

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
OF BUCKLAND BREWER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 12th AUGUST 2020 AT 7:30pm
(MEETING HELD REMOTELY VIA ZOOM)

Members Present: Mrs Barbara Babb, Mr Andrew Hewitt, Mr Richard Hooper, Mr Jim Lowe, Mr Trevor Mills, Mr David Watson and Mr Bob Wilson

Also in attendance: 1 member of the public and Jane Lowe (Webmaster)

Parish Clerk: Mr P Blosse

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

216. Apologies for Absence George Heywood, Cllr Barry Parsons, Cllr Phil Pennington and PCSO Liz Rendle

217. Declarations of Interest Barbara Babb re item 229.b, grant approval relating to the Buckland Brewer Patchwork Group; Andrew Hewitt re item 229.a, grant approval relating to the Playing Field Association; David Watson re item 229.a, grant approval relating to graveyard maintenance.

218. Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 23rd July 2020: The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd July 2020 were agreed and will be signed by the Chair in due course.

219. Public Participation PCSO Liz Rendle had sent the following report about crimes reported in Buckland Brewer:

From May, June, July 2020 there have been 7 crimes in the parish of Buckland Brewer.

This includes the following;

- 2 x dog related.
- 2 x public order
- 1 x criminal damage
- 1 x harassment
- 1 x blackmail.

220. County and District Councillors' Reports

- a. Councillor Barry Parsons (Devon County Council): Cllr Parsons had tendered his apologies but had provided a written report which is attached at Appendix 1.

- b. Councillor Phil Pennington (Torridge Council): Cllr Pennington had tendered his apologies but had provided the following report:

- 1) WWHo! slipway now fully restored. Far better access to the sands and water. Thanks to all officers involved.
- 2) TDC Full Council on the 27th July. approved a Notice of Motion(NoM) from Cllr. Mc Geough to look again at some free parking in our town centres to draw shoppers. This will now be looked at the main finance committee, Community and Resources. Any decision will only affect car parks, not on street parking as this is run by DCC
- 3) A further N o M from Cllr Hames will look further into providing better cycling routes. Discussion will include the feasibility of the old Bideford to WWHo! railway line - which runs through Abbotsham.
- 4) The Full Council also considered an excellent presentation from officers regarding the possible funding of the regeneration of Bideford town centre. This action was in response to the central govt. proposals in the Future High Street Fund. Officers put together a very complex bid in an extremely short time which must be submitted by the end of the month. The proposals were unanimously accepted by elected members
- 5) Covid update. Many staff now working from home. Majority of zoom meetings. Budgetary issues will come clearer through the year as the interaction between central and local govt. becomes more clear. There will be a significant shortfall when coming to looking at council tax setting in six months time. Now looking at new lock down measures, due to an increase in the prevalence of the virus.
- 6) Tourism - the coast is now buzzing. With the closure of Spain over the weekend even more look at staycations through the autumn. Torridge has one of the lowest incidences of covid - hope it stays that way. Should there be any local spikes on Environmental team will be ready to put the safety of our community first. Finally, this Council was elected into being in May 19. There have been major issues on coming to office which had to be dealt with. The covid crisis has added to the pressures. However, the direction the council is now taking, as listed above. demonstrates a strong forward direction in these very challenging times.

- 221. Webmaster's Report by Jane Lowe** Jane's latest report had been distributed prior to the meeting and is shown at Appendix 2. It was noted that the number of hits continues to rise with a noticeable spike during the early part of the Covid-19 lockdown. She continues to have difficulty scouting for information and news for the website and would welcome more involvement by the users and parishioners. Andrew Hewitt said that a recent article about the playing field had been unhelpful and confused the responsibilities of the Parish Council and the Playing Field Association. Jim Lowe said that the Parish Council was involved because people complain to the Council. He thought that better signage about the PFA was needed at the entrances.

222. Vehicle Activated Sign – Latest Reports The Clerk had distributed a report of the latest data from the VAS. It showed no marked difference to earlier information with between 43% and 48% of vehicles exceeding the speed limit, including one result of 57.4 mph recorded in May 2020. The results have been shared with Cllr Barry Parsons and the local police team. **The Clerk will upload the results to the website in due course.**

223. Clerk's Report

- a. Correspondence There had been 39 items of correspondence since the last meeting. The Clerk highlighted two items:
 - i) NALC: CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BULLETIN (Planning White Paper Consultation) The government has presented a white paper which could have a profound impact on planning applications in the future, possibly giving more discretion to developers and less to Planning Departments. Consultation on the white paper closes on 29th October 2020. **It was agreed that the item should be added the next agenda.**
 - ii) Invitation for applicants for the DALC Board of Directors Councillors are invited to nominate themselves for a position on the Board of Directors for DALC. Nominations must be submitted by no later than 24th August 2020. **The Clerk will add an item to the September agenda to carry out a vote in the event that there are more nominees than available positions.**
- b. Potential co-optees for vacant councillor position There are now 4 nominees for the vacant councillor position. Since there is only a slim chance of not forming a quorum for any meeting at the moment, and bearing in the mind the unsuitability of Zoom for either meeting new candidates or conducting a ballot, it was agreed that the appointment would wait until the first time the Parish Council can conduct a face-to-face meeting.
- c. Risk Assessment for Village Hall The Village Hall trustees had supplied a copy of a risk assessment relating to re-opening under Covid-19 regulations, and a template to help hirers develop their own risk assessment. Guidance had also been supplied by NALC in the form of a checklist. It was noted that the current advice from DALC and NALC is that councils should not hold face-to-face meetings yet. **The Clerk was asked to draft a risk assessment for face-to-face meetings for the next meeting.** It was reported that the Village Hall Trustees are meeting in about a week to decide when to open. In response to a question from Jim Lowe it was reported that the business using the kitchen should have vacated by the end of August.
- d. Pothole/flooding outside community shop The Clerk had reported the large pothole outside the community shop via the DCC Report a Problem website and a repair had been carried out. However, a parishioner had complained that the area was still flooding. The Clerk had discussed the issue with Kieran Stanbury at Devon Highways who had offered to inspect it personally. The Clerk will report on developments in due course.

- e. Complaint re overgrowth in Back Lane A parishioner had complained about the side growth in Back Lane encroaching on her fences. The Clerk had explained that the County Council is only responsible for maintaining the path and not the side growth, unless it encroaches on the path, and that residents are therefore responsible for maintaining their own fences. However, in the course of a conversation with the Footpaths Officer, he had offered to inspect the lane and give it a second cut if he thought it needed it.

224. Community Assets: Coach and Horses Pub Members had noted that the village pub might be converted to a dwelling at some time in the future if it cannot be sold as a going concern and considered the arguments for and against listing it as an Asset of Community Value under the Community Right to Bid Scheme. Andrew Hewitt had discussed the matter with Cllr Bob Hicks who had advised that listing the building might hinder the sale. Jim Lowe reported that a consortium of local individuals was interested in getting involved. It was felt that the matter was one of a general commercial interest and outside the scope of what the Parish Council could undertake either financially or organisationally.

225. South Church Park

- a. Footpath redirection It was noted that there is still a moratorium on footpath redirections but that the Footpaths Officer had agreed that it would be feasible for the Parish Council to fence off an area along the edge of South Church Park if it chose to do so, provided that the existing footpath remained in place and available for use by the public.
- b. Gateway and drainage works **It was agreed that a drainpipe would be set in concrete across the gateway and that a new gatepost was required, together with hedge-trimming and a digger to create an 80m ditch. Fencing will be provided to create a footpath about 2 metres wide along the edge of the field.** The work will need to be co-ordinated with George Heywood to ensure that a footpath continues beyond South Church Park. The total cost of the works is expected to be about £2,000 and will be financed from the Footpath Diversion reserve. **Andrew Hewitt and Trevor Mills will obtain 3 quotes for the work.**
- c. **It was also agreed that work was required to improve the gateway into Higher Turnaway that has been recently let to a new tenant and that this work would be included in the quotes to be obtained for South Church Park.**

226. Electric Vehicle Charge Points A possible scheme to install one or more electric charging points in the parish was discussed. **It was agreed that correspondence should be passed to the Village Hall Trustees as that would be the logical location for a charging point.**

227. Request to erect a large shed on an allotment plot An allotment tenant had requested permission to erect a shed that is larger than permitted by the terms and conditions. The current limit is 6' x 4'. The tenant has asked to erect a second-hand shed that is 7'10" x 5'11". Permission was granted and **it was agreed that the Allotment Terms and Conditions would be amended to permit building sizes of up to 8' x 6' with no change to the deposit rate of £75.00.**

228. School Field Rental Agreement and Proposed Licence to Gain Access The licence is being drafted by the County Solicitor.

