

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
OF BUCKLAND BREWER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 10th JULY 2019 AT 7:30pm
IN THE PARISH CHURCH SCHOOL ROOM

Members Present: Mrs Barbara Babb, Mr Andrew Hewitt, Mr George Heywood and Mr Trevor Mills

Also in attendance: None

Parish Clerk: Mr P Blosse

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

38. Apologies for Absence David Watson

39. Minutes of the Meetings of the Parish Council held on 12th June and 2nd July 2019: The minutes of the meetings held on 12th May and 2nd July 2019 were agreed and signed subject to removing the sentence starting, "She said that the occupier..." from item 36 of the minutes of 2nd July.

40. Declarations of Interest George Heywood re item 44, Education Support Fund.

41. Public Participation Jim Lowe asked about item 31 of the minutes of 12th June. He noted that the Parish Council would be paying for the cutting of the grass verges in Orleigh Close and said that there were a number of other County-owned verges and banks in the parish that were being maintained by homeowners. It was agreed that a precedent had been set and that the Parish Council would be prepared to consider any similar requests for the Parish Council to take responsibility for grass-cutting.

42. County and District Councillors' Reports:

- a. Councillor Barry Parsons (Devon County Council):** Councillor Parsons had provided a written report (see Appendix 1). He said that he was aware of complaints about the main road being difficult for cars and farm traffic to get through at times and that he would bring it up at the next HATOC meeting. It was noted that David Watson is now on the DALC County Committee and might be attending. George Heywood asked for Monkleigh Mill Lane to be considered as well. Barry talked about the continuing pressures on the County budget and uncertainty around Brexit. The County is trying to minimise disruption and managing to retain healthy reserves. Most pressure is on Children's Services; particularly as new regulations require services to be provided up to age 25. He said that school children in Devon get £300 per pupil less than the national average. Andrew Hewitt asked about the Fire Service cuts. Barry said that the County was awaiting a report but noted that austerity has forced cuts to services across the board, including the Fire Service and Police. George Heywood said that there was no longer a decent bus service. Barry Parsons talked about the Wheels to Work scheme and said that he would provide more details.

- b. **Councillor Phil Pennington (Torridge Council)** said that Torridge Council had discussed whether free bus passes and the problem of people not using the public transport system without them. There has been an increase in recycling; Phil provided a copy of a report from Cllr. Chris Leather (see Appendix 2) Also, Torridge has recently undertaken to achieve 'carbon neutral' status by 2030, for which there is much work to do. Phil talked about the 'Extinction Rebellion' campaign, a non-violent demonstration about environmental protection inspired by school children. He also pointed out that the parking meters in the district had been upgraded and now require a car registration number to be punched in.

43. Website:

- a. **Update by Jane Lowe** Jane had provided a written copy of her report (see appendix 3), which the Parish Council noted. The website continues to be used extensively not only by parishioners but by a large number of people from the wider population. Jane is happy to continue to act as Webmaster. George Heywood reminded her that she should not be out of pocket and asked if she would accept an honorarium, which Jane declined.
- b. **Dealing with requests to add information to the community website** Jane and the Clerk explained that there had been a request recently to add a particular message to the 'local worship' page to meet Church of England guidance. This had been done, with a rider explaining that the website is not a C of E site. **Members agreed that it was important that the community website continued to be both a-political and non-denominational and that they trusted Jane and the Clerk's judgement on such matters.**
- c. **Do we want to allow advertising, and should we charge?** When the website was first set up it was agreed that the Parish Council would review its policy on advertising 'at a later date'. A request had been received this month from a not-for-profit charitable company providing a service in partnership with Torridge Council to lend money to home-owners for property maintenance. The company had asked for adverts to be included on the website and parish magazine for which they had offered to pay. The Clerk's recommendation was that the Council should not be seen to be promoting commercial enterprises. Although this particular company is a 'not-for-profit' one, it is selling a money-lending service, which adds a further dimension to people's perception of the Council's support for such companies. He was also concerned that introducing a policy to charge for advertising would involve the need to charge and account for VAT, which he felt was an unnecessary complication for what would be a minor addition to Council funds. Jane agreed that the administration of advertising space on the website would be unnecessarily complicated. **It was agreed that, if any request to add content to the website was felt to offer news or interest to the local community it would be included at no charge and that it would be left to the Clerk and the Webmaster to evaluate each request.**

