

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
OF BUCKLAND BREWER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 14th OCTOBER 2015 AT 7:45 AT
BUCKLAND BREWER SCHOOL

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

Also in attendance 2 members of the public and Cllr. Robin Julian (DCC)

Parish Clerk: Patrick Blossie

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

119. Apologies for Absence Shirley Tilley and Cllr Alison Boyle

120. Minutes of the Meetings of the Parish Council held on 9th and 23rd September 2015: The minutes of the meetings held on 9th and 23rd September 2015 were confirmed and signed.

121. Declarations of Interest Cllr Barbara Babb in respect of item 139a, Termination of Brian Chapple's Tenancy.

122. Public Participation None

123. Clerk's Report

- a. **Correspondence:** A summary of 40 items of general correspondence had been provided. All of the correspondence had been distributed by email prior to the meeting.
- b. **Geoffrey Cox, Rural Roads Petition:** It was agreed to distribute copies of a petition raised by Geoffrey Cox, MP in the shop, pub, village hall, chapel and at Thornhillhead.
- c. **Complaint re Cobblestones in Ashtons Row:** The Clerk had written to DCC to complain about the cobblestones that had been dug up when a new street lamp post was installed but no reply had been received. Cllr Julian had been informed. Jim Lowe reported that he had been treated rudely by an officer of the County Council when he reported the issue by telephone and enquired about who owned the path. It was noted that the cobblestones had since been reinstated.
- d. **Traffic Lights on the Landcross to Littleham Road:** The Clerk had written to Littleham Parish Council, who have also been trying to put pressure on DCC Highways and others. They confirmed that the dispute is in the hands of solicitor and pointed out that the stretch of road in question falls into the Bideford South ward. Cllr. Robin Julian noted that the road was decaying and undertook to press for a resolution of the problem. Barbara Babb suggested leaving the issue for 3 months a reviewing again if necessary.

124. Website Management and IT Equipment: The Clerk had submitted a grant claim to DALC amounting to £577 for a laptop, training and website development costs and had discussed the issue of uploading files directly to the site with Peter McClymont. Peter had supplied the Clerk with access to software which will enable him to do this. The Clerk recommended that we do not pursue setting up a separate website.

125. Locality Group Meeting: a. Report by Jim Lowe Jim Lowe gave a brief overview and suggested that the group could prove to be a useful forum for discussion and that the Parish Council should continue to support it.

b. Request from Cllr. Boyle to support the group and suggestions for Chair and Secretary: The Clerk read out a brief overview supplied by Cllr Boyle, which also requested that the Parish Council formally supports the Group and asked for recommendations for a Chair and Secretary. It was agreed unanimously to support the group but it was not thought appropriate to suggest who should act as Chair or Secretary.

126. Thornhillhead Moor: a. To consider proposals by Cllr. George Heywood for the future management of the moor George Heywood reminded members that the arrangements for the management and funding of the SSSI at Thorn Moor would end in about 5 years' time. He felt that the current economic climate posed a risk to any future funding, especially if the proposed referendum resulted in Britain leaving the EU as this could mean an end to the subsidies. He said that it is a large and valuable site and that the Council should consider selling the moor and putting the income in trust for the benefit of the parish. Sally Nicholls pointed out that the moor benefited from Higher Level Stewardship and that Natural England has said that it should qualify for Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier. It was therefore in a good position, with a 90% chance of getting into a new funding scheme in 5 years' time. Natural England would guide the Parish Council through the application process if it was successful in the 'expressions of interest' stage. George Heywood felt that the future could not be certain and suggested that the Parish Council should arrange an open meeting to hear what the parishioners thought and to have a parish referendum or vote on the future of the moor and the possible future cost to the parish if we have to bear the costs of operating the moor as it is now. Andrew Hewitt said that the Council has a duty of care towards sites like this. Jim Lowe asked whether the 'wild environment' could be preserved if it was sold. Andrew Hewitt suggested that Natural England should be asked to explain the future scheme prospects. And Robin Julian suggested asking AONB for advice. Sally Nicholls said that the Devon Wildlife Trust has set up a Facilitation Fund which she will apply for.

b. Other matters: Andrew Hewitt showed photos of the signs that have been erected on the moor and of the faulty gate latches, which he will put right. Jim Lowe reported that a car accident had resulted in damage to one of the fences but this has already been repaired.