229. Grant Approvals 2020/21: The Parish Council considered and either approved or declined the following grants:

a. Regular Annual Grants:

i) Buckland Brewer Village Hall. **It was agreed to meet the full value of the Village Hall insurance which is expected to be in the region of £1,000, subject to receipt of the final invoice.**

(1) During the early weeks of the Covid-19 lockdown a local company requested permission to use the village hall kitchen to prepare meals for distribution to people unable to leave their homes. To meet hygiene regulations, this required the installation of an industrial chiller. Although the cost of the chiller was borne by the company, the electrical installation was paid for by the Village Hall Trustees. About 80% of the meals were provided to residents of Buckland Brewer. A request from the Village Hall Trustees for a grant towards the cost of installing the chiller was considered by email communications and the consensus at the time was that the Village Hall should be granted a sum equivalent to 80% of the cost of installing the chiller. This amounts to £291.13. This grant would be met from the grant of £793.59 received from Torridge Council in April 2020 to meet these sort of costs. **It was agreed by 7 votes to 1 to approve a grant of £291.13.** Jim Lowe objected to the payment as he believed the £10,000 coronavirus business grant from Torridge District Council to the village hall should cover the payment, and that the TDC payment was not disclosed when the principle was previously discussed.

(2) **It was agreed that the balance of the Covid-19 grant from Torridge, amounting to £502.46 should be donated to the North Devon Foodbank.**

ii) Youth Services No application had been received. **It was agreed that the funds would be re-allocated to other schemes for the current year.**

iii) Buckland Brewer Playing Field Association Andrew Hewitt reported that Steve Harding was now compiling the association's accounts and would submit them in due course. It was noted that the PFA had found it difficult to raise funds recently and that there had been complaints about the lack of grass cutting. Following a general discussion, **it was agreed that a grant of £300 would be approved immediately and that the item would be added to the next agenda as a Part II item, by which time it was hoped that there would be more information available about the PFAs financial position.**

- iv) The Church of St. Mary and St. Benedict, Graveyard Maintenance The PCC had asked for an increase in their grant to meet the rising cost of maintenance. **It was agreed to award £300 and to review the budget for next year at the appropriate time. It was also agreed that the Parish Council should consider making a similar grant for the Thornhillhead Graveyard in future years.**
 - v) North Devon Record Office **An award of £200 was agreed in line with the Council's previous decision to continue to support the NDRO throughout the current term.**
 - vi) Community Shop **An award of £1,000 was agreed to meet the cost of electricity.**
- b. Other Small Community Grants
- i) Buckland Brewer 10k Run **It was agreed to support this fund-raising effort either by making a direct donation to the North Devon Hospice or by paying directly for some of the costs of organising the event, which is now scheduled to take place next May.**
 - ii) Buckland Brewer Patchwork Group **It was agreed to purchase 2 irons to the value of about £75.00 for use by this group.**
 - iii) Families in Grief **It was agreed to award this organisation £50.00.**
 - iv) Torridge Volunteer Cars **It was agreed to award this organisation £200.00.**
- c. Update re Education Support Fund The Education Support Fund Committee is due to hold its first AGM in September and is expected to consider grants for the current year in early October. So far 4 requests for application forms have been received but no completed applications have yet been returned. The Parish Council's Annual Internal Audit Report for 2109/20 has pointed out that the use of its powers under s.137 to provide a grant to the Education Support Fund might still be considered ultra vires, because only a handful of individuals benefit. The Council has no specific power to provide finance for education purposes so its general power under s.137 has been used to enable it to give a grant to the Education Support Fund. The Internal Auditor's reference is to the legislation that says "*the benefit to the community should be commensurate with the expenditure incurred and that it will bring direct benefit to their area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants*". In other words, she does not think that spending £1,500 per year to benefit a few individuals demonstrates that the spend is commensurate with the grant provided. Her advice is that the terms of reference for the organisation could be widened to permit the Education Fund to offer grants to more people and organisations and for a wider range of purposes. There is a statutory limit on the amount that can be spent on s.137 activities which is £8.32 per elector for 2020/21. This equates to about £5,900.00 per year at the moment. **It was agreed to award the fund a grant of £1,500 and to ask the Education Fund Committee to review its terms of reference and funding sources for future years.**

