

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
OF BUCKLAND BREWER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 8th NOVEMBER 2017 AT 7:30 AT
BUCKLAND BREWER SCHOOL

Members Present: Mrs Barbara Babb, Mrs Marie Douglas, Mr George Heywood, Mrs Elisa Hurley, Mr Jim Lowe, Mr Trevor Mills, Mr Andrew Hewitt, and Mr David Watson.

Also in attendance Claire McIntosh (Hicks & Co.) and 2 members of the public

Parish Clerk: Mr P Blossie

KEY: Actions are shown in bold blue type Decisions are shown in bold red type

Members stood in silence for a minute in respect of Peter Sandon who has died recently. Peter was previously a Clerk to the Parish Council.

553. Apologies for Absence: Rosemary Sanders, Cllr Alison Boyle, Cllr Barry Parsons (DCC), PCSO Liz Rendle. Jim Lowe noted that Marie Douglas often has difficulty getting to meetings and suggested that the Clerk should ask her whether changing the timing or dates of meetings would help her and other younger members of the Council with work and family commitments. Marie arrived a few minutes later and was asked to consider these ideas.

554. Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 11th October 2017: The minutes of the meeting held on 11th October 2017 were agreed and signed.

555. Declarations of Interest: George Heywood re item 559.d, Footpath Diversion. Barbara Babb re item 568, Trees in Glebe Field.

556. Public Participation: Joan Blight spoke about an item of correspondence concerning her recently deceased brother, Bruce Brown, who has left a legacy to the Parish Council. She asked that the Parish Council honours Bruce's wishes by earmarking the monies specifically for one or more defibrillators and similar expenses related to managing the helipad site.

557. Thornhillhead Moor Update: Claire McIntosh, Hicks & Co.: Claire explained that we are now in year 7 of the 10-year scheme. Swaling could not be done last year due to adverse weather but would be going ahead in January/February of next year. A little more maintenance should be expected over the later years of the scheme. For example, some scrub clearance is needed soon for which quotes will be required. **Claire will send a map and details to the Clerk.** We are soon due to pay the graziers for this year. Natural England wants the site to go into continual management at the end of the 10-year period. As an SSSI it has the highest priority and funding is unlikely to be withdrawn even with the uncertainty of Brexit. Claire said that she will be leaving Hicks & Co. in December, when Andrew Heywood will take over. Jim Lowe thanked Claire on behalf of the Parish Council for all her hard work. The Clerk asked about the Council's rights and responsibilities in relation to any funds retained by the scheme at the end of the 10-year period. **Claire will check the agreement.**

558. Clerk's Report:

- a. Correspondence:** 35 items of correspondence were distributed by email since the last meeting. The Clerk highlighted the following items: i) Transform Ageing are asking for applicants for grants for Social Entrepreneurs. ii) There was a Holsworthy Rural Area Group meeting in Holsworthy Memorial

Hall with Cllr John Hart as guest speaker on 6th November. Jim Lowe attended and reported later in the meeting. iii) Countryside Alliance are asking for nominees for 'Rural Oscars' – local businesses that provide exceptional services in rural areas. iv) A student at Petroc College has asked for assistance with wind turbine studies. **Jim Lowe will contact him.** v) Parkham Parish Council had responded to say that they had already committed their TAP Fund to a joint scheme with Woosery for hedge trimming. vi) Two recipients of Education Support Fund grants had sent letters of thanks. vii) A local pony club has suggested that their annual Christmas Ride could be incorporated as part of the Christmas Market with up to 15 ponies in a procession through the village. The ponies and their riders would be in suitably Christmassy dress. Members were very supportive. viii) There will be a further two days of consultation about the Draft Local Plan at public meetings to be held on 16th and 17th January 2018. It is now estimated that the plan will not go live until the summer of 2018. ix) A letter had been received from the solicitors acting for the estate of Bruce Brown to say that he had bequeathed £3,500 to the Parish Council. Andrew Hewitt offered the Council's thanks to the family and said that it should do whatever Bruce had wished with the money. The Clerk explained that, although the solicitor's letter referred to the "helipad scheme", Bruce had contacted him about a year ago explaining that it was his intention to leave a bequest to purchase a defibrillator to go outside the village hall, so that it was close to the helipad site. Trevor Mills confirmed that this was the family's understanding. He suggested that the Council should get another defibrillator to match the one in the bus shelter and that the money might also be used for associated training and for replacement accessories like pads and batteries. **He will send a letter to the Clerk confirming the family's wishes.**

b. Devon and Cornwall Police:

- I. The Police Commissioner has introduced a Councillor Advocacy Scheme and has asked for nominations from each council to act as a link between the council and the police. Andrew Hewitt offered to take it on but Jim Lowe was concerned that it could result in the Parish Council taking on a lot more responsibilities. He suggested that **a representative from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner should be asked to attend the next meeting.**
- II. In the absence of PCSO Liz Rendle, the Clerk read out a brief report. There had been 4 crimes in the parish in the last two months: 3 communications related offences, and 1 theft.