127. S106 Land and Community Hall Monies Transfer

a. Monies Transfer: Update from the Clerk: An agreement has been drawn up by the Parish Council's solicitor. This was distributed for comments about 2 weeks ago. Stephen Harding emailed a few days ago to confirm that the Village Hall Trustees were happy to sign it. Copies were passed to Trevor Mills who will arrange for them to be signed. Jim Lowe (supported by Andrew Hewitt) asked for reassurance that the Village Hall Trustees were planning to build a village hall and not a Pre-School. Trevor Mills confirmed that this was the case.

b. Land Transfer: Update from Trevor Mills: Jim Lowe reported that Fred's field (the new playing field) was being re-seeded this week and that Pearce would then be finished. There were now only 5 houses left to sell at Hillpark. There is an issue that the street lights are on all night at the moment but this should change once the roads are adopted by the County. Trevor Mills reported that negotiations were almost complete with Pearce for them to build the new hall, for which a revised planning application has been submitted and will be discussed by the Parish Council on 28th October. He said by this time next year, the Parish Council could be meeting in the new hall.

128. Defibrillator: The Clerk has not yet ordered the defibrillator as he is still waiting for confirmation from the chapel that they are happy with the proposed placement of the box outside the shop and that the electrical supply can be taken from there. Andrew Hewitt and David Watson will meet with Brian Chapple to confirm these details. David Watson suggested that the defibrillator would need to go on the right hand side of the shop door where it would be conveniently situated for the electricity supply. **It was agreed that a security light and camera should also be installed.** The Clerk confirmed that the available funds were sufficient to meet this cost. Trevor Mills presented the Council with a cheque for £1,000 towards the project from an anonymous donor for which the Council was extremely grateful.

129. Community Bed Closures: Petition Request The Clerk read out an email from Cllr Hackett of Torridge Council who is attempting to get 1,000 names to a petition to halt the closure of local community hospital beds. This was not supported as the Council felt that the request had come too late. However, Cllr Robin

Julian that he was still campaigning against the closures and that the reasons that had been put forward had been unsustainable and ill-thought out. It was proposed by George Heywood and **agreed unanimously to put together a petition for Buckland Brewer residents that would be put together and collated by Jim Lowe and presented to Cllr Julian by the end of November 2015.**

130. Electoral Review of Devon: Further limited consultation for North Devon No comments made.

131. Review of Parish Plan/Emergency Plan: Progress report from Working Group The group had not met yet. Barbara Babb suggested involving Roger Waters as he is acting as a local emergency co-ordinator. Jim Lowe suggested that the group should review the whole plan and it was agreed that the group should include as many people as possible from the group that put the original together. **Barbara Babb will organise a meeting**, which the Clerk was asked to attend.

132. Future of North Devon Records Office & Local Studies Centre: Funding Request Members were supportive of a request for financial help towards maintaining a records office in Barnstaple but asked for more details about how much might be expected.

133. Consultation re Gambling Act 2005 - Review of statement of principles Deferred to next meeting

134. Devon County Road Warden Scheme – Report by Andrew Hewitt Andrew Hewitt is attending a meeting (DCC Highways Conference) on 21st October and will report his observations at the next meeting. Cllr Julian confirmed that, if the Council signed up to the scheme, the County would provide the necessary training, materials and public liability cover.

135. 2016 Annual Parish Meeting: Date and Guest Speaker Jim Lowe suggested and it was agreed unanimously to invite Jane Whittaker, the Leader of Torrington Council. Two dates were suggested: 20th April and 18th May 2016. **Jim Lowe will approach Jane and determine the most appropriate date.**

136. Repair or replacement of boundary fence at Bowden Cross Corner Deferred

137. Back Lane, Overgrown trees Westward Housing had responded to a letter from the Clerk to say that the trees and hedges were not on their land. However, Andrew Hewitt provided photographic evidence that their tenants had been dumping rubbish over the fences and the Clerk was asked to write to Westward Housing again. Barbara Mills had notified the Clerk that DCC had offered to start work on the trees very soon.

