

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
OF BUCKLAND BREWER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 13th MAY 2015 AT 7:30 AT
BUCKLAND BREWER SCHOOL**

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

Also in attendance 4 members of the public

Parish Clerk: Patrick Blossie

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

Preliminaries:

- a. Before the meeting formally started the following signed declarations of acceptance and formally accepted their positions as elected members of Buckland Brewer Parish Council:
Mrs Barbara Babb, Mr Andrew Hewitt, Mr George Heywood, Mr Jim Lowe, Mr Trevor Mills, Miss Sally Nicholls, Mrs Shirley Tilley and Mr David Watson.
- b. Register of Members Interests were distributed to all members. These are to be returned to the Parish clerk who will take copies for the website and pass on the originals to the Monitoring Officer.
- c. Register of Gifts and Hospitality were distributed to all members

1. Election of Chairperson (item chaired by Jim Lowe, previous Chair)

Jim Lowe explained that he would not be standing for Chairman again this year for health reasons and proposed Trevor Mills. This was seconded by George Heywood. There were no other nominations and **Trevor Mills was elected unanimously**. Trevor said that he would be willing to accept the post for 12 months and suggested that he would like to have a 'cabinet' style Council with each councillor taking responsibility for a portfolio of responsibilities. Some options were discussed but it was agreed that the details would be deferred until the next meeting and that, in the meantime, the Clerk would circulate some suggestions for portfolio responsibilities. George Heywood led a vote of thanks to Jim Lowe for his hard work over the past 4 years and said that he would be a hard act to follow.

2. Apologies for Absence Cllr. Alison Boyle

3. Election of Vice-Chairperson

Sally Nicholls was proposed by George Heywood, seconded by Shirley Tilley and elected unanimously.

4. Appointments to Sub-Committees:

- a. Budget & Finance Sub-Committee Deferred to next meeting
- b. Personnel Sub-Committee Deferred to next meeting

5. Appointments to Working Groups:

- a. Football Pitch Working Group Deferred to next meeting
- b. Others Deferred to next meeting

6. Appointment of Snow Warden Deferred to next meeting

7. Appointment of Representative to Village Hall Management Committee

Jim Lowe wished to drop out from this role as he would like to retain responsibility for the Community Hall Development and felt that this would be a conflict of interest. It was also unanimously agreed that the role

should not be taken by a councillor who was also a member of the Village Hall Management Committee. **It was unanimously agreed that Sally Nicholls would be the Village Hall Trustee representative.**

8. To confirm the appointment of the Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

It was unanimously agreed that Patrick Blossie should be retained as the Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer and he was thanked for his contribution.

9. Dispensations

Dispensations were agreed and signed by all present to permit all councillors to debate and vote on all issues concerning a) Village Hall and b) Precept setting for the full 4-year term of this Council.

10. To Reconfirm Membership of DALC and Consider County Committee Nominations

It was unanimously agreed to continue membership of the Devon Association of Local Councils. Andrew Hewitt nominated himself as a candidate for the County Committee.

11. DALC and Other Training Opportunities Deferred to next meeting

12. Review of Banking, Insurance and Audit Arrangements

The Clerk reported that, with the receipt of grants and donations as yet unallocated, Thornhillhead Moor stewardship payments, the first instalment of this year's precept and the establishment of reserves for elections, allotment expenses and other activities, the Council's balances now stood at about £24,000. He recommended that some of this should be transferred to a suitable savings account and **it was agreed unanimously that he should open a deposit account with Barclays Bank.**

The Clerk had been approached by a company (AON) which had quoted an annual premium slightly lower than the current Community First policy. However, this was only an initial offer prior to seeking the Council's exact requirements and could not be guaranteed to stay at that rate in future years. The Clerk's recommendation was that Community First offered a good service and should continue to be used. **It was agreed unanimously to renew the policy with Community First.**

The Council had used South and West Internal Audit for a number of years. The Clerk felt that the company understood the requirements of auditing parish councils and of Buckland Brewer's particular requirements and should continue to be used. **It was agreed unanimously to retain South and West Internal Audit.**

13. Review of Dates for Future Meetings

It was agreed that regular monthly meetings would continue to be held on the second Wednesday of each month and that the fourth Wednesday of each month would be reserved solely for Planning consultation meetings.