230. Members Reports:

Barbara Babb i) spoke about the potholes between Horwood Combe and Catsborough Cross. **The clerk will report these to DCC and Frithelstock Parish Council.** ii) She also reported that the small gate into the amenity field, nearest to the school's back entrance, needs to be rehung. **Andrew Hewitt and Trevor Mills will attend to this.** iii) Barbara also asked whether the Chapel was going to put up a 'No Parking' sign outside the chapel. **David Watson said that he would remind them to do it.**

Andrew Hewitt i) reported that the Field Tenancy Agreement for Higher Turnaway was being drawn up by Hicks & Co. ii) Also, he had spoken to Richard Mills about widening the Higher Turnaway entrance (see 225.c), and iii) had asked Hicks & Co. for a written report about future funding for Thornhillhead Moor.

231. Planning

- a. Complaint E/18/0006/UND The Old Village Store At the Parish Council meeting in March 2020 it had been reported that the complaint concerning the building works at The Old Village Store had been closed as the planning application had been approved. The Clerk had been asked to contact the Planning Enforcement Team to point out that the issue about water draining onto the public footpath had not been resolved. A reply had been received to say that this was not a planning enforcement issue.
- b. Decision, 1/0292/2020/FUL, East Hele, Agricultural roof over yard and loading area as a part of Mid-Tier Countryside Stewardship – Granted permission

232. Accounts and Audit:

- a. Receipts and Payments to date 2020/21
 - i) Bank balances as at 30th June 2020 (£60,808.70):
 - (1) Parish Council Current Account was £10,291.64
 - (2) Thornhillhead Moor Account was £3,239.20
 - (3) Savings Account was £47,277.86
 - ii) Fund balances as at 30th June 2020 (£60,808.70):
 - (1) General Account - £29,569.50
 - (2) Thornhill Head Account - £31,239.20
 - iii) Payments due (£3,682.56 + VAT) **The schedule at Appendix 3 was approved**
 - iv) Receipts (£9,029.59) **The schedule at Appendix 4 was approved**
- b. Year End Accounts, 2019/20 **The accounts for the year ending 31st March 2020 shown at Appendix 5 were approved.**
- c. Internal Audit Report for 2019/20 Members noted the comments in the Internal Audit Report, particular the recommendation concerning the Education Support Fund (see 229.c). Any change to the terms and conditions of the Education Support Fund would require a resolution by that committee. **It was agreed that the current year's grant should be paid in line with the annual budget and that an agreement would be reached about future years' funding before the next internal audit.**

233. Annual Returns for 2019/20

- a. Approval of the Council's Annual Statement of Internal Control - **noted and approved**
- b. Approval of Annual Governance Statement – **noted and approved**
- c. Approval of Annual Financial Statement – **noted and approved**
- d. Exercise of Public Rights – **it was agreed that the 30 working day period for the exercise of public rights would run from 17th August 2020 to 28th September 2020 and that this would be advertised on public notice boards, the community website and Village Scene.**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:45 pm

Dates of Future Meetings:

Parish Council, Wednesday 9th September 2020 (7:30pm, remotely via Zoom)

Signed as a true record:

Chairman: **Date:**

County Councillor - Holsworthy Rural Town and Parish Update (5 Aug 2020)

Dear Officers and Members,

I hope of late that some of you have had a bit more time to spend with friends and family and to do some of the things that many of us have missed in recent months – including things that support our Health and Well-being (H&W). Summer doesn't mean that work stops, too, and there's an awful lot still going on, especially, in terms of recovery from the pandemic and preparing for any potential 2nd wave. It is vital that we make sure that the most vulnerable continue to be supported and I want to express my thanks again to everyone for an unbelievable contribution in helping others with significant need.

Yesterday, the Holsworthy Community Involvement Group met (along with the Clinical Commissioning Group) to continue working on aspects related to our Holsworthy Community Hospital. I am in regular contact, too, with Public Health England regarding such things as our care homes locally. I had another meeting today with **One Northern Devon** (a partnership of public services, businesses, and voluntary and community groups) which is working collaboratively with many partners seeking to address local issues in both Torridge and N Devon and for which I Chair the Health and Well-being Development Group (one of 3 themes below).

One Northern Devon has 3 Themes – Health and Well-being; Safe, Clean, Sustainable Places; Economy, Employment and Skills

Priorities are:

1. Obesity/Healthy Wt. (Lead Partner – Devon Clinical Commissioning Group)
2. Loneliness (North Devon Voluntary Services & TTVS (Voluntary and Community Support across Torridge))
3. Crisis Prevention and Support (Police and Public Health)
4. Child Poverty (Action for Children)
5. Fuel Poverty (361 Energy)
6. Climate Change (North Devon (ND) Biosphere)
7. Strong and Resilient Communities (One Communities Group)
8. Supporting Local Employers (North Devon Plus)
9. Local Supply Chain Dvt (ND Biosphere) and Increasing Employment Opportunities (Petroc)

People often ask me about PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and I can say that the Devon sign-up to Clipper (the national online portal to purchase PPE) is significant. Across Devon, 77% (55% nationally) of providers are now registered with 90% placing orders (84% nationally).

In terms of Climate Emergency Response Group for Devon – Devon's emissions are likely to have dropped by 25% during April/May in comparison to this time last year. To meet the target of net-zero by 2050, though, we need to drop about 5% every year.

On Highways, you will have noted my comments on my last written Update to all parishes and the additional funding for rural areas. Don't get too excited, though, because although an additional £17m sounds a good deal it doesn't go that far on all our rural roads.

Just on finances – the County Council has spent £3m on PPE; arranged for the provision of around 5000 food parcels for individuals; spending more than £45m in supporting the Old, the Young and the Most Vulnerable and will continue to do so. Whilst, our figures in relation to many aspects related to Covid-19 are hugely positive please remain vigilant especially during this time of high tourism-related activity.

Business is being conducted in a very different way. We have around 3500 staff working from home – not just doing their own job but helping others within communities generally. Will it ever be the same again? I don't think so. I think staff at the County Council as well as many of us will work remotely for much of the time and have flexible working hours to fit around busy home lives. For my part, I miss seeing and chatting to you all more than anything. But, some folk have had and continue, sadly, to have the most dreadful of experiences. I know, our hearts go out to them all and that we will together, ultimately, work our way through this.

My every best wish to you all, as always.

Barry

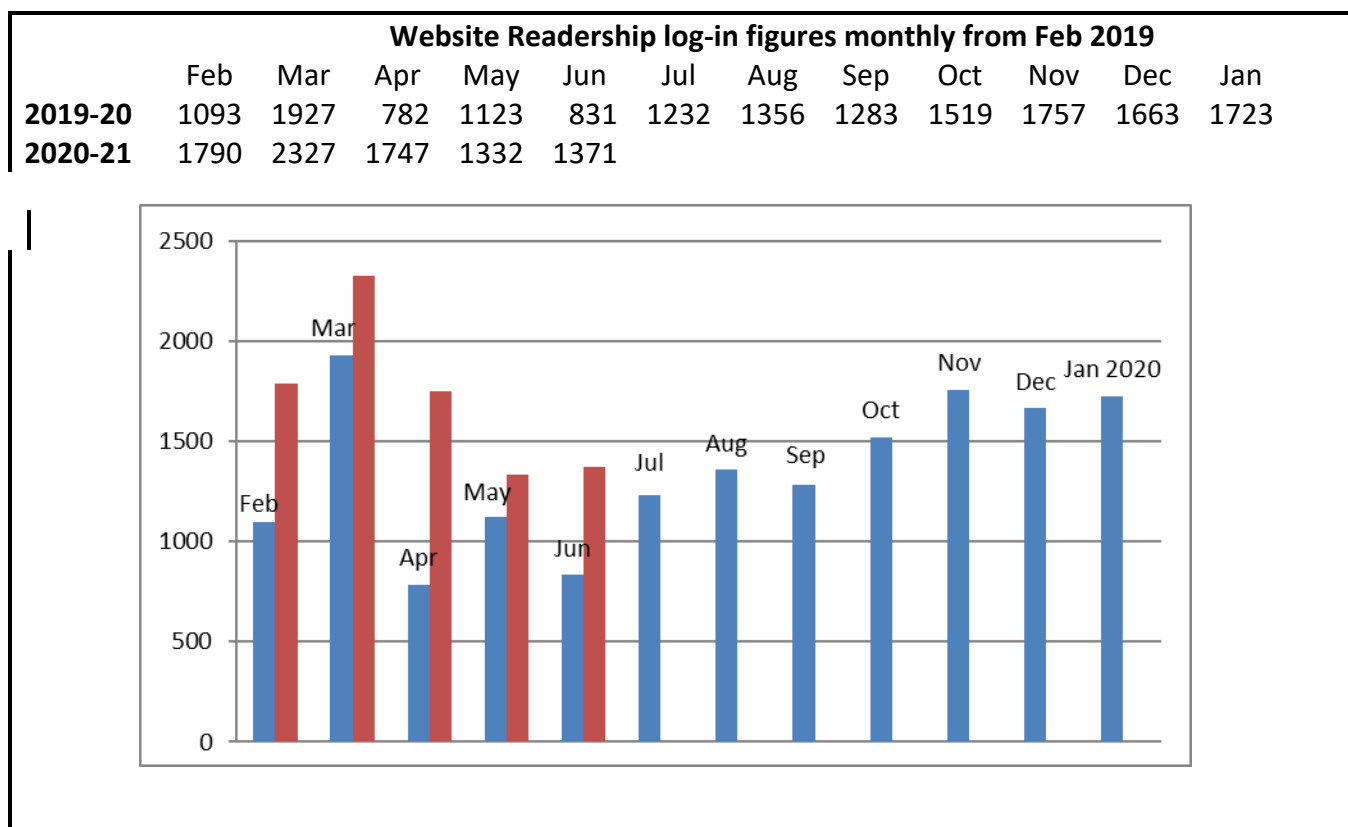
Buckland Brewer Community Website performance report

½ year to 30th June 2020

Hours spent working website from 1st Jan- 30th June 2020:- 80.65 (average of 13.4 hours per month)

Usage- hits on the Homepage - showing increase over the last 5 months. **2020 in red.**

Recordings started in Feb 2019, so comparisons year on year start from that month:-



Comparison Feb to Jun inclusive, month on month average:

Hits 2019 average 1151, hits 2020 average 1713. Like for like, **year on year increase of hits/usage = 49%**

A large spike in usage occurred during early days just before and after Lockdown. It is likely that some of this was generated by official bodies e.g. district and county councils, and organisations seeking to ensure that public information was prominent and correct.

I have continued to try and ensure website is refreshed with new information and articles at least twice a week (at times this has changed several times weekly) as it is evident that from feedback there are regular readers who welcome Community Website as a source of local information.

As an editor, during the last 12 weeks, as I have been bombarded with very large (and at times very unhelpful) documents with similar content from numerous sources, it has been necessary to exercise judgement about which and how much information to share i.e. what our parishioners will find relevant in the “doom and gloom department”, as the need for good news has become more urgent. It is an established fact that people seeking information from the internet, especially using smaller devices such as smart phones, are less inclined to want to read in depth long documents, thus I have been obliged to study a number and extract pertinent facts or exclude them totally. Finding the good news has required some trawling of local memories and knocking on various doors of former contacts, as well as some creativity, but it has been possible.

Sustained usage over the lockdown tends to indicate that regular readership is on the increase. Summer months last year saw a “dive” in website access -this has not been the case to the end of this half-year.

As always, if parish councillors require more in depth information about website performance please advise me. I will endeavour to provide this. For now I remain at your service.

Jane Lowe, Community Webmaster, webmaster@bucklandbrewer.org.uk 30th June 2020