44. Education Support Fund: Progress Report by Jim Lowe and Appointment of Parish Council Representative

Jim Lowe said that he had advertised for people to join a committee to manage the fund. He currently has six volunteers, including the Parish Clerk. It was agreed that Pat Blosse should represent the Parish Council on the new committee and that, therefore, it would not be necessary for any of the councillors to take part. Jim asked whether the Parish Council would be willing to pay for the hall hire for its initial meeting and that he and Pat Blosse

would be attending a meeting in Exeter on 20th August to set up the bank account. Members agreed unanimously **that a grant of £100 would be made to assist with the set-up costs for the new committee**. Jim explained that grant applications would be kept to the same timetable as the current system so that applicants received their grants at the beginning of a new academic year.

45. Clerk's Report:

a. **Correspondence:** There had been 41 items of correspondence since the last meeting. The Clerk highlighted:

- i) **Devon & Somerset Fire Service:** Service Delivery Operating Model Proposal – offer to attend Parish Council meeting – see item 50 below.
- ii) **Area Advisory Groups:** Request for items for agenda - noted
- iii) **DALC: County Committee 2019 – 23:** Nomination Results: It was noted that David Watson had been appointed as one of the Torridge Representatives to the County Committee for the current 4-year term
- iv) **Robert Hicks & Co.:** Agent authorisation, Thornehillhead Moor As requested, **the Chair signed a replacement agent authorisation form to enable Hicks & Co. to continue as the agent for the management of Thornehillhead Moor**

46. Co-option of New Councillors: Only one enquiry had been received, from an individual who no longer lives in the parish. As their current residence is over 4 miles from the nearest parish boundary and do not work or own property in the parish, they did not qualify under any of the recognised criteria. Andrew Hewitt will put together another advert for a second round of nominations.

47. Fishleigh's: Application for 'O' Licence: It had been noted that a local contractor is applying for an 'O' licence for 7 goods vehicles and 8 trailers. Although the Parish Council has not been directly consulted, members of the public have been invited to comment. Andrew Hewitt proposed, Barbara Babb seconded, and it was agreed unanimously that the **Parish Council would write a letter of support.**

48. Vehicle Activated Sign: Activity Report: The Clerk had distributed monthly reports for April, May and June 2019. The highest speed recorded had been 51 mph in the early hours of the morning. Disappointingly, in all 3 months, less than 13% of all traffic was recorded as travelling at less than the speed limit of 20mph. About 75% of all vehicles were travelling at between 20 and 30 mph and the rest at even higher speeds. In the 3 month period, over 35,000 vehicle movements had been recorded. The Clerk said that he would continue to produce reports at quarterly intervals. It was agreed that the sign should be turned around to face up the hill periodically **and Jim Lowe accepted a nomination to act as 'Speed Sign Manager'. He will continue to recharge and replace the batteries and will decide when the sign should be turned around.**

49. School Field Rental Agreement and Proposed Amendment to Covenant: A revised copy of the lease had been distributed to members. This version was now with the school's solicitor and our solicitor was hopeful that it would be signed in the near future. **The Council had been asked to formally minute their approval of the final version of the document, which they did unanimously.** George Heywood reported that the school would like the use of the school field for this year's Sports Day. **It was agreed unanimously that the school should have access to the field for the rest of the school term (until 24th July 2019) and that Trevor Mills will arrange for one more cut of the grass.**

50. Proposed Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service Changes Consultation: The Fire Service is holding a series of consultation events, including one at Bideford Library on 6th August. Andrew Hewitt proposed, and **it was agreed unanimously that the Parish Council should object and write in support of the affected communities (such as Ilfracombe and Woolacombe).**

51. Members' Reports:

Barbara Babb noted that one of the residents in Tower Hill had regularly tidied up the gullies along the road, clearing weeds etc. Members agreed that he should be sent a letter of thanks. Andrew Hewitt felt that the Parish Council should revisit the **Devon County Road Warden Scheme and asked for it to be added to the next agenda.**

Trevor Mills reported a metal bar and a concrete block, both of which need to be removed by Devon County Council. **Andrew Hewitt will get photographs and report them.**

52. Planning:

- a. Decision: 1/103842019/FUL Woodwall, Frithelstock – Variation of plans schedule in relation to application 1/0039/2018/AGMB (Replacement of wall sheets with timber boarding – Granted Permission – noted