559. Fields and Allotments:

- a. Works to School and Amenity Fields: Trevor Mills had received a quote for hedging works of £16 per hour (inc. equipment costs). This includes laying new hedges and clearing up. The work is expected to take about 3 weeks with a total cost of about £2,000. It was proposed by David Watson, seconded by Elisa Hurley and agreed unanimously to waive standing orders due to the specialist nature of the work and the fact that it would be unlikely to find other contractors to quote. **Trevor Mills will ask the contractor to proceed.**
- b. School Field Rental Agreement: The only news was that Mark Reynolds was in touch with the school and was waiting for their views on some matters. It was reported that the short length of path from the school's back gate to the footpath had been completed.
- c. Report of the Fields and Allotments Sub-Committee, 26th October 2017: Elisa Hurley reported that there had been no difficulties with the first meeting of the sub-committee, which had been well attended with everyone being very supportive. An allotment clear-up day had been agreed and it was agreed that this should be done on 9th December 2017, starting at 10:00am. **The Clerk will notify the allotment holders. All the items recommended in the sub-committee minutes were approved formally by the council,**

including the terms of reference (see Appendix 1). Andrew Hewitt will purchase a supply of black plastic rolls to help keep down the weeds on unused plots.

d. Footpath Diversion: The application is proceeding.

560. Footpath Diversion: Land to West of Tower Hill: Members noted that a footpath diversion order has been issued and will be posted on the notice board.
561. Third Age Events and Activities: The fitness class is proving popular. 19 people in total have attended the sessions so far with an average of 11 at each session, most of them being regular attenders. The first 4 o'clock Club will be held on 23rd November. Elisa reported that she was being put under some pressure to be registered as a TorrAge volunteer and for the sessions to be treated as TorrAge events. She is resisting this as she feels that it is important for us to retain control. **This approach was supported unanimously by the Parish Council.**
562. Battle's Over – A Nation's Tribute, 11th November 2018 – Update and Guide to Taking Part: The Clerk read out an email about the arrangements for next year's 'Battle's Over' celebrations, which includes asking local churches to ring their bells at 7:05pm on 11th November 2018. Jim Lowe has already talked to the History Group about the project and **David Watson will talk to the bell ringers.**
563. DCC Communities Strategy: Jim Lowe talked about a 'Communities Strategy' document that has recently been issued by Devon County. He had attended a meeting at County Hall where he took part in various workshops. There had been a robust discussion about the County's plans for seeking "local solutions", especially in relation to the Care in the Community plans. He said that there were no hospital beds left in the Torridge District.
564. Parish Plan: Establishing an Approach and Timescale and Arranging a Public Meeting: Jim Lowe asked **Trevor Mills to work out when the Village Hall was free for a public meeting in January/February 2018.** Martin Rich of Devon Communities Together will facilitate the event. It was re-iterated that it was hoped to produce a new Parish Plan by the end of 2018.
565. Flashing Speed Signs and Wireless Monitoring Systems: Jim Lowe had been in touch with a firm called Messagemaker, and also with Abbotsham Parish Council, which is considering installing a similar sign. Abbotsham have secured £500 of funding from the local county councillor and are keen to join with Buckland Brewer in a joint TAP Fund application. It was agreed that we would approach Cllr Barry Parsons to ask if he could provide some funds from his Locality Budget. There was a discussion about the most effective type of sign. Marie Douglas suggested that one that allows the message to be changed could have most impact. Andrew Hewitt said that he felt the data capture option was important and should be included in the costings. It was generally agreed that a solar-powered sign would be most suitable and would avoid the cost of installing an electric power supply. Battery-powered options are also available. **Jim Lowe will do some more research and will approach Barry Parsons about a grant.**
566. Post Office Van: Jim Lowe reported on discussions that he had with Woolserly Post Office, BT and the Ombudsman. There had been lots of complaints about the bad IT connection which has resulted in parishioners having no access to funds from the van the past 5 weeks. This has especially affected pensioners, especially as there is no satisfactory bus service every day. Both the Woolserly Post Office and BT are denying responsibility. Jim Lowe had been informed by the Ombudsman that the Parish Council has no right to complain because it is not the customer. He has lodged an official complaint through the Post Office website and it was **also agreed that he should write to Geoffrey Cox MP.**
567. Highways Works Programme: Noted

568. Trees in Glebe Field Adjacent to Bowden Cross: Jim Lowe explained the contents of a letter that he had received from agents acting for the Exeter Diocesan Board of Finance concerning the row of trees near Bowden Cross. One of these had recently fallen in the aftermath of Hurricane Brian; the second of these trees to have fallen in recent years. Despite the Diocesans protestations that the trees were dangerous and their suggestions about various ways to improve the situation, the TDC Trees Officer had put a Tree Preservation Order on them and was refusing to allow any work to be carried out. George Heywood reported that 3 children had passed the spot only 10 minutes before the tree had fallen a couple of weeks ago. The trees were in a bank that provided insufficient support for the roots. **Jim Lowe will write to the CEO and Leader of Torridge District Council and copy in Bob Hicks our District Councillor.**

569. Snow Warden's Report: Salt supplies are available. It was agreed that **George Heywood would order as many as he could.** These would be in 25 kilo sacks. **Andrew Hewitt has not yet checked the grit bins but agreed to do so.**

570. Members' Reports

Andrew Hewitt had attended the Town and Parish Highways Conference where he had learnt more about the new contractors, Skanska. They appear to be a highly ethical Swedish company, operating on a 2.1% profit margin. They are working locally out of Gas Lane but might be moving to a depot near Merton soon. They employ 350 on the Devon contract, working out of 9 depots across the County. Andrew distributed details about the 'report a problem' weblink and encouraged members and parishioners to use it for reporting any form of highways issue. **There is already a link to this site on the Parish Council's website.**

Jim Lowe had attended an Area Group meeting in Holsworthy recently where Cllr. John Hart, Leader of Devon County, gave a speech about the County's future spending plans. Yet more cuts are on the way with the central government Revenue Support Grant being cut further. This will leave nearly all expenditure to be raised through Council Tax and fees and charges. It was reported that the proceeds from the New Homes Bonus Scheme will be transferred to the County Council in future and will be used to help fund the Care in the Community programme. Jamie Hollis (TDCs Solicitor and Monitoring Officer) talked about the Community Governance Review. The Devonwall parliamentary boundary was back on the agenda, which would create a new parliamentary constituency spanning the North Cornwall and North-West Devon region, incorporating Launceston, Bude, Holsworthy and Bideford.

David Watson had attended a Facebook and Twitter course run by TTVS. This was the follow-up course to the one attended by Jane Lowe recently, who also attended this course. It covered mainly Facebook issues. David recognized that social media sites offered another way of communicating with people, especially the younger generation, and had learnt some things that would benefit him with the Methodist Chapel's Facebook page.

571. Planning:

- a. **Application: 1/0439/2017/FUL, Oakwood, Retrospective application for a rural worker's dwelling** It was noted that there had been requests for enforcement notices relating to this property in the past and that members had felt that no work should ever have been permitted there. It was proposed by Trevor Mills, seconded by Andrew Hewitt and **agreed unanimously to object to the application.**
- b. **Application: 1/1019/2017/FUL, Beech Tree Farm, Retrospective application for change of use from poultry pen to manufacturing pens.** It was noted that a similar application in March 2017 had been supported but some members felt that the Council should object because work had been done without permission. **A vote was taken with 4 in favour, 3 against and 1 abstention. It was agreed, therefore, to support the application and to record this result in the consultation response.**

- c. **Decision: 1/0854/2017/FUL: Development Plot 3, Ross House, Erection of One Dwelling – Granted Permission.** Noted

572. Accounts:

a. Receipts and Payments:

- I. Bank balances as at 31st October 2017 (£48,061.46):
 1. Parish Council Current Account was £5,810.61
 2. Thornhillhead Moor Account was £4,155.19
 3. Savings Account was £38,095.66
 - II. Fund balances as at 30th September 2017 (£48,061.46):
 1. General Account - £19,906.27
 2. Thornhill Head Account - £28,155.19
 - III. Payments due (£589.48)

The following list of payments was approved:

 1. Parish Clerk's salary, expenses and associated PAYE (October 2017): £372.62, including PAYE - £68.40
 2. E.on – Electricity (direct debit) - £5.01 + VAT
 3. Buckland Brewer PCC, Hall Hire – £20.00
 4. J Lowe, Travel Expenses (Conference) - £44.25
 5. Life Education Wessex, Grant - £135.00
 6. J Lowe, Travel Expenses (Holsworthy AAG) – £12.60
 - IV. Receipts since last meeting (£49.32):
 1. Slee Blackwell, expenses re Stibb Cross Mast - £49.32
- a. **Precept Timetable for 2018/19:** The Clerk explained that the precept returns for 2018/19 must be sent by 26th January 2018. This is the day after the meeting planned for 25th January, giving an opportunity to make some last-minute adjustments to the budget that it proposes to set at the meeting on Wednesday 10th January 2018. The Clerk reminded members that initial discussions about the budget will be on the agenda for the December meeting and he asked them to let him know in advance if there were any new items or major changes that they wanted to propose.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10:10 pm

Date of Next Meeting:

Parish Council and Personnel Sub-Committee, Thursday 23rd November 2017 (Church School Room, 7:30pm)
Parish Council: Wednesday 13th December 2017 (Buckland Brewer School, 7:30pm)

Signed as a true record:

Chairman: **Date:**

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
OF BUCKLAND BREWER FIELDS AND ALLOTMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE HELD ON
THURSDAY 26th OCTOBER 2017 AT 7:30 AT
THE CHURCH SCHOOL ROOM**

Members Present: Mr Andrew Hewitt, Mrs Elisa Hurley and Mr Trevor Mills

Also in attendance Betty Banks, David Blight, Debbie Byworth, Terry Byworth, Peter Iles, Sandy Iles, Chris Kaminski, Grash Kaminski, Kevin Lobb, and Lynn Snead

Parish Clerk: Mr P Blossie

KEY: Actions are shown in bold blue type Decisions are shown in bold red type

573. Introduction by the Parish Clerk: The Clerk explained that this sub-committee had been formed at the last Parish Council meeting, partly as a result of the inspections that had taken place in September, and to provide a less formal forum for discussions with field and allotment tenants. It had been agreed unanimously that an allotment holder should be co-opted to the sub-committee. The detailed terms of reference for the sub-committee are for the sub-committee itself to propose and this might be something that develops over time. It will not be a decision-making body. Any recommendations, including any relating to its terms of reference, will be presented to the full Parish Council for further debate and ratification. As a small sub-committee, it is not felt necessary to elect a Vice-Chair, but the Council's Standing Orders require it to elect a Chair for the duration of each year.

574. Election of Chairperson: It was agreed unanimously that Elisa Hurley would Chair the Sub-Committee for the remainder of the current year. (Proposed by Andrew Hewitt/seconded by Trevor Mills)

575. Co-option of an Allotment Holder: It was proposed by Betty Banks, seconded by David Blight and agreed unanimously to co-opt Chris Kaminski.

576. Apologies for Absence: Chris and Lyn Layton, Jack Seddon, and Eric Tucker

577. Declarations of Interest: None

578. Public Participation: It was agreed that, to keep the sub-committee informal, it would not be necessary to include 'public participation' items on future agendas and that all discussions could be open to everybody present at the meetings.

579. Terms of Reference: The following terms of reference were proposed:

- a. To monitor the use and maintenance of fields and allotments and to recommend terminations of tenancies in appropriate circumstances
- b. To encourage communal help between field and allotment holders
- c. To promote open communication between tenants and the Parish Council and to assist with upkeep of plots if needed
- d. To review allotments rents and conditions of tenancy annually
- e. To review field rents every five years and to consider the terms and conditions for each tenancy when they become vacant
- f. To monitor income and expenditure on fields and allotments at each meeting

580. Frequency of Meetings and Date of Next Meeting: It was agreed unanimously that the sub-committee should meet three times a year and that inspections should be carried on Saturdays about two weeks prior to each meeting.

During 2018, meetings will be held on;

- Thursday 1st March 2018
- Monday 2nd July 2018
- Tuesday 6th November 2018

581. Frequency of Inspections: See above

During 2018, inspections will be carried out on:

- Saturday 17th February 2018
- Saturday 16th June 2018
- Saturday 20th October 2018

It was also agreed that there would be a 'pitch-in' Saturday in the near future, on a date to be confirmed, when all allotment holders would be invited to help with a general clearance of paths and hedges.

