

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
OF BUCKLAND BREWER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 12th FEBRUARY 2020 AT 7:30pm
IN THE PARISH CHURCH SCHOOL ROOM

Members Present: Mrs Barbara Babb, Mr Andrew Hewitt, Mr George Heywood, Mr Trevor Mills, Mr David Watson and Mr Bob Wilson

Also in attendance: Cllr. Barry Parsons (Devon County Council), Jane Lowe (Webmaster), Jim Lowe (co-option nominee)

Parish Clerk: Mr P Blosse

KEY: Actions are shown in bold blue type Decisions are shown in bold red type
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162. Apologies for Absence Cllr Phil Pennington

163. Minutes of the Meetings of the Parish Council held on 23rd January 2020: The minutes of the meetings held on 23rd January 2020 were agreed and signed.

164. Declarations of Interest Barbara Babb re item 175.e, Lower Abbots development

165. Public Participation None

166. County and District Councillors' Reports

a. Councillor Barry Parsons (Devon County Council): Cllr Parsons said that he had met with Tom Dixon, Digital Communications Lead, and had asked him to consider ways that the County Council could support the parishes to meet website accessibility standards. He has also spoken to Kieran Stanbury, the Highways Officer, and had mentioned the parish's flashing sign. He found Kieran to be supportive and pro-active. He wants to create a list of priorities and has asked parishes to provide their own lists of the 4 or 5 highest priority highways issues. **Andrew Hewitt and Trevor Mills will provide a list, via the Parish Clerk as soon as possible.** Cllr Parsons said that the County Council almost certainly approve a council tax increase of 3.99% for 2020/21, of which 2% would be ring-fenced for adult care services.

b. Councillor Phil Pennington (Torridge Council): Not present. Cllr Pennington had sent an email to say that the Holsworthy Agri-Business/Kivell's case was still subject to confidentiality rules but that he would give more feedback as soon as he was able to. Andrew Hewitt will ask Cllr Bob Hicks to keep the council updated.

167. Clerk's Report reported that a joint meeting has been arranged with the Parish Plan Steering Group for Monday 17th February starting at 7:30pm in the schoolroom. Also, a planning application has come in today with a consultation closing date of 6th March. It was agreed to hold an extra meeting on Thursday 27th February starting at 6:0pm in the schoolroom.

- a. Correspondence: There had been 41 items of correspondence since the December meeting. The Clerk highlighted, i) PCSO John McGovern: Pastures new: PCSO John McGovern had written to say that he was leaving his part-time PCSO post on 31st January to work full time with North Devon Council as their new Housing and Homeless Outreach Officer. On behalf of the Parish Council, the Clerk had written to him to thank him for his service.
 - ii) TTVS: Social and wellbeing sector engagement- Future High Street Fund transformation opportunities for Bideford: There is a possibility that Torridge Council could bid for funds from a “Future High Street Funding” scheme. A meeting had been arranged for 31st January, followed by a public drop-in session on 1st February and a public survey had been launched on SurveyMonkey. No-one had attended.
 - iii) Keep Britain Tidy: Get ready for the Great British Spring Clean: The Keep Britain Tidy Campaign had written to ask parish councils to support or organize ‘clean-up’ events. **It was agreed to hold an event on Saturday 18th April between 10:00 am and 12:00 am, ending at the Village Hall for refreshments. The Clerk will notify the school in case they would like to be involved.**
 - iv) Cllr Barry Parsons: Stagecoach Consultation: Members noted that Cllr Parsons had distributed to all the Holsworthy Division parishes his comments to Stagecoach concerning their consultation on changes to some bus services, mainly affecting Okehampton, Bude and Launceston.
 - v) DCC Highways: Drainage Maintenance Responsibilities Highways had issued a document detailing theirs and landowners’ responsibilities for drainage, which the Clerk has asked to be published in Village Scene and on the website.
 - vi) Invitation: North Devon Record Office, 24th March 2020, 2:00pm David Watson will attend, and also possibly Andrew Hewitt.
- b. Torrington 100 Grant Application The Clerk had submitted a claim for £500 from the Torrington 100 grant scheme towards the cost of adult fitness equipment for the amenity field. The closing date for applications was 31st January 2020. He will also apply for a grant from Devon County Council. Andrew Hewitt suggested that **an application should also be sent to the Bridge Trust.**
- c. Feedback from Training Seminar, 29th January 2020 Two important issues had emerged from the seminar that the Clerk had attended recently. Firstly, it is probable that the work needed to ensure that the community website is accessibility compliant by September 2020 is going to be more onerous than first thought. The speaker had suggested that Councils ought to have set aside a budget of £1,000 to meet the cost. Also, an accessibility statement ought to have been published by September 2019 even though the deadline for meeting the standard is September 2020. The Clerk has written a suitable statement, which has already been published. Secondly, climate change is high on everybody’s agenda and it was recommended that we join one of the networks to share knowledge and experience with other councils, and also that the Council declares a ‘climate emergency’. The matter will be discussed in depth at the annual parish meeting in April, where a panel of experts will all be talking and answering questions on the subject.