53. Accounts

a. Receipts and Payments

i) Bank balances as at 28th June 2019 (£49,266.57):

- (1) Parish Council Current Account was £7,987.38
- (2) Thornhillhead Moor Account was £7,069.75
- (3) Savings Account was £34,209.44

ii) Fund balances as at 28th June 2019 (£49,266.57):

- (1) General Account - £22,196.82
- (2) Thornhill Head Account - £27,069.75

iii) Payments due (£712.48 + VAT)

The following list of payments was approved:

1. Parish Clerk's salary, expenses and associated PAYE (June 2019): £472.90 including PAYE - £81.70 and £22.50 for tickets to DALC Conference
2. M F Garden Services, grass cutting - £230.00
3. E.on, electricity - £9.58 + VAT

iv) Receipts (NIL)

- b. **Budget Monitoring Report: 1st April to 30th June 2019:** The Clerk presented a report of the accounts for the first quarter of this financial year, which members noted.

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

Dates of Future Meetings:

Parish Council, Wednesday 14th August 2019 (7:30 in the Parish Church Schoolroom)

Signed as a true record:

Chairman: **Date:**

County Councillor 'Update' – Holsworthy Rural Ward (end-June 2019)

Firstly, and from a personal perspective my many thanks to everyone for their well-wishes during my partner's sudden and recent illness. We are both deeply thankful for how things have turned out and for the very kind wishes sent. You will have seen my earlier e-mail last week in relation to the Devon Air Ambulance (DAA) for which so many of us are especially grateful. The DAA does a wonderful service for our communities.

One of the big issues of the day, of course, is that of Climate Change. The County Council has not been alone in giving plenty of focus to this phenomenon, and, rightly so. Devon County Council has declared a climate emergency. We have committed to facilitating the reduction of Devon's carbon emissions to net-zero by 2050 at the latest and have formed the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group to enable strategic partners to collaborate on producing a Devon-wide Carbon Plan.

One such measure taken is in relation to street lighting. All of Devon County Council's streetlights will be converted to low carbon LEDs in the next three years. Converting all the streetlights in Devon to low carbon LEDs is the equivalent of taking 8,000 cars off the road.

Our Chief Executive, Phil Norrey, told members, officers and guests, "This is not about gestures, this is about action." The Council is working with partners including the University of Exeter on a Devon-wide plan to cut carbon emissions to net-zero. Dr Norrey is Chair of the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group (DCERG), made up of executives and chief officers of around 20 organisations including councils, emergency services and business groups.

Devon County Council's cabinet has agreed to retain a youth service, launching an invitation to tender for the running of the next five years of the service, with the successful bidder taking over on April 1, 2020.

The number of Devon pupils being educated at home (Elective Home Education (EHL)) has more than doubled in the last five years. Children's Scrutiny Committee met on 10 June 2019; an extract from the minutes including:

- " ... the number of registered EHE pupils increasing at Years 9-11 due to a combination of factors including attending part-time college courses or suffering from stress/anxiety brought on by the pressure of exams and high expectations;
- there was no statutory requirement for a local authority to carry out any EHE visits, however, Devon did conduct monitoring visits and provide support if required;
- the responsibility for free school meals lay with the schools;
- it was difficult to assess the longer-term effects of EHE, as the DfE did not collate statistics; and
- at present, there was no right for a local authority to see the child to ensure elected education was taking place, unless there was a safeguarding issue, although Government was currently consulting on a potential change in the law in this area;" a matter for which the Cabinet Member for Children's Services is currently taking up with The Minister.

Whilst, on the matter of youngsters ... I have just been reading an article on cyber crime which evidences the NSPCC (National Society of Prevention of Cruelty to Children) calling on the government to prioritise young people's online safety after figures revealed police forces in the UK

record an average of 22 cyber-related sex crimes against children every day.

The number of sexual offences against under-18s logged by police as having an online element doubled in four years to more than 8,000 in 2018-19, according to figures gathered by the children's charity from 40 forces in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The most common age of the victim was 13, but 185 offences involved children aged 10 and under, including babies, a series of freedom of information requests revealed. These awful crimes include online grooming, sexual communication with a child, and rape.

