

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
OF BUCKLAND BREWER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 11th SEPTEMBER 2019 AT 7:30pm
IN THE PARISH CHURCH SCHOOL ROOM

Members Present: Mrs Barbara Babb, Mr Andrew Hewitt, Mr George Heywood, Mr Trevor Mills and Mr David Watson. Mr Bob Wilson also attended and was co-opted at this meeting

Also in attendance: 1 member of the public and Cllr. Phil Pennington (Torridge Council)

Parish Clerk: Mr P Blosse

KEY: Actions are shown in bold blue type Decisions are shown in bold red type
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74. Apologies for Absence Cllr. Barry Parsons

75. Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 14th August 2019: The minutes of the meeting held on 14th August 2019 were not agreed. Cllr Heywood thought that item 73.a, recording an objection to the development at Barton Court, should have recorded that the Council supported the development of the new dwellings but objected to the joint access arrangement with the neighbouring property and the additional traffic that could cause difficulties at the access to the main road and at the narrow junction between Barcott and the vicarage wall. This view was not supported by the majority of the Councillors and the Clerk pointed out that it was not possible to both support and object to an application. It was also noted that the Parish Council had asked for the application to be called in if it was likely that officers would approve it, and this conflicted with a decision to support the application. **It was agreed that the Clerk would draft an additional comment for the minutes, for approval at the next meeting, that made it clear that the Parish Council had no objection to the additional dwellings.**

76. Declarations of Interest Barbara Babb re item 87b, development of 35 new houses at Lower Abbots.

77. Public Participation Jim Lowe explained that the Buckland Brewer Education Support Fund committee had held its first meeting and that the bank account had been set up. It had also received its first donation, from the Mini-Market, for which he was very grateful. Three applications had already been received with at least 2 more in the pipeline. The committee will meet on 1st October to approve this year's grants. A quiz is being organized for later in the year and there will be more fund raising events in the future. Jim also talked about item 87.b, the development at Lower Abbots. He said it was a credit to the Parish Council that it had consulted widely with the community and that, consequently, there were few, if any, objections. He asked the Parish Council to press for all the affordable houses to be offered as full rental properties and to avoid any shared ownership options.

78. County and District Councillors' Reports:

a. Councillor Barry Parsons (Devon County Council): Not present

- b. Councillor Phil Pennington (Torridge Council): Cllr. Pennington said that he had been asked to call in the Barton Court development and had, at first, elected not to do so but, having been contacted by some local residents, heard about a couple of accidents and inspected the site, he had changed his mind. The Wharf Development is ready to be signed off. Plans are available online. Central Government has approved a 'High Street' grant, which will help with improvements in the town centre, but he will continue to fight for more rural development, e.g. transport and broadband. He explained that Torridge Council is now re-convening following the summer break and that the next day would be 'Strategy Day' which would set out the Council's main priorities. He asked the Parish Council to let him know its own main priorities. These were: for the Planning Department to take more notice of Parish Council opinions to improve its administration, for more affordable housing and for better rural transport.

79. Clerk's Report: The Clerk said that he had booked a defibrillator training session for 6:30 pm on Friday 25th October 2019 in the Village Hall. Also, he had notified Torridge Council that the Parish wishes to adopt the BT phone box and that we intend to re-house the original defibrillator there. We will be contacted directly by BT in due course, but probably not earlier than November 2019.

a. **Correspondence:** There had been 45 items of correspondence since the last meeting. The Clerk highlighted:

- i) Event at North Devon Record Office, 17 Sep 2019. David Watson might be able to attend.
- ii) Climate taskforce to deliver Devon's carbon plan now appointed: See item 84
- iii) CPRE: Planning Workshop for Town and Parish Councils. 15th October 2019. Hatherleigh
David Watson might be able to attend.
- iv) Parish Plan Minutes: The minutes of all the meetings are now on the community website.
- v) Cllr. Barry Parsons: RE: Draft minutes: Buckland Brewer Parish Council, 14th August 2019:
Cllr Parsons had ensured that the damage to the Glen bridge was reported. He also offered financial support if the Parish Council decided to install another defibrillator, and advised that any issue over the shared access at Barton Court would need to be resolved by the disputing parties.
- vi) Cllr. Barry Parsons - Holsworthy Rural - County Councillor Update: Cllr Parsons had supplied a written report which is attached at appendix 1.
- vii) Jane Lowe: Speed sign in Buckland Brewer: Members had received a copy of an email from Jane Lowe to Councillors Parsons and Pennington. Members noted the comments and felt that it would have better if they had come from the Parish Council.
- viii) Update from Extinction Rebellion North Devon: See item 84

- ix) Gerrard Sables: Bus Meeting, Saturday 19th October 2019: Mr Sables, from Barnstaple, has arranged a meeting to start a 'Rural Bus Campaign' to fight for a bus service to rural areas in the evenings and at weekends, to which the Parish Council is invited.
- x) Devon Highways: Highways Parish & Town Council... (3 Oct 2019 - 15 Oct 2019): Devon Highways is holding another of its annual 'conferences' at various venues around the county. **It was agreed that Councillors Andrew Hewitt and George Heywood would attend the session in Merton on 15th October 2019.**
- xi) The Coach and Horses 10k Run: The Clerk read out a letter from the Nicki Wolfe and Will Slocombe, who are planning a 10k Run around the parish for 25th May 2020 in aid of the North Devon Hospice. **The proposal was supported unanimously and it was agreed that the Parish Council should consider a grant for the event in 2020.**

80. Co-option of New Councillors: Bob Wilson attended the meeting. He said that he had been a councillor for Frithelstock in the past and LEWA school governor. He intends staying in the village for many years to come and would like to make a contribution to the community. **It was agreed unanimously to co-opt him as a Parish Councillor.** He signed the Declaration of Acceptance and was given copies of the Notification of Interests form, the Code of Conduct and Gifts Register. **The Clerk will email to him copies of other relevant policy documents.**

81. Grant Application: Buckland Brewer Education Support Fund The Clerk explained that the newly formed Buckland Brewer Education Support Fund committee had held its first meeting and that a bank account had been opened. The committee is meeting on 1st October to consider this year's applications which rely on receiving a grant from the Parish Council. The committee had discussed the possibility of extending grants to younger age groups and the Clerk talked about a recent email that had highlighted the demand for this. **Members approved a grant of £1,500. It was also agreed that in future years all grant applications would be considered at the August or September meetings, rather than later in the year.**

82. Consideration of the Agreement to join the DCC Community Road Warden Scheme:

Following a brief discussion of how the scheme works and reassurance from Andrew Hewitt that the parish council would not be committed to do any more work than it wished to do, **it was agreed unanimously to join the Devon Highways Road Warden Scheme.** Works would consist mainly of grass cutting, sign cleaning, gully cleaning and weeding. It was noted that the work could be done by anyone appointed by the Parish Council and that three people could be nominated to undertake the free Chapter 8 training. It was agreed that **Andrew Hewitt and Trevor Mills would do the training and that the contractor who currently cuts the grass for the Parish Council would also be asked by Trevor Mills if he would like to join them.**

83. Request for cutting grass verges in Tower Hill: George Heywood had checked with Land Registry and confirmed that the roadside half of the banks referred to in Jim Lowe's sketch map were owned by Devon County Council. The extent of the works that might be undertaken throughout the parish was discussed and how this might tie-in with the Road Warden Scheme. **It was agreed that by December 2019 Andrew Hewitt and Trevor Mills will complete a survey of the parish to determine the extent of the works in time for costings to be completed by January 2020 when the Council will determine its budget for 2020/21.**

84. Climate Change – Request to Nominate a Parish Representative A small group of private individuals is trying to establish a 'Climate Emergency Network' to monitor developments in climate change matters and to share ideas. Parish Councils have been asked to nominate representatives. Although there was a scepticism about the effectiveness of such bodies **it was agreed that David Watson would be nominated as a point of contact** and that he would report back on his initial experiences before the Parish Council decided whether to remain a member of the network.

85. School Field Rental Agreement and Proposed Amendment to Covenant: Nothing further to report. The Clerk had contacted Cllr Barry Parsons who has asked the County officers to explain the delay.

86. Members' Reports:

Barbara Babb (i) reported another large pothole on Glen Bridge **which the Clerk will report.** (ii) branches of the tree on the village green are overhanging the path and need cutting back. Trevor Mills said that Steve Harding would also like the canopy of the tree lifted to benefit the plants. **Trevor will undertake the work.** (iii) the parking area for the Post Office van still needs to be repainted. **Andrew Hewitt will do this.**

Andrew Hewitt had been in touch with one of the local GP surgeries concerning the Torrington 100 'social prescribing' scheme. He was reassured that the only communication about patients referred to them would be between the GPs and the Torrington 100 Community Link Worker.

David Watson (i) will be attending his first DALC meeting next Monday and will report back at the next meeting, (ii) the churches are organising a 'Reminiscences Meeting' for 10th October 2019 – an opportunity for people of all ages to explore memories. It was agreed that the Parish Council would donate £25.00 towards the facilitator's fee from The Plough.

Bob Wilson talked about the flashing speed sign and the temptation to mainly younger people to speed up in order to beat the sign or to see how high they can get it to register.

87. Planning:

- a. Application: 1/0745/2019/FUL, Timber Lodge, Proposed agricultural building for calf rearing – **Supported unanimously**
- b. Application: 1/0788/2019/FULM, Land North Of East Hill Park (Lower Abbots), Proposed Development of 35 New Houses and associated works It was felt that the Parish Council needed more time to read and fully understand the application as it consisted of about 80 documents and the meeting had already overrun its 2 hour target. **It was agreed that an extra meeting would be held on 18th September 2019 to discuss the plans more fully.** In the meantime, **the Clerk would try to obtain a copy of the latest S106 proposals.**
- c. Decision: 1/0516/2019/FUL, Thorne Farm, Alterations and extension to existing annexe – Granted permission - noted
- d. Decision: 1/0581/2019/CPL, 1 Rectory Close, Certificate of proposed lawful use for insertion of window to rear elevation – Granted permission - noted

88. Accounts

a. Receipts and Payments (*August bank statement not yet received*)

i) Bank balances as at 31st July 2019 (£48,201.80):

- (1) Parish Council Current Account was £6,922.61
- (2) Thornhillhead Moor Account was £7,069.75
- (3) Savings Account was £34,209.44

ii) Fund balances as at 31st July 2019 (£48,201.80):

- (1) General Account - £21,132.05
- (2) Thornhill Head Account - £27,069.75

iii) Payments due (£2,198.02 + VAT) The following list of payments was approved:

- (1) Parish Clerk's salary, expenses and associated PAYE (August 2019): £486.72 including PAYE of £81.70
- (2) M F Garden Services, grass cutting - £194.00
- (3) E.on, electricity - £7.31 + VAT
- (4) South West Water, Water charges - £9.99
- (5) Buckland Brewer Education Support Fund, Grant - £1,500.00

iv) Receipts (£159.52)

- (1) Western Power, Wayleaves - £159.52

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

Dates of Future Meetings:

Parish Council (Planning), Wednesday 18th September 2019 (6:00pm in the Parish Church Schoolroom)

Parish Council, Wednesday 9th October 2019 (7:30 in the Parish Church Schoolroom)

Signed as a true record:

Chairman: **Date:**

County Councillor 'Update' Holsworthy Rural (3 September 2019)

Dear Members and Officers,

I do hope that everyone has enjoyed the recent holiday period as we start to think about getting in shape for Autumn, and, for what, I think, is going to be a very interesting year ahead! This period (summer holidays) of the year is usually less busy (although, we do have the 'B' word which is causing a lot of interest!), but I would like to mention one or two matters of some significance which, I hope, you might find of some interest.