On another, related matter, it had been determined that the overgrown hedge by the chapel was the responsibility of Keith Horwell, who lives in Shebbear. **Andrew Hewitt will provide contact details for the Clerk.**

138. Hillpark Footpath, Safety Concerns It was noted that Pearce had safety barriers for the path on order.

139. Fields and Allotments:

a. **Termination of Brian Chapple's Tenancy** Trevor Mills and Andrew Hewitt had inspected the field today and reported that it was looking tidy. **They will meet with Brian to progress the matter.** It was generally agreed that any future field tenancy agreements must make adequate contingency for maintenance costs and responsibilities.

b. **Removal of Football Pavilion** No further action required

c. **'Football Pitch' Tenders** So far the Clerk has received 4 expressions of interest, mostly for use as grazing for horses. Eric Tucker has asked to be considered for the grass crop and will be added to the list. The closing date for expressions of interest is 31st October and they will be considered at the next meeting on 11th November.

- d. **Vacant Allotments** Only plot 7b is now still available.

140. Half-Yearly Financial Statement Cllr Marie Douglas presented a budget monitoring report as at 30th September 2015. It was noted that income and spending were largely on target with the annual budget. £150 identified for the Summer Bus service had already been re-allocated as a grant to Torridge Volunteer Cars. A further sum of £350 for a Hopper Bus service would not be needed for that purpose. Marie asked for suggestions for a suitable project for this year's TAP Fund grant and this item will be added to the next agenda. It was noted that there was already a Welcome Pack scheme in progress but wondered whether the organisers would be able to make use of the funds to keep the scheme up to date. The Clerk explained he would shortly be able to transfer funds into a savings account and it was agreed that he would maintain balances of about £2,000 - £3,000 in each of the two current accounts and will transfer the rest into the savings account.

141. Grant Applications Members considered a number of grant requests. It was agreed that approval would continue to be given only to organisations based in or mainly benefiting Buckland Brewer and its residents. Existing agreements to provide grants to the Village Hall (£500), the Playing Field Association (£250) and the Youth Drop-In Centre (£300) were confirmed. It was proposed by Trevor Mills, seconded by Sally Nicholls and **agreed unanimously to allocate the entire budget for 'one-off' grants of £500 as follows:**

- a. **Torridge Volunteer Cars: £300**
- b. **Playing Fields Association: £100 (With further consideration to be given to increasing the annual grant when next year's budget is set)**
- c. **Buckland Brewer Bowls Club: £100**

142. Members' Reports

Barbara Babb reported that the village green light was not working

Andrew Hewitt reported that he has been appointed as DALC county committee representative to the HATOC Highways Committee.

George Heywood said that he had been told to expect a severe winter this year and that it might result in using up the existing stock of 5 tons of salt.

Jim Lowe reported that the Draft District Plan would not now be going to the Minister until next year following the issuing of new guidance from central government, the failure to meet affordable housing targets and the need to designate areas for wind turbines. He suggested and **it was agreed unanimously to write a letter of complaint to Geoffrey Cox, which he will draft.**

Sally Nicholls said that her workload was continuing to increase and that she would almost certainly be resigning once she has moved to Milton Damerel.

143. Planning

- a. **Application: 1/0973/2015/AGMB, Vielstone:** Prior notification for the change of use of agricultural building to 1 No. dwelling/s under Class Q (a) It was proposed by Jim Lowe, seconded by Andrew Hewitt and agreed by 4 votes in favour with 1 against and 3 abstentions, to **object on the grounds that the building in question was not of the type intended for conversion to dwellings by this legislation.**

- b. Application: 1/1007/2015/FUL, 12 Orleigh Close, First floor extension to existing dwelling. It was proposed by George Heywood, seconded by Sally Nicholls and **agreed unanimously to support the application**

144. Accounts:

i) Cash book balances:

- Parish Council Current Account was £12,014.55 as at 30th September 2015
- Thornhillhead Moor Account was £13,739.05 as at 18th August 2015

ii) Payments due (£346.61)

- Parish Clerk's salary, expenses and associated PAYE (September): £310.29
- Jim Lowe, Meeting travel expenses - £11.40
- Stephen Harding, Village Green Maintenance - £24.92

iii) Receipts (£5,315.00)

- Torridge Council, 2nd instalment of precept- £3,375.00
- Allotment rents/deposits - £155.00
- Field rents - £785.00
- Donation (defibrillator) - £1,000.00

Date of Next Meeting:

Parish Council, Planning: 28th October 2015 (Buckland Brewer School) (7:00pm)

Parish Council: 11th November 2015 (Buckland Brewer School) (7:30pm)

It was also agreed to make a date for the Clerk's Annual Review

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10:35 pm.

Chairman: Date: