

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
OF BUCKLAND BREWER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 11th JANUARY 2017 AT 7:30 AT
BUCKLAND BREWER SCHOOL

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

Also in attendance 1 member of the public and Cllr. Barry Parsons (Devon County Council)

Parish Clerk: Patrick Blossie

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

404. Apologies for Absence Cllr Robin Julian and Cllr Alison Boyle

405. Declarations of Interest Jim Lowe asked whether it was necessary for all members to declare their interest in item 409. The Clerk pointed out that he had signed a dispensation for all members to discuss matters relating to precepts for the current full 4-year term of office.

406. Public Participation Elisa Hurley asked about the arrangements for salting and gritting roads. The Snow Warden, George Heywood, explained which roads were the responsibility of Devon Highways and which roads in the parish he would ask to be salted. He provided Elisa with his contact details.

407. Presentation by Cllr. Barry Parsons: Cllr Parsons explained that, with effect from May 2017, Buckland Brewer will become part of Devon County's Holsworthy Rural Division, which he currently represents, along with 30 other parishes, making it the largest division in the county. He talked about the success of the Holsworthy Agri-business market and that he was now focusing his efforts on the Ruby Way, which will provide a cycling/walking track to Bude. He explained that since 2010 local authorities have had their rate support grant funding reduced by 40% and that he was especially concerned about highways funding and the governments focus on high spending, city-centred, national schemes like HS2. Devon has a backlog of £700m to bring its roads up to scratch and although £100,000 of the recent £1 million of additional funding for pothole repairs had gone to Holsworthy it was nowhere near enough to meet the challenge. The new Devon contractor, Skanska, has a different method for filling potholes that is hoped will be more effective. In terms of education funding, Devon children get on average £270 per year less than the national average. All primary schools in this area will be getting increased budgets for the coming year but they still lag behind schools in other counties. A change in precepting rules will enable councils to raise up to an extra 6% in council taxes over the next three years specifically to meet adult social care needs. Cllr Parsons said he was in favour of using new technology to support people in their homes. In a question and answer session, he made the following points: (Andrew Hewitt) Officers will be meeting with Skanska to discuss how they will operate the new highways contract. Most of the current employees will be TUPE'd across to new workforce but, as yet, decisions have not been made about how many or where any depots would be. (Shirley Tilley) Shirley felt that new technology was not suitable for older people and also asked why not enough infrastructure and support services are being planned to support the ambitious house-building plans. Cllr Parsons said that Planning was a district council matter but that he had actively supported additional road improvement works to include upgrading the road as far as Bideford. He agreed that employment for people in this area is a challenge. (David Watson) He agreed with David that traffic problems, especially, at peak times on schooldays, is a problem and said that he worked closely with Carl Haggerty at Devon County to gather data about traffic flows. (George Heywood) Cllr Parsons agreed with George that more funding needs to be attracted to this area. He thought it

unlikely that NDDH would close. Trevor Mills thanked Cllr Parsons for taking the time in his busy schedule to visit Buckland Brewer and Cllr Parsons left the meeting at this point.

408. Resignations of Cllrs. Rosie Beer and Shirley Tilley and arrangements for their replacements:

Letters of resignation had been received from Rosie Beer and Shirley Tilley. Rosie had been offered a new job in Dubai that started on 2nd January and Shirley felt that this was the right time for her to also resign. She might have resigned earlier but had not wanted to risk causing another costly election. The Clerk read out a letter that Shirley had brought with her and she left the meeting at this point. The Clerk explained that he was obliged to inform the Elections Officer at TDC and that statutory notices would be posted shortly. If 10 or more electors request one it will then be necessary to hold another election, otherwise the Councillors might have the option to co-opt one or two new members.

409. 2017/18 Budget:

The Clerk presented a financial report showing the quarterly budget statement for 2016/17 as at 31st December 2017 and a proposed budget for the next financial year. He explained how the precept calculation operated and that the taxbase for 2017/18 was only 0.06 higher than this year, generating only an extra £2.00 per year if the band D rate was unchanged. The supplementary support grant, which had reduced to 50% in the current year was being phased out completely. This would result in a loss of £123 in 2017/18. He recommended that, unless it was spent by the end of the year, £3,500 of unspent budget for fencing and other works to the amenity field should be added to the Haywood Funds Reserve so that £8,500 was available to carry-forward. Together with a further budget of £4,000 against the 2017/18 budget, this would provide a total of £12,500 for levelling, fencing and preparing the amenity field for use in the future and for any other similar projects like the school field. He also explained that there were further reserves of about £6,500, of which £5,500 was earmarked for election expenses, allotment deposits and winter maintenance. Jim Lowe recommended that there should be no increase in the band D rate, which would generate a precept of £11,003. The Clerk pointed out that for the next 19 years a further sum of £2,000 per year would be received from the turbine contribution. Discussion focused on the larger items of expenditure for preparing the sports and amenities field, the school field, grants (including equipment such as a cooker for the new village hall) and winter maintenance. Trevor Mills asked whether the Parish Council would be prepared to pay for fencing between the new village hall and the school field. Andrew Hewitt was in favour of this and Jim Lowe suggested that the cost could be split 50/50. However, there were still no firm quotes for any of the works. It was agreed to defer finalising the budget until the next meeting on 26th January. The Clerk pointed out that he must meet a deadline of 27th January to submit the precept form.

It was noted that the proposed public meeting/allotment holders' meeting scheduled for 18th January had not been advertised in Village Scene and therefore it had been cancelled. A new date was set for 20th February 2017 and it will be held in the School Hall (if available).

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:50 pm.

Date of Next Meeting:

Parish Council: Thursday 26th January 2017 (Buckland Brewer School, 7:30pm)

Public Meeting and Allotment Holders' Meeting: Wednesday 20th February 2017 (Buckland Brewer School, 7:30 pm)

Parish Council: Thursday 8th February 2017 (Buckland Brewer School, 7:30pm)

Signed as a true record:

Chairman: **Date:**