team is currently running twice a week. However it is difficult to run the scheme efficiently on a regular basis owing to the lack of volunteers. There were now no volunteers from Colchester Road which is disappointing. Further advertising in hand.

f) Station Hill garden: 2 quotations have been received to revamp the Station Hill garden. It is agreed to accept the following quotation from JPB Landscapes – removal of planting approximately 54m², removal of soil 200mm and install new mix of topsoil and soil improver, all waste to be removed off site - £1,925 + VAT. Planting of new shrubs by volunteers to follow in the autumn.

g) Millennium footpath fence: The fence is deteriorating. The parish contractor regularly repairing damaged rails and it is agreed there is a need to investigate renewing the complete fence. Clerk seeking available grants with Stour Valley Environment Fund. Estate and rustic fencing suggested as a good replacement but costly.

e) Essex Knowle: Clerk proceeding with upgrading the Possessory Title of Essex Knowle to Freehold Title as the requisite 12 year period ended in November 2021. Waiting on Wayman & Long to agree to proceed on behalf of the parish council.

10/03/22 AUDIT AND FINANCE MATTERS

Business Premium A/C balance: £10,446.06

Community A/C balance: £4,803.15 (when all cheques paid)

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

b) Bank reconciliation report dated 4th March 2022 – circulated, noted and attached.

Corresponding bank statements – circulated, noted and attached. Duly signed by the Chairman and non-signatory member.

c) It is agreed to give the following donations: £50 towards Bures in Bloom and £200 towards the Queen's Platinum Jubilee event.

d) It is agreed to accept the NJC National Salary Award 2021/22.

e) Band D Parish Element 2022/23 increased 2.19% - noted.

f) Letter from Cllr Graham Butland advised the proportion of the Collection Fund that is attributed to the District Council will not be shared with parish and town councils – noted.

g) Policy for recording and social media at meetings being followed up jointly with BSMPC.

11/03/22 CLERK'S REPORT PLUS ANY CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FOR ACTION

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

It is noted that the illegally created access point leading from the railway to the private path at Tenter Field, by-passing the stile has been closed off by Network Rail.

12/03/22 PHYSICAL RISK ASSESSMENT

Cllr Ellis had circulated her report prior to the meeting. All assets appeared in good order.

Flower tub at Normandie Way worn and in need of replacing. Bridge Street lifebelt clasp

difficult to open. Bus shelters and benches in need of a clean. Grass in need of first year cut.

Clerk to follow up on all matters raised.

At this point the Chairman requested the meeting to continue after the 2 hours per Parish Council Standing Orders. All members present agreed.

13/03/22 REPORTS

All reports had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Bures St Mary PC: Cllr Aries noted that several agenda items were currently being followed up jointly with Bures St Mary Parish Council. She reported that a bench has been installed at Windwhistle Ridge to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The Bank House application for a coffee shop plus residential living space is still waiting on a decision by BDC.

Cemetery: Cllr Aries had circulated her report prior to the meeting. Cemetery Authority waiting on Suffolk Tree Services Ltd to carry out further tests and visual inspections at height on the Sequoia and Cedar. Planted bulbs emerging. Widening of approach drive in extension area in hand. Wooden posts and chain link to be installed to protect the more vulnerable graves which are situated on the corners of the driveway. Overgrown utility pole cleared. To reduce costs of maintaining the Leylandii hedge it has been agreed to remove to ground level. Advice being sought to plant a more manageable hedge. Looking at alternative services for monitoring the Sequoia and Cedar. Cemetery fees increased but still remain a fair and reasonable rate.