14. Review of Standing Orders and Code of Conduct

It was agreed to reaffirm the Parish Council's existing Standing Orders and Code of Conduct without any revision at this time.

15. Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council on 8th April 2015: The minutes of the meeting held on 8th April 2015 were confirmed and signed subject to the following amendments:

- a. Sally Nicholls name was deleted from the list of 'Members Present'
- b. It was noted that George Heywood had offered his apologies prior to the meeting.

16. Declarations of Interest

Sally Nicholls and Trevor Mills in relation to item 29c: Cleave planning application, and Barbara Babb in relation to item 27b: Mr B Chapple, Field Rent

17. Public Participation None

18. Clerk's Report

- a. **Correspondence:** A summary of 25 items of general correspondence had been provided. All of these had been distributed by email prior to the meeting.

- b. **Co-option of one additional councillor** The Clerk explained that there was one unfilled position following the recent election process and that the Council had until 26th June 2015 to co-opt someone, failing which the Elections Officer would be required by law to call another election. **The Clerk will prepare notices for the parish notice board, website, Facebook and Village Scene and candidates will be asked to make a short presentation to the next Parish Council meeting.**

19. TAP Fund 2015/16

The Clerk reported that TDC and DCC had announced that the TAP Fund scheme would continue for another year and that the Council would be entitled to apply for a grant of up to £718. Applications must be submitted by 29th February 2016. George Heywood suggested that this could be used to contribute towards a defibrillator.

20. Local Transport Services

Jim Lowe reminded members that the early bus and afternoon return from Petroc was no longer available to paying customers. The 10:25 372 service was now run by a new contractor and although this was still 5 days per week at the moment, it was expected to be reduced to 2 days per week in late June/early July. The recent joint meeting of parish councils at Bradworthy had generated little enthusiasm to continue the Summer Bus Service as a joint venture, but it would be possible to consider doing this on our own. The Council had already offered support to the newly formed Torridge Volunteer Cars scheme but he suggested that **any financial donation should be deferred until it was properly constituted as a charity. This was agreed unanimously.**

21. Tuckers Park/Ashtons Row Parking: - Response from Westward Housing

The Clerk read out a letter from Liz Smith, Chair of Westward Housing's Board stating that if carers placed a company compliments slip in their car windows when visiting their customers these would be honoured by the parking enforcement company. **It was agreed that the Clerk would supply Andrew Hewitt with a scanned copy of the letter and that he would deliver one to each of the affected residents.**

22. Galsworthy Wind Turbines

No further information had been received from Torridge Council. If there is still no response by the next meeting the Clerk will chase up the Planning Department.

23. Babeleigh Barton Road

Jim Lowe reported that one or two residents had made complaints to DCC and that at least had contacted their Member of Parliament.

24. Thornhillhead Moor:

- a. **Fly-Tipping** Nothing further to report
- b. **Signage** Cattle signs were now confirmed to be in place but the white-lining offered by DCC had not yet been done.
- c. **Outstanding Contractor Payments** Claire McIntosh had confirmed that the two retained payments could now be released and the Clerk had prepared cheques for signing at this meeting.

George Heywood asked the Council to consider what should be done with the moor in future years and questioned the ownership of the land, how it could be used and by whom. Sally Nicholls said that she would investigate the legal definitions of Common Land and report back to the next meeting.

25. Hillpark Development Update

Jim Lowe reported that no more houses had been sold in the last month but that 4 of the social housing properties were now occupied.

26. S106 Land and Community Hall Monies Transfer Update

Jim Lowe read out a letter from Slee Blackwell itemising some disputes over boundaries and use of the access road which need to be resolved between Pearce Construction and the Village Hall Trustees before the land and monies transfer can take place. The Clerk had not been able to make contact with the solicitor in the past few days but will chase this up before the next meeting.