The excessive cuts to Police funding in recent years have resulted in our own Chief Constable, Shaun Sawyer, who does a wonderful job condemning current funding arrangements. With the increase in cyber crime growth Shaun clearly, and, rightly has a focus on this area of work.

Finally, and briefly, for anyone wishing to obtain even more information regarding 'a favourite topic' - a dedicated County Council website has now been launched to signpost all the latest Government advice and guidance around Brexit. The County Council will continue to develop and add to this as necessary and as more information becomes available. See <https://www.devon.gov.uk/brexit/>

With every best wish,

Barry

Torridge District Council

Waste and Recycling

Report from Lead Member Cllr. Chris Leather

In June 2018, Torridge District Council embarked on a major change to its waste and recycling collections with the introduction of fortnightly black bag collections, including food waste from all households, and the extension of an optional green garden waste collection service made available to all properties for the first time. A year and the figures speak for themselves with recycling rates in the district soaring to 51% from the 41% achieved previously. The Council's figures show that around 3,600 tonnes of black bag waste has been diverted from landfill which equates to around 360 lorry loads that are now being recycled and the same reduction in lorry movements that those trips would normally entail. Residents have also helped in being prepared to sort their recycling prior to collection, which has allowed the Council to operate more efficiently on rounds and to keep the cost of collection down from the 2.5 million household collections and 8 million receptacles emptied each year. People's efforts have also contributed to the high quality of materials collected with low levels of contamination. Demand for this type of 'cleaner' waste is high and as a result the Council has been able to work exclusively with UK companies meaning the material has less far to travel before it is reused and reprocessed. Aluminium to new cans, cardboard to cartons, plastic pots, trays and bottles to garden furniture, wheelie bins, food packaging and plastic milk bottles are just a few examples of how this waste has been reused. Councillor Chris Leather -Lead Member for Waste, said, "Many people will forget that back in 2018 we were one of the last councils to move to a fortnightly black bag collection in the country. At the time, and maybe even now, this was opposed by some in our community. However, while the costs of maintaining a weekly collection was a factor in our decision making, our main goal, to encourage more recycling and less waste ending up in landfill, was absolutely the right thing to do for the environment and for future generations. In real terms, the jump in recycling represents an amazing 25% improvement from where we were just a year ago with an emphatic reverse in the decline we were previously seeing year on year. This would not have been possible without people embracing the new service and it is perhaps no coincidence that this is now also being championed by our younger generations concerned about plastic pollution and climate change.

We can still do more, and our focus will now be on areas of the district where participation has been harder to improve. We will also look to find ways to introduce further materials that we can collect. But in the meantime, I would like to thank all of our residents who have participated in this success and try to encourage others to take up the challenge and reduce our landfill figures even further from the 2 million bags we still bury in the ground each year. Food waste and garden waste is processed locally as below. Much of the remainder is sorted locally e.g. Exeter and then recycled as follows:

Food waste: Holsworthy and is turned into fertiliser and fuel gas

Garden waste: Open windrow compost site where it is turned into high quality compost

Paper: Norfolk where it is recycled into both regional and national newspapers

Cardboard: Kent recycled into carton manufacturing

Aluminium: Cheshire – melted down into aluminium ingots which are used to manufacture new cans.

Steel cans: Wales where they are recycled into new steel products

Plastic pots: Leeds where it is used to manufacture large plastic items such as garden furniture, plastic pallets and wheelie bins. 'Tough and squeezy'

Plastic: Essex – recycled and reused to make plastic milk bottles

Plastic drink bottles: Lincolnshire – where it is recycled into plastic pellets used to produce food grade packaging

Other News

- 1) Climate change issues becoming dominant. Devon CC voted to be carbon neutral (CN) by 2050. Torridge voted to CN by 2030. Torridge has a good record with many natural advantages to achieve these aims.
- 2) Electric vehicular charging points coming on line in various public points across the district
- 3) Smarter parking meters now installed. Savings in the region £100k

My contact details for any issue with TDC.

Phone 01237 422875

Email councillor.pennington@torridge.gov.uk

Phil Pennington

Ward Member for Monkleigh and Putford

Buckland Brewer Parish Website – report 1st ½ 2019

From Jane Lowe, Webmaster

Report dated 3rd July 2019

Dear Chair of the Parish Council & fellow Councillors,

Please find my ½ annual report below on the activity and function of the now mandatory Parish Council website.