Sportsground: Cllr Monk had circulated a report from the Committee meeting held on 10th March. The efficiency and usefulness of the CCTV system to be kept under review. Funding for a Youth Worker over the summer months approved. One expression of interest received for the sale of refreshments at the carpark. T Saer's offer accepted. Ways to raise funds to re-surface the tennis courts discussed. Tennis Club low on membership numbers. New playground equipment project proceeding well. Grants received and orders placed with suppliers for the equipment. Installation scheduled within 6 weeks. Pikes Marsh playarea tidied satisfactorily. Primary school to use courts for netball sessions. BMF and Macmillan Hike events planned for this summer. The newly appointed Clerk has resigned. Jenny Wright to continue as Responsible Financial Officer for the time being. The post has been advertised.

Community Centre: Cllr McCrory had circulated a brief report prior to the meeting. Curtains up in the Garrad Room. UK Power Networks upgrading the power to prevent any further power outages from overloading the system. New dishwasher. Planning to increase hall charges from 1st April. Lettings up.

Rights of Way: Cllr Aries had circulated her report prior to the meeting and this has been published on the parish council website. Items to note: Parish Council to enter into a Service Level Agreement with ECC in the summer of 2022. Application progressing. Sign still to be erected near Brook House Cottage to indicate there is a traffic-free route into BSM and to the school. Various damaged, missing or obscured fingerposts reported but logged as items to be assessed during future scheduled inspections. BWY25 surface issues have not been resolved and the original report appears have been removed from the system. FP16 unofficial diversion route needs to be formalised by Butlers Farm.

BALC: Meetings bi-monthly, virtual and in-person. Parish council representative to attend meetings agreed as the Chair.

Transport: No matters for reporting.

Station Adopters: Mary Turner had circulated her report on behalf of Bures Station Adopters. Spring bulbs planted along with pansies and primula plants. Some daffodil bulbs donated by Marie Curie planted in the large tub on the platform. Station Adopters to promote Marie Curie Planting Daffodils to mark the National Day of Reflection on 23rd March. Noticeboard displaying the dragon and a walking map now complete. 2 bat boxes donated by Maldonado Men's Shed to be erected in a tree at the end of the platform.

The station garden to be entered in to Bures Open Gardens 2022. The stolen pictures from the waiting hut are to be replaced. Bures Primary School children to embark on a project to paint pictures of flowers, wildlife and climate change. These will be fixed to the fence alongside the path leading to the ticket machine. Full report published on the parish council website.

Tree Warden: Cllr Baker had circulated her report prior to the meeting. She has received three applications since the previous meeting a) Pine View – to reduce Oak crown and remove Spruce. b) Apple Trees – to remove Goat Willow. c) No. 2 Hamlet Court – to remove a Conifer hedge. Cllr Baker advised that she has visited all 3 sites and has no objections to the planned works.

Bures Primary School: Cllr Fairbairn, Chair of School Governors has circulated a March update. The school took part in NSPCC Number Day themed similar to World Book Day. The children revisited a story called 'Have you filled a bucket today? This books talks about best ways to make yourself feel good. Year 5 have been trained as 'Peer Mediators' using a training programme run by educational psychologists. Children joined a virtual assembly for Children's Mental Health Week to remind everyone that it is important to look after our mental health alongside our physical health. Safer Internet Day was another important event for the week. World Book Day raised over £200 donations to support the Ukraine refugees. Two new Parent Governors appointed. Full report published on the parish council website.

Bures Common Land Trust: Gill Jackson, Secretary had circulated a brief report on behalf of the Trustees. Monthly markets resumed in March The markets were a very successful social event for the village, A Community event is planned for Tuesday 22nd March organised by the Braintree Well-being Officer. All welcome.

14/03/22 INFORMATION EXCHANGE/NEXT AGENDA ITEMS

Cllr Ellis informed members that the bus was not currently stopping at the stop outside No. 4 Colchester Road. Clerk to check if it is a designated stop or a request stop.

15/03/22 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Joint Annual Parish Meeting, Thursday 31st March at Bures Community Centre at 7.30pm. The Chair requested moving the date of the AGM in May forward owing to his holiday commitment. It was agreed to hold the AGM on Monday 23rd May 2022. Future dates booked: 2022: 18th July, 19th September, 14th November.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date: