

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
OF BUCKLAND BREWER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 11th OCTOBER 2017 AT 7:30 AT
BUCKLAND BREWER SCHOOL

Members Present: Mrs Barbara Babb, Mrs Marie Douglas, Mr George Heywood, Mrs Elisa Hurley, Mr Jim Lowe, Mr Trevor Mills, Mr Andrew Hewitt, Mrs Rosemary Sanders, and Mr David Watson.

Also in attendance Martin Rich, Devon Communities Together, Cllr. Barry Parsons (DCC)

Parish Clerk: Mr P Blosse

KEY: Actions are shown in bold blue type Decisions are shown in bold red type
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537. **Apologies for Absence:** Claire McIntosh, Hicks & Co.

538. **Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 13th September 2017:** The minutes of the meeting held on 13th September 2017 were agreed and signed.

539. **Declarations of Interest** George Heywood regarding item 544.f (Footpath Diversion) and Elisa Hurley regarding item 548.c (Education Support Fund Grants).

540. **Public Participation:** None

541. **Parish Plans: Presentation my Martin Rich, Devon Communities Together:** Martin Rich explained that a review of the Parish Plan could be either a 'light overhaul' of the existing plan or a complete revision starting again from scratch. It should be developed from an examination of what has and hasn't been achieved to date and how the dynamics of the community might have changed. A steering group ought to be established, including representatives from the parish council and the community at large. Different groups might take on responsibility for different aspects of the plan. A survey would quantify the process but is not compulsory. Website based surveys using software like 'Survey Monkey' usually get low response rates. Martin felt that the most comprehensive and reliable surveys were still paper-based or face-to-face questionnaires. He provided some examples of how other parishes had presented their plans, including a comprehensive 'Village Design Statement' published by Winkleigh Parish Council. Andrew Hewitt asked whether Neighbourhood Plans or Parish Plans were best. Martin said that Parish Plans have a wide reach, covering more than just the built environment. Jim Lowe said that the process would take at least a year and that a public meeting ought to be held to kick it off. **It was agreed to add this to the agenda for the next meeting and that the plan ought to be a Parish (or Community) Plan, rather than a neighbourhood plan, and should go up to 2031, to coincide with the Local Plan.** Martin was thanked for making time to visit us and for his presentation.

542. **Thornhillhead Moor Update: Claire McIntosh, Hicks & Co.:** Claire was unable to attend this meeting but has been invited to next month's.

543. **Clerk's Report:**

- a. **Correspondence:** 37 items of correspondence were distributed since the last meeting. The Clerk highlighted the following items: i) a list of dates for the next round of Devon Highways Parish & Town Council Conferences, which **Andrew Hewitt will attend.** ii) The October update from Cllr Barry Parsons which included a link to a 'Devon Funding News' web page and some details about the

'Pothole Action Fund'. iii) A course being run by TTVS on Facebook and Twitter which David Watson and Jane Lowe have been booked onto and required approval for the £50 course fees (**agreed**). This is a follow up course to the Social Media course that Jane attended last month. iv) Torridge Council is again doing a Rough Sleepers Census. The Clerk asked if councillors knew of rough sleepers in the parish. There were none. v) Planning Enforcement, Land at Eckworthy. This has now resulted in a court case and the offender has been fined £1,000 with £3,000 costs. He faces 28 days imprisonment if he fails to pay and continues to be subject to meeting the terms of the Enforcement Notice. vi) Jim Lowe asked **the Clerk to book him a place on the Communities in Control Workshop on 31st October.** vii) Following a message from Devon Highways about the Snow Warden Scheme, **Andrew Hewitt was asked to carry out a survey of the grit bins to identify any that needed refilling or repair.**

b. Social Media Workshop, 27th September 2017: Jane provided some feedback by email, which **the Clerk will distribute.** The course had proved helpful and she is booked to attend a follow-up course with David Watson on 7th November. It is clear that more could be done to link the parish website with the Parish Council's Facebook page. **The Clerk and Jane will work on this in the coming month.**

c. Clerk's Appraisal Meeting: This was set for 23rd November 2017 in the Church School Room. The Personnel Sub-committee now comprises Jim Lowe, Andrew Hewitt, Barbara Babb and Elisa Hurley.