Monthly access activity continues to increase, as can be seen from the graph below. It is reasonable to assume that many users are “regulars” and that we are getting new viewers also. As you can see from the first graph, over 1400 users accessed and viewed our Home Page in June.

As can be seen from the second graph, there is an unusual and unexplained “spike” in the last week of June – there are many possible causes. Whether this is new viewers/users catching on, or (more likely) whether there is a specific item of interest, is unclear.

There was a large number of “hits” on 3 advertised food/entertainment events in the last week which could account for this. Continuing to monitor trends into the next quarter end may offer clarity.

It is disappointing that whilst there is a good nucleus of viewers/readers (many give verbal feedback) very few seem to want to contribute articles and news of their own. I continue to need to chase most advertisers, specifically clubs & societies, (despite the fact that they gain benefit from free advertising which is reaching a fairly large viewership) for up to date information. Photographs exhibited on the Home Page slide show, together with articles, are mostly mine. Most clubs/societies respond positively to chasing but this time consuming and laborious, and this task does need to be borne in mind by any successor/s in the Webmaster role. Advertising out of date material is undesirable and whilst the advertisers themselves are most likely accountable for wrong data given, it cannot reflect well on the site’s sponsors.

My own time taken has averaged out to 67 hours over the 6 month period, just over 10.5 hours per month. It is a widely known fact that statistics recorded in this way are usually an under-estimate despite my attempts at accuracy – none of the recordings include “thinking” time or measurement of statistics. In addition the site needs to be maintained on a regular basis – failure to do this becomes evident to the users fairly quickly and their attention is lost.

I continue to receive and manage enquiries which relate primarily to non-website matters, e.g. Village Hall availability, bus times etc.

The Parish Clerk has advised me that auditors have expressed very positive views on this site and whilst I remain “Webmaster” alongside the Parish Clerk, I will endeavour to continue to publish good quality, relevant and diverse content.

Use of the website by our parishioners appears now to have “bedded in” and is on the increase although at some stage, if our users are Buckland Brewer people (& possibly the surrounding area), as I believe because of feedback, then this use will peak and level out.

There will remain those who prefer to use the Village Scene magazine (or even better, both) and this has always been the intent, that the two should function in parallel.

I shall also be grateful if you let me know if any particular statistic is required and I will endeavour to provide it, assuming that it can be provided without expensive software changes from the service provider, Clystnet, or a large increase in my time.

I believe it is fair to say that the website is starting to become part of community life and in order to support me or any future “Webmaster” I request that parish councillors use it, contribute to it (via me), and also recommend it to parishioners.

I look forward to your comments and any requests.

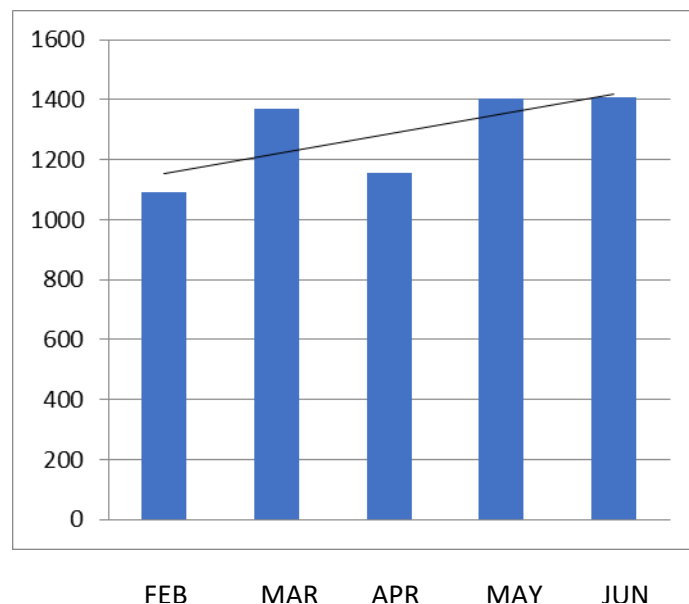
Kind regards,

Jane Lowe

Community Webmaster

3rd July 2019

WEBSITE MONTHLY READERSHIP FROM JAN- END JUNE 2019



4-WEEKLY WEBSITE ACCESS TRENDS OVER 4 MONTHS

