

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**OF BUCKLAND BREWER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON**  
**WEDNESDAY 8<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2020 AT 7:30pm**  
**IN THE PARISH CHURCH SCHOOL ROOM**

**Members Present:** Mrs Barbara Babb, Mr Andrew Hewitt, Mr Trevor Mills and Mr David Watson

**Also in attendance:** 2 member of the public

**Parish Clerk:** Mr P Blosse

<b>KEY: Actions are shown in bold blue type   Decisions are shown in bold red type</b>
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**141. Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Barry Parsons, Cllr Phil Pennington, George Heywood and Bob Wilson

**142. Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019:** The minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019 were agreed and signed.

**143. Declarations of Interest:** None

**144. Public Participation:** Andrew Baguley, supported by Yvonne Hasler, explained that the residents of Castle Meadow have been badly affected by rats during the past year and that the situation has got considerably worse during the prolonged period of wet weather. The houses are next to the Blackhorse Field allotments and it was noted that chickens are kept on one of the plots at the far end, and also that there is a chicken farm nearby. The allotment plots themselves and residents' gardens provide other sources of food and it was also noted that one of the residents keeps an aviary of birds of prey. None of these factors were felt to be the primary cause but, taken together, they have helped to create a location in which the rats can flourish. Torridge Council has been asked to help but they have only directed the residents to private rodent control companies who have not been effective, in spite of making a number of visits. All the residents in the road have agreed to stop feeding wild birds. The Parish Council was sympathetic and offered some advice about baiting, trapping and using electronic deterrent devices. **It was agreed that the Clerk would write to the Environmental Health Officer (with a copy to Councillor Phil Pennington) asking him to take appropriate action.**

**145. Planning:**

- a. Application: 1/1137/2019/FUL, East View, Stibb Cross, Proposed construction of single storey office accommodation & welfare building **Supported unanimously**

**146. Budget Monitoring Report as at 31st December 2019:** The Clerk presented a budget monitoring report showing income and expenditure to date, projected activity for the rest of the year and a forecast outturn for 2019/20. Most items were broadly in line with the budget. The exceptions being an overspend on maintenance of the amenity field (because the budget was used for continuing to cut the grass of the school field pending leasing it to the school). This was more than offset by savings on the budgets for training, parish plan and 3<sup>rd</sup> age activities, resulting in an anticipated shortfall for the year of about £1,200 instead of £3,400.

**147. Draft Budget and Precept for 2020/21:** The Clerk presented a draft budget for 2020/21. The initial draft showed a small surplus for the year of £385 and included some items highlighted at the last meeting, in addition to routine inflation increases and some minor modifications to existing budgets. It was noted that an initial approach to Torrington 100 about a potential grant towards fitness equipment for the amenity field had been favourably received. **It was agreed that the parish council should pursue a policy of installing equipment that was suitable for older residents.** More research was needed into the equipment available and what surface dressing was preferred, and a range of quotes would need to be sought. In the meantime, it was recommended that the budget should allow for expenditure of £5,000 in 20/21 offset by grant income of £2,500. Further expenditure might follow in later years. **The recommendations of the Personnel Sub-Committee of 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020 regarding the Clerk's salary were agreed, and the draft budget will be adjusted accordingly.** The draft budget did not include anything for legal fees. A reserve has already been established for £2,000 for the footpath diversion and if the budget of £500 for the school field legal fees is not spent by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020, this will also be transferred to a reserve. The following items were also agreed pending a review of the final draft at the meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> January:

- Additional hours for the Clerk to meet website compliance and CiLCA training - £500.00
- Anticipated national pay award for the Clerk (3%) - £150.00
- CiLCA Course Fees and Expenses - £300.00 (to be absorbed within the existing budget)
- Electrically operated screen (inc. fitting) - £200
- Education Support Fund Grant - £1,500
- Cutting of grass verges - £500 (actual work to be done yet to be agreed)
- Play equipment for the amenity field - £5,000 (offset by grant claims of £2,500)
- Cleaning of BT phone box, signage and electrical fitting for defibrillator - £400.00
- Ad-hoc maintenance - £500

**It was agreed that any increase in the precept should, if possible, be limited to about the rate of inflation, or roughly 3%, the final figure to be agreed at the next meeting.**

**The Clerk will revise the draft budget in line with the decisions made here for presentation at the meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> January.** The deadline for submitting the annual precept demand to Torridge Council is Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

**There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:00pm**

**Dates of Future Meetings:**

Parish Council (Full Council), Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020 (7:30pm in the Parish Church Schoolroom)

**Signed as a true record:**

**Chairman:** ..... **Date:** .....