544. Fields and Allotments:

- a. Works to Sports & Amenity and School Fields: The Clerk had obtained 6 'No Waiting' traffic cones and two 'Keep Clear' signs for the gateposts. It was reported that the air ambulance had landed in the field today (11th October). There is just the fencing works to do now, which will be completed when weather permits.
- b. School Field Rental Agreement: Mark Reynolds, who had been working for DCC in the negotiation of the school field lease agreement, had contacted the Clerk on 10th October. He explained that the delay in preparing the agreement had been due to the school becoming a trust school. These issues had now been resolved and DCC had asked him to carry on, but the costs are to be charged to the school and any agreement will bear their name. He is aware of the Council's proposed revisions to the draft heads of agreement and felt that these could be resolved fairly easily and quickly. The Education Department has asked whether the Parish Council would have any objection to them erecting a modular building on part of the land, probably between the back of the village hall and the school's back gate. This would be a separate agreement with the County Council for that parcel of land. **It was agreed that this would be acceptable but would require the Education Department to consult with the Village Hall Trustees.**
- c. Field and allotment inspection, 9th September 2017: The Clerk had written to all the field tenants about the items needing attention. An email had been received from Kate Slocombe which the Clerk read out. He was asked to advise her that, if the barn is not required by the next tenant, it might be necessary for her to remove it and the hardstanding. **Retrospective permission was given for the work that she has done.** Chris Kaminski had commented that although last month's minutes said that no-one had trimmed their hedges or cut their paths, he regularly does his on plot 13.
- d. Establishment of Fields and Allotments Sub-Committee – Membership and Meeting Frequency: It was agreed that the first meeting will be held on 26th October 2017. The following members were appointed: Trevor Mills, Andrew Hewitt and Elisa Hurley. Elisa will chair the first meeting. It was also agreed that an allotment holder should be invited to join the sub-committee. Its terms of reference will be to consider the medium and long-term issues concerning the use of the land and any maintenance requirements, review allotment and field rents and consider any complaints or suggestions from tenants. The sub-committee

will not be a decision-making body but will make recommendations for consideration by the Parish Council.

- e. Allotments: New Gate: Work in progress.
- f. Proposed Footpath – Meeting with Footpaths Officer and Recommendation: A constructive site meeting was held with the Footpaths Officer, Martin Caddy, on 25th September. A mutually acceptable route was agreed, including diverting the path around the adjacent field owned by George Heywood. The Ramblers Association has raised some “concerns”. **The Clerk will now submit a formal application.** The field tenant had been consulted and was happy with the proposals.

545. Third Age Events and Activities: Twelve people had attended the recent exercise group in the Chapel (10 ladies and 2 men). A ‘social group’, possibly to be called the ‘4 o’clock Club’ will be held in the village hall on 23rd November and 14th December.

546. Commemorative Plaque for the Village Green Seat: **It was agreed that the original wording that had been engraved into the old seat would be repeated on a plaque on the new seat: “To the kind people of Buckland Brewer in memory of their vicar Rhys Cwerfyl Richards 1906-1965”. Andrew Hewitt will arrange.**

547. Community Governance Reviews: The Clerk read an email from the Monitoring Officer at Torridge explaining the process of reviewing parish boundaries and constitutions prior to the next round of parish council elections in 2019. There was some debate, mainly around the additional burdens being placed on town and parish councils due to economic constraints, but it was suggested by Jim Lowe, and generally agreed, that any changes could only work if they came from the top down and that a complete overhaul of local government was needed, perhaps reducing the number of tiers.

548. Grant Applications 2017/18: The Clerk read a letter of thanks from the Community Shop for the grant that was approved recently. The Council considered a number of applications and made the following approvals:

- a. Annual Grants Specified in the 2017/18 Budget:
 - I. Buckland Brewer Village Hall – **approved £833.47 subject to receipt of the next set of audited accounts. The Clerk to write to them.**
 - II. Buckland Brewer Playing Field Association - **£300 was earmarked** but was subject to a review by the Playing Field Association following the proposal that the £15,000 wind turbine monies could be split between both capital and revenue expenditure. **The Clerk to write to them.**
 - III. Lemon Jelly Youth Work - **£300 was approved subject to the receipt of satisfactory audited accounts. The Clerk to write to them.**
 - IV. The Church of St Mary and St Benedict – **Approved £200**
 - V. North Devon Records Office – **Approved £200**
- b. Other Small Community Grants:
 - I. Buckland Brewer Skittle Club – **Approved £150.00**
 - II. Buckland Brewer Bowls Club – **Approved £150.00**
 - III. Torridge Volunteer Cars – **Approved £100**
 - IV. Life Education, Wessex and Thames Valley – **Earmarked £135 with a request that Parkham Parish Council offers the other 50%. Clerk to write to Parkham School.**
 - V. **£65.00 was earmarked for Citizens Advice, who normally request a grant towards the end of the financial year.**
- c. Education Support Fund Grants:
 - I. Members considered applications from 5 young people aged between 16 and 20, all of whom had lived in Buckland Brewer all their lives. **Grants amounting to £1,000.00 were approved for 4 of the applicants.**

549. Flashing Speed Signs and Wireless Monitoring Systems: Jim Lowe had received a quotation for installing a battery-operated, programmable flashing light of £1,800. A solar panel variety

was available for an extra £500. **It was agreed to investigate further with Devon Highways about installation of a light.**

550. Members' Reports

Cllr. Barry Parsons (DCC): Barry had attended Cabinet today. It had approved an application to central government for improvements to the A361 and would be competing with 15 other bidders for about £88 million from a pot of £350 million. Torridge and North Devon Councils will also be asked to contribute, probably from monies raised through s106 agreements. An initiative was being put together to look at 'purposeful systems – looking at the value people get out of services and how to stop things happening that prevent people from getting what they want or need. Barry said that the County was still experiencing real financial challenges. Although an extra £7.5 million had been granted for Children's Services, Devon's children still get about £290 per year less than the national average. In spite of this, whereas the national average for the percentage of schools with 'good' or 'outstanding' classifications is 87%, Devon has achieved 93%. Barry had recently met with the Head Teacher at Buckland Brewer Primary School and intends to meet with her regularly. Barry explained that he is on the Health and Welfare Committee. He was committed to trying to re-open the beds at Holsworthy and noted that with this latest closure, Torridge now has no hospital beds at all in its area. He had also recently attended a HATOC (Highways) meeting and recommended that a representative from Buckland Brewer attends one of the Highways Conferences.