Blue Badge Scheme

There have been recent changes to the Blue Badge scheme which were introduced on 20 August 2019 and will now allow people with hidden disabilities such as mental health conditions, dementia and Crohn's Disease to receive permits to park in disabled parking spaces. It's a very welcome change.

A Blue Badge lasts for three years and it is policy for a renewal notice to be issued automatically at least six weeks before it expires. If Blue Badge holders move during that time they can phone Devon County Council on [0345 155 1006](tel:03451551006) or e-mail csc.bluebadge@devon.gov.uk to let the County Council know any new address.

Ash Dieback

A current major threat to Devon's trees, hedges and woodland is arising from the spread of ash dieback throughout the county. For more information, including a call for action now to combat this disease in Devon, please visit the Devon Ash Dieback Resilience Forum website (<https://www.devonashdieback.org.uk/>). The website provides key information and advice relating to ash dieback in Devon.

Highways

Much of my time as you know is spent on matters related to Highways. I am meeting again with officers from Highways in a week or so's time to cover some of the particular issues currently being experienced by those in the ward. I have also received an update from Paul Wilkins, Routine & Reactive Auditor at Highways.

Please continue to encourage pothole defects being reported via the 'Report a Problem' page on the DCC website. Problems will remain visible on the map until such time as the enquiry is closed down. Historically, when this happens it doesn't always necessarily mean a repair has taken place. A large quantity of the reports received from members of the public are often duplicates of existing reports,

have already been repaired, cannot be located due to inaccurate positioning on the map or do not meet intervention criteria, as set out in our [Highway Safety Policy](#).

Defect reports can be tracked on the 'Report a Problem' page using the enquiry number issued at the time of logging the defect (clicking 'Track an existing problem').

Paul has informed me that there is work to improve the automated messages - dictated by the outcome of the gangs/inspectors attendance to the report.

In a bid to address the inefficiencies associated with relying on public pothole reports DCC has recently been trialling a triage process with dedicated inspectors visiting and assessing all public pothole reports logged on our website. I understand from Paul that there has been a dramatic improvement in the number of repairs taking place, through the verification of actual safety defects being sent to repair gangs. This process commenced in July of last year and was introduced in to West Devon recently. It is now countywide. As a second strand to this, and in a bid to reduce future repeat reports work has been done to address serviceability defects. These are potholes or areas of general deterioration that do not meet our intervention criteria to be considered a safety defect, but that have resulted in a public report nonetheless. In these instances defects are, generally, being repaired, or, at the very least the information passed to asset management teams for consideration for future schemes.

The introduction of this process has resulted in our term maintenance contractor receiving verified, consistent works instructions which are yielding a more consistent output. I understand from Paul that we're already seeing a reduction in the overall number of pothole reports across the network.

I emphasized to Paul again the concerns raised around checking of workmanship and timeliness of repairs and he informed me that contractually we work to an auditing figure of 5% (which I have already mentioned to many parishes) of all defect repairs carried out. This sample is randomly chosen. Where it is found that works have been completed to an inadequate level DCC request that the contractor returns to put these right, as per the agreed specification, at no extra cost. This same rule applies when DCC is made aware of repairs that have failed. There is also a series of key performance indicators which monitor key metrics like timeliness of repairs.

Funding for Village Halls

I get a number of requests requesting information related to funding for village halls. Please note the information below which is very recent:

<http://trusthousecharitablefoundation.org.uk/>

<https://www.fundingforall.org.uk/funds/defra-village-hall-improvement-grant-fund/>

<http://acre.org.uk/our-work/village-hall-improvement-grant%20fund>

I hope the above is helpful.

With every best wish, Barry