168. Co-option of New Councillors Since the last meeting, the Clerk has been approached or informed about three people interested in being nominated as councillors. One is on holiday and might be able to attend the March meeting, one has not responded to an email from the Clerk. Jim Lowe had submitted a written nomination. His nomination was proposed by Andrew Hewitt, seconded by George Heywood and approved unanimously. He signed a declaration of acceptance and took his place as a councillor immediately.

169. Dispensation for Cllr Bob Wilson in respect of Thornhillhead Moor Cllr Wilson and the Clerk signed a dispensation approving that Bob Wilson should be permitted to debate and vote on matters concerning Thornhillhead Moor.

170. Webmaster's Report Cllr Jim Lowe declared an interest and took no part in the item. Jane Lowe presented her annual Webmaster's Report and a copy of a report she had distributed to local organisations asking for more content. Although Jane's report suggested that she would welcome a replacement Webmaster some time in the coming year, she was aware of the work required to meet accessibility standards and offered to stay on at least long enough to see that completed. **It was agreed unanimously that Jane should be paid a single honorarium payment of £500 in recognition of the excellent work she has done in the past few years and the additional work that would be required in the coming months. It was also agreed that the Clerk should contact the website developers, DALC and any other agencies that might be able to offer practical help in meeting the accessibility standards. The Clerk will undertake an audit of the website in the near future and will report back on the estimated time and cost needed to meet the standards.**

171. Northern Devon Right to Travel Meeting, 29th February 2020: An individual, Gerrard Sables, is trying to organise a campaign to improve public transport services in North Devon and has called a meeting of interested parties on 29th February starting at 11:00am in Barnstaple Library.

172. V.E. Day Remembrance Events (George Heywood to Report): George suggested that, although the Parish Council had not agreed to organize any events for V E Day, he still felt that the day should be celebrated in some way. It was noted that V E Day coincides with the weekend of the Plant Sale and it was suggested that some recognition of the day could be tied in with that event. It was agreed that suitable 1940s music could be provided and that bunting and flags could be provided to decorate the village green. **The Clerk will purchase these. Also, David Watson will talk to Roger Waters about arranging for the bells to be rung at 2:55pm to coincide with bellringing events throughout the country.**

173. School Field Rental Agreement and Proposed Amendment to Covenant: There have been no further developments since the last meeting.

174. Members' Reports

Barbara Babb said that she had been approached by a parishioner who had complained about debris left in the road following hedge-cutting. George Heywood explained that farmers do the best they can but cannot be expected to sweep up everything.

Andrew Hewitt said that he and Trevor Mills had inspected the work carried out by SWEB at Thornhillhead. Also, they had found some asbestos sheets that had been dumped and had reported it to Torridge Council. He had attended the defibrillator training and praised the trainer for an excellent presentation. He noted that the pads and battery had shelf lives and needed to be replaced. The Clerk will provide details of the replacement costs. He had been looking at adult fitness equipment for the amenity field and asked all councillors to do some research for themselves. He also noted that the Thornhillhead Moor SSSI agreement runs out on 31st May 2021. **He will talk to Bob Hicks about the way forward.**

George Heywood asked **the Clerk to write to Arqiva to ensure that no additional equipment is being added to the mast on Thorne Moor in view of the development of 5G technology.**

Trevor Mills noted that SWEB have upgraded the cables from the school room at Thornhillhead Head to the new tower at Buckland Brewery. He also suggested that a new parish notice board might be needed as the current one is constantly full-up, often with posters advertising events in other villages. There was some discussion about a possible display board for the village, but no decision was reached at his time.

David Watson asked if the Parish Council would pay the hall bill for a community Fire Safety Talk taking place next month at a cost of £10. **This was approved unanimously.** He had reported some potholes on the road to Parkham. Also, he had arranged for the 10th June 2020 Parish Council meeting to take place at Thornhillhead Chapel.

Jim Lowe said that the seats on the village green need a coat of varnish. Andrew Hewitt said that he had the varnish and that he would do it when the weather permitted. Jim also noted that the Parish Council had given grants to the Youth Project 2018 and asked what progress was being made. Dave Watson said that a toddler group had been set up and that drama workshops had been arranged. A meeting was being arranged to discuss future