George Heywood had obtained a quotation from the Council's contractor of £350 for the first 2 runs of salting and £250 for subsequent runs. There would be a charge of £100 for extra runs on the same night. **It was agreed that the Council would offer a sum of £150.00 towards the cost of storing the salt for this year.**

551. Planning: Application: 1/0627/2017/FUL, Lydeland Water, Erection of Dwelling – Affecting a Public Right of Way: Members felt that the submission was very poor, almost undecipherable in parts and did not show the impact on the right of way. **It was agreed unanimously to object to the application and suggested that the applicant should submit a revised, clearer application.**

552. Accounts:

a. Receipts and Payments:

I. Bank balances as at 30th September 2017 (£50,045.65):

1. Parish Council Current Account was £7,794.80
2. Thornhillhead Moor Account was £14,155.19
3. Savings Account was £28,095.66

II. Fund balances as at 30th September 2017 (£50,045.65):

1. General Account - £21,890.46
2. Thornhill Head Account - £28,155.19

The following items were approved retrospectively for September 2017:

III. Payments due 13th September 2017 (£638.62 + VAT)

1. Buckland Brewer Village Hall, Hall Hire - £8.50
2. Royal British Legion, Wreath - £40.00
3. Grant Thornton, Ext. Audit Fee - £200 + VAT
4. Devon Communities Together, Conference Fee - £30.00
5. D & I Bridgman, Fencing and gates - £351.63 + VAT
6. E.on, electricity - £8.49 + VAT

IV. Payments due 11th October 2017 (£3,126.59)

The following list of payments was approved:

- V. Parish Clerk's salary, expenses and associated PAYE (August and September 2017): £906.97, including PAYE - £133.10 and the purchase of traffic cones and signs at £74.35 (inc. £9.44 VAT) and Data Protection Registration of £35.00
- VI. TTVS, Social Media Courses - £60.00
- VII. E.on – Electricity (direct debit) - £8.30 + VAT
- VIII. DALC, Training and Conference Fees – £125.00 + VAT
- IX. Rosemary Sanders, Travel Expenses, New Cllrs Course - £25.20
- X. Andrew Hewitt, Travel Expenses, DALC Conference – £51.12
- XI. Fishleighs, storage of salt - £150.00
- XII. Church of St Mary and St Benedict, grant - £200.00
- XIII. North Devon Records Office (Barnstaple Town Council), grant - £200.00
- XIV. Buckland Brewer Skittle Club, grant - £150.00
- XV. Buckland Brewer Bows Club, grant - £150.00
- XVI. Torridge Volunteer Cars, grant - £100.00
- XVII. Education Support Fund Grants - £1,000.00

V. Receipts since August 2017 (£18,222.84):

- i. Allotment rents and deposits - £35.00
- ii. Field Rents - £1,470.00
- iii. Western Power, Wayleaves - £158.19
- iv. TDC: 2nd instalment of Precept - £5,501.50
- v. RPA: Thornhillhead Moor Stewardship - £11,058.15

- b. **Transfer of Funds to Savings Account:** It was agreed to transfer £10,000 from the Thornhillhead Moor Account to the Savings Account.
- c. **External Audit Report:** The Clerk read out the external auditor's report. There were no issues except the auditor had noted that, although there were a number earmarked funds, the general reserve was very low. This was because the Council had chosen to pay in 2016/17 a sum of about £2,300 in grant to the Village Hall out of its 2017/18 budget. General Reserves should be at a more acceptable level at the end of this year.
- d. **Budget Monitoring Report as at 30th September 2017:** The Clerk presented a budget monitoring report that had been circulated before the meeting showing a surplus to date this year of £8,189.63. This is before the payment of annual grants and includes the full year's precept. Further unbudgeted income of £5,000 is expected later in the year from the wind turbine and the communication mast rent. Unbudgeted income of about £2,000 from the initial mast rent has been allocated to grants to the Community Shop and the Education Support Fund. Although the year's budget of £4,000 for fencing and other works has already been spent, there is a reserve of an additional £5,000 for these works available to use.

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

Date of Next Meeting:

Fields and Allotments Sub-Committee: 26th October 2017 (Church School Room, 7:30pm)

Parish Council: Wednesday 8th November 2017 (Buckland Brewer School, 7:30pm)

Signed as a true record:

Chairman: **Date:**