

# Bucknell Parish Council Extra Ordinary Meeting

## Via Microsoft Teams

15 Feb 2021

## MINUTES

Present at the meeting

Cllr Andy Parsons (AP), Cllr Chris Wells (CW), Cllr Neil Wainman (NW), Cllr Derek Hedges (DH), Cllr Alexander Bowden (AB), Cllr Lee Peck (LP) Cllr Stephen Messenger

In attendance

Sue Mackrell (clerk), Cllr Ian Corkin, Cllr Lawrie Stratford, and 6 members of the public

1. **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Order 3.1 to enable meeting to be held remotely via Microsoft Teams due to the Covid 19 pandemic lockdown measures in place.
2. **RESOLVED** to note that there were no apologies of absence.
3. **RESOLVED** to note declarations of interest from:  
Cllr Hedges as a riparian owner.  
Cllr Bowden as a riparian owner.
4. **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the previous meeting concerning the flooding issues only.
5. **Matters arising** re flooding issues:  
It was decided not to engage with Victoria Prentis MP at this stage since considerable progress is being made without this engagement.
6. **Update of flooding issues:**

Cllr Corkin:

- Speaking on behalf of himself and Cllr Stratford on both CDC and OCC matters since they are closely connected.
- Various parties had a walk around the village last week. Decent maps are needed of the drains and pipes.
- Thanks to all for the work that is going on. There has been exceptional community engagement leaving Cllr Corkin to concentrate on the highways issues and working with Thames Water.
- Key people are: Tony Brummel from CDC  
Paul Wilson from OCC and his colleague Arta.
- Having a professional viewpoint on the walkabout is useful and will happen on Friday this week.
- Silted up gullies still not cleared.
- OPC will be arriving to survey the drains, culverts and gullies.
- Viridor liaison meeting still to be arranged, because the most recent date mooted was not suitable.
- Public Health department stretched due to Covid 19, but has advised Cllr Corkin that any referral needs to come from a GP. This was challenged by Cllr Wells. There are two processes that need addressing – if a resident gets sick, investigation is done by the GP, but water samples can be taken privately and tested. Joined up thinking is needed to tie the two together. Concerns that any privately obtained results might not be accepted by Public Health.

#### Cllr Wells:

- A WhatsApp group was rapidly set up after the January meeting and everyone affected is signed up to it. It is targeted towards flooding issues only, and any community support needed, with a place to share issues, call for help etc. It is important still to complain to Thames Water individually to add weight to the issues since TW react to volume of calls.
- Sandbags – OCC were extremely quick to get them out to Bucknell and delivered 6 pallets of them to Manor Farm for residents to collect for themselves. They are still there for anyone to help themselves to.
- Emergency Plan is underway using the very valuable experience from recent flooding and the pandemic to shape it.

#### Engagement with Thames Water and Viridor:

- Grateful thanks to Juliet Hope for her work in engaging with Thames Water and Viridor that resulted in Viridor stopping their discharge for key periods.
- Thames Water were slow to respond to emergency calls, but then sent tankers which were on site, running for 24 hours a day for 7 days.
- The sewers are in a poor state, with ingress of water from outside the pipes like a sieve. They need substantial money spending on them to bring them up to standard since they are not fit for purpose.
- Rachael reports that TW will be surveying the whole system over the next few weeks.
- 'Hydraulic overload' is a stock response from TW.
- TW is a profit making organisation, making money from taking away trade waste from Viridor so could invest in infrastructure and personnel. Excuses are hollow.
- Need to establish the nature of the reported 'gel' that appears in the drains, seemingly causing blockages. Dave has a gallon sample of the blue coloured water that could be taken for testing. Cllrs Parsons and Wells will discuss the way forward with this **ACTION AP and CW**
- The engineers have reported that the blue chemical turns into a gel when mixed with water.

#### Further issues:

- Cllr Hedges asks for help with a surface water plan to map the routes. Cllr Corkin reports that historic records are not good, but that Arta's survey work with Tony and Paul should help this problem.
- Surface water management needs to include people's gardens as well as the wider picture.

#### Next steps:

- Need regular gulley cleaning.
- Need to resolve the issue of getting surface water away.
- Constant and continued pressure on TW to improve the sewerage system. To be done by a combination of BPC, Juliet and individuals.
- Land drainage survey is key. Local knowledge needs to be fed in.
- Take individual responsibility – investigate the drains outside your home.

Cllr Parsons sums up:

- Lots has happened since the last meeting and continues to happen.
- People are still living in unacceptable circumstances and the pressure must be kept up on the various agencies.
- It feels that we are starting to get somewhere, but we cannot be complacent.
- Grateful thanks to everyone that has been involved, from the Parish Council, OCC, CDC, and all the individuals that have gone over and above to try to tackle this problem.

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**MARCH 8 2021**