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26 August 2016

Dear Mrs Skippers

BUCKLAND NEWTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION

Further to your letter dated 27 July 2016 in which you raise a number of matters in respect of the Buckland Newton Neighbourhood Plan Examination we have circulated your letter and met with the Buckland Newton Neighbourhood Plan Working Group to discuss the issues you raise.

In the first matter you draw attention to a number of representations which raised concerns about process including issues around transparency, openness and conflict of interest. As these appear to be concerns about the conduct of members of the working group, the Council's Deputy Monitoring Officer has been consulted. He has advised that the Council would not normally carry out an investigation against a parish or district Councillor unless we had received a formal complaint under the 'code of conduct' directly to the Council's Monitoring Officer. To date the Council has not received a formal complaint and we would not therefore be looking to take this matter any further at the current time.

With regard to the second and third matters, the Parish Council has considered their position, and now wishes to make the following request:

"Its representatives having met with the District Council officers who have shared the contents of the Examiner's recent letter, the Parish Council would like to have the opportunity to respond, and provide some further information where there has been some confusion. It is understood that any such response would need to be published. It would therefore be useful if the Examiner could indicate whether she would be willing to accept a response, to avoid any abortive work."

If you felt it was appropriate, we would welcome the Neighbourhood Planning Working Group being given the opportunity to address the issues raised through the submission of further information.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Cardnell
Senior Planning Officer – Planning (Community & Policy Development)

CC John Baker – Parish Councillor and Chairman of Buckland Newton Community Plan Working Group