27. Fields and Allotments:

- a. **Report of the Football Pitch Working Group** Trevor Mills had not yet spoken to Eric but Andrew Hewitt reported that Eric would be happy to rent the whole field but would want a holiday from the rent if he was asked to erect fencing. The archers did not want to take on the whole field. Jim Lowe suggested that they might be able to use part of the playing field instead. Sally Nicholls explained the 28 day rule in respect of basic single farm payments. George Heywood said that we could offer crops of hay for sale. Decision deferred to a later meeting.
- b. **To consider termination terms offered by Mr B Chapple** The Clerk read a letter from Hicks & Co outlining Brian Chapple's request to terminate his field rent from Michaelmas 2015 rather than giving 12 months' notice. Andrew Hewitt said there would probably be plenty of interest from people with horses. Sally Nicholls said that the basic entitlement on this field would be about £90. This would normally be passed on to the new tenant as the Parish Council would not be able to claim it or it could be sold off. It was recognized that some damage had been done by vandals to one of the hedges and that Brian would not be held responsible for this. **It was agreed that George Heywood, Andrew Hewitt and Sally Nicholls would inspect the field before a decision was made and the item would be discussed again at the next meeting.**

28. Members' Reports

Barbara Babb i) said that the village green area had suffered a lot of damage in the past 3 weeks due to the works by Western Power. The Clerk will contact the company to discuss arrangements for reinstatement. ii) She also noted that Andrew was going to mow the green. It had not been done yet and she asked if it could be done in time for the plant stall next week.

George Heywood said that the Parish Council should discuss the future of Thornhillhead Moor. Sally Nicholls offered to investigate the options and it was agreed that the matter would be discussed in full at the August meeting.

Jim Lowe reminded members that the Annual Parish Meeting would take place on 24th June with Cllr Barry Parsons as guest speaker. He will ensure it is advertised in Village Scene. It was agreed that some 'discussion items' should be added to the agenda. **The Clerk will draft one and distribute in advance for further suggestions.**

Shirley Tilley i) said that the owner of 'Spurs' in Back Lane was parking a caravan and other vehicles in the lane and causing an obstruction. **The Clerk will write asking him to keep the public right of way clear.** ii) She also pointed out that heavy vehicles had made ruts in Back Lane and that the surface needs to be levelled. **The Clerk will contact the Footpaths Officer.** iii) Shirley also complained about the amount of rubbish left behind by the South Molton Recycling van. **The Clerk will write to them.**

29. Planning

- a. **Enforcement at Eckworthy** There had been no feedback yet from Torridge Council. **The Clerk will check with the Enforcement Team.**
- b. **Application:** 1/0154/2015/FUL. High View, Two storey extension to rear of dwelling (comprising leisure room / conservatory) **Supported unanimously**
- c. **Consultation:** 1/0406/2015/AGMB, Cleave, Prior notification for the change of use of agricultural building to xxx No. dwelling/s under Class Q (a) and Q (b) **Supported unanimously**

30. Accounts:

i) **Bank balances:**

- Parish Council Current Account was £11,558.71 as at 30th April 2015
- Thornhillhead Moor Account was £11,314.70 as at 17th April 2015

ii) Payments due (£1,762.63)

- Parish Clerk's salary, expenses and associated PAYE: £323.03
- SLCC: Annual Fee - £103.00
- M Fry, Allotments maintenance - £70.00
- Tom Lloyd, Scrub Clearance (final payment) - £500.00
- R A Metherell, Scrub Clearance (final payment) - £600.00
- Community First Trading, Insurance Premium - £166.60

iii) Receipts (£4,328.00)

- Allotment rents - £82.00
- Field rents - £680.00
- 1st Instalment of Precept - £3,375.00
- Openreach: Wayleaves - £191.00

iv) Transfer between Funds: £250 re Clerk's salary and expenses for 2014/15 transferred from Thornhillheadmoor account to general account.

v) Annual Accounts and Returns The Clerk presented the annual accounts for 2014/15 together with the annual audit return and governance report. **These were approved unanimously and signed by the Chairman.**

vi) Audits The Clerk reported that the internal audit would be taking place tomorrow and that the audited accounts and the annual returns would be submitted to Grant Thornton for external audit on 6th June 2015.

Date of Next Meeting:

Parish Council: 10th June 2015 (Buckland Brewer School) (8:00pm)

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

Chairman: **Date:**