

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
OF BUCKLAND BREWER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 28th JANUARY 2015 AT 7:30PM AT
BUCKLAND BREWER VILLAGE HALL

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

Also in attendance 6 members of the public

Parish Clerk: Patrick Blossie

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

1399 Apologies for Absence George Heywood

1400 Declarations of Interest: Jim Lowe in respect of item 1407, planning application re 6 dwellings at Tower Hill.

1401 Public Participation: None

1402 Clerk's Report The Clerk reported that he had attended a DALC workshop on 'Preparing for the Elections' on Monday 26th January, which he had found extremely useful. He would be distributing further guidance in due course.

1403 Consultation on TDC Housing Renewal Policy: Jim Lowe summarised Torrridge Council's Housing Renewal Policy, explaining that it was primarily concerned with protecting the rights of people in private rented accommodation, especially the vulnerable. The Council supported the policy's principles, but **agreed that the document should be made available in printed form rather than just on the internet, and that a copy would be lodged in the Parish Information Point.**

1404 Consultation on Parish Poll Legislation: Jim Lowe explained that central government had responded to advice that the rules for triggering parish polls was permitting too few people to force them, sometimes at great cost to the parishes. Also, other criteria needed to be tightened up, such as restricting the subject matter of polls, modernising voting arrangements, extending voting times and allowing parish councils to publish a short, factual, balanced and objective statement when a poll is called. **The proposals were supported unanimously and it was agreed that a copy of the consultation document would be lodged in the parish information point.**

1405 To consider the Village Hall Trustees' decision not to fence the land due to be transferred to them for the new community hall:

(For the avoidance of doubt, a dispensation has been approved for all members of the parish council who are also Village Hall Trustees to discuss village hall matters on the grounds that so many of the members would otherwise need to declare an interest that the council might be inquisitorial for such items.)

Jane Lowe, the Project Liaison Officer for the new community hall, had informed the Parish Council by email that the Village Hall Trustees had decided not to fence the land that was to be transferred to them for the building of the new hall. This would have an impact on the Parish Council's offer to allow the adjacent plot to

be used by Buckland Brewer School, could leave the site insecure and open to abuse, and could result in a considerable financial burden on the parish. Jim Lowe stated that the Parish Council is acting as an enabling body in this process and has no budget to erect or maintain fences. He presented members with sketch maps of the site showing the boundaries between the parish council land, community hall land, the school and private properties (see Appendix 1). The Clerk explained that the fencing bordering the new properties at Hillpark was already in dispute with the developer's solicitors and that the Parish Council was negotiating to ensure that these boundaries were the responsibility of the owner-occupiers. Kate Slocombe explained that the school itself could not enter an agreement over their boundary and that it would be necessary to formalise this through Devon County's solicitors. This was accepted. Andrew Hewitt asked why the Village Hall Trustees had made their decision. Barbara Babb said that she had not seen a map like the one presented by Jim Lowe when the decision was taken by the Village Hall Trustees. Trevor Mills explained that the Trustees had felt that the Parish Council were getting an asset and should be responsible for the fencing but, having since visited the site with Jim Lowe and looking at the map it seemed appropriate that the Village Hall Trustees should take responsibility for their boundaries. Jim Lowe explained that the developer had already erected a temporary fence between the car park and the land in question and had offered to leave this in place until the building work starts on the community hall. As the north-west edge of the land is already bordered by a substantial hedge there is no immediate security or health and safety risk. **The following motion was proposed by Jim Lowe, seconded by Kate Slocombe and supported unanimously:**

The Parish Council agree that in selling the land for the erection of a new community hall and car park, the Village Hall Trustees must take responsibility for fencing the current and future boundary around the community hall site and car park.

Barbara Babb suggested that a joint meeting of the Parish Council and Village Hall Trustees should be arranged and this was supported unanimously. The meeting will be arranged by Jim Lowe and Trevor Mills.

1406 Members' Reports

Barbara Babb reminded the Council that it had agreed to set up extra meetings when needed to meet the deadlines for planning consultations but this agenda had included other items as well. The Clerk pointed out that the two consultation items had been deferred from the last meeting at the request of the Council to allow members time to consider them. The deadline for both of these items was 30th January, so they could not have been left until the February meeting. The Clerk had added another emergency item regarding the fencing of the village hall land because a response was needed to a decision made the Village Hall Trustees that could severely delay progress with the S106 land transfer which the Council's solicitor had already been instructed to proceed with. **The Clerk will add the issue of what should be considered at the extra meetings to the next agenda so that the Council can make a suitable resolution.**

Andrew Hewitt gave a report of the Torridge Area Advisory Group meeting that he had attended the previous evening. (i) For the forthcoming election, nomination papers MUST now be handed in, in person, to Torridge Council and cannot be delivered by post, (ii) tickets are available for the count which will take place at Langtree Village Hall on Monday 11th May, (iii) Torridge had announced no budget increase for 2015/16, having saved £1 million. This was largely achieved through staff reductions. New working arrangements were also being made with some staff working from home using electronic communications. There would be multi-tasking Locality Officers who would be responsible for providing advice on a wide range of services. (iv) Proposals to make all planning application consultations electronic from April 2015 were going ahead. Clerks might be given access to the Government portal to access plans. There will be no more printed copies and no staff available to produce any. (v) The Draft Local Plan is again out for consultation but only with developers at this stage. Andrew supplied a copy of the plan on a disc for the Clerk.

Jim Lowe reported that Aster Homes had signed the agreement to take on the 8 social housing properties at Hillpark in March 2015 and that applications to rent one of them could be made through Devon Home Choice.

David Watson reported that drilling rigs were operating in Tuckers Park where ground source heat pumps were being installed.

1407 Planning

Application: 1/1212/2014/OUT, Outline application for 6 dwellings, including play area and parking for 1& 2 Bell Cottages and 1& 2 Tower Hill Jim Lowe, having declared a prejudicial interest, left the meeting at this point and Trevor Mills took the Chair. Sally Nicholls felt that larger houses like those proposed were not what most local people wanted and this was supported by Kate Slocombe. Andrew Hewitt also felt that a better mix of housing was needed. He was also concerned that there would be too much traffic for the access proposed. It was recognised that the development site was plot 7 in the Parish Council's Settlement Plan and that, although it was encouraging to see new developments, especially one that helped to balance out the provision of more housing at different ends of the village, there was concern that too much building work could potentially be under way at one time. Members were pleased to note that the additional parking spaces provided could help to alleviate some of the on-street parking problems along the main road. **It was proposed by Kate Slocombe and agreed unanimously that the Council should support the development of the site in principle but that a recommendation should be made for a mix of housing with more affordable low cost options.**

Date of Next Meeting:

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

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:10 pm.

Chairman: **Date:**