582. Issues arising from the inspection held on 9th September

- Field reference numbers: 8315 & 9216 Black Horse Field** - *enhance bank between field and allotments when new allotment gate installed.* It was agreed that it might be necessary to purchase a few plants to help build up the bank, and that this work would probably not be done until next Spring.
- 9551 & 9947 Portway** - *being given up by the present tenant and needs a new gate (to be provided by PC). Outgoing tenant to renew fence so that gate opens inwards.*
- 6047 & 6744 Well Park & 6552 Frogs Parlour/Frogs Park** - *advise tenant that, if he were to give up tenancy, he may be required to reinstate the hardcore/rubble yard in front of barn.* The tenants had contacted the Clerk about this issue and had agreed that they were aware that this was the case. They apologised for not having sought prior consent.
- 6955 Long Close** - *new stock fences to be installed on the boundary of the field.* There had been no response from the tenant so far. **The Clerk will contact them again.**
- 1500 Hymns Piece** - *requires a new gatepost (PC responsibility) and adjacent landowner to trim hedges.* The hedge has now been trimmed.
- Community/School Fields** – *short term: trim the hedge & verge along the long footpath adjacent to the village hall and the trees beside the new houses. The bank at the bottom of the field needs some attention and a hedge needs planting. Acquisition of machine to drill holes to install new fencing is in progress. Long term: some stone work needed on wall at rear of the School and hedge needs properly laying.* Trevor Mills is seeing the hedge layer on Monday to get a quote. The Clerk said that he had had a request from the Village Hall to book the field for next year's fete on 14th July 2018.
- 0506, 0699 & 9506 South Church Park** - *overhanging sycamore from playing field to be cut back by Andrew Hewitt. New tenant to fence boundary with the playing field with high tensile wire fence. Tenant to put a spring on the top gate at the end of the footpath. Footpath diversion in progress.* Andrew Hewitt said that he needed to discuss the overhanging sycamore and a rope ladder/swing rope that had been attached to one of the trees with the Playing Field Association. The spring on the top gate has now been done.

h. Allotments - *In a poor state with minority being kept tidy, hedges not trimmed, and path edges not cut.* Andrew Hewitt opened the discussion by talking about the need to look after the hedges and green banks. Trevor Mills explained that the RPA limits when hedges should be cut back to once every two years in the season between September and February to protect birds and other wildlife. Andrew said that tenants should be trimming their side of the hedges. The other sides and top ought to be maintained by the Playing Field Association and Black Horse Field's tenant. There was further discussion about keeping the pathways trimmed and the difficulties caused when some tenants don't maintain their plots at all and when weeds etc can spread. In particular, the main path along the side can only be kept under control properly if every tenant does their own bit regularly. It is also difficult to get wider pieces of equipment down the path, especially as some tenants have not moved their sheds to the other end of their plots as requested. Andrew Hewitt will ask Matt Fry if he could do all of the path if Trevor Mills could use the topper on his small tractor to get it down to a reasonable length first. Andrew Hewitt suggested that a communal effort at trimming the hedges and generally tidying up would be helpful and that this could be done every couple of years. A date will be set for the first of these in the near future. **The rubbish at the bottom end of the allotments was discussed. Lynn Snead said that she would have another go at "blitzing" this and offered to have it done by the time of the next meeting.** Chris Kaminski spoke about the sheds/lean-to's extending on to the path and it was agreed that these would be picked up at the next inspection. It was agreed that vacant plots ought to be covered in black plastic to prevent weeds spreading and to make it easier for the next tenant to make use of the plot. **Andrew Hewitt will obtain a supply.**

583. New Allotment Gate: - *gate and posts purchased. Work to be done subject to weather. See 10a above. A 4' gate is to be installed in the spring.*

584. Vacant Allotment: Plot 2: - *pending notification that it is clear and ready for inspection. It was noted that plot 3 is not being maintained and it was suggested that the Council should offer to cover it in black plastic until the tenant is able to use it again. Andrew Hewitt will measure up to see how much is required.*

585. Best Kept Allotment Award: It was reported that the Parish Council had offered to sponsor a 'Best Kept Allotment' award at future Garden Fetes each September. It was agreed that the prize ought to be garden centre vouchers and that the rules for the award should be discussed at the next meeting.

586. Discuss Possible Items for Next Agenda:

- a. Best Kept Allotment Award rules
- b. Financial statement

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:50 pm

Date of Next Meeting:

Thursday 1st March 2018: 7:30pm in the Church School Room

Signed as a true record:

Chair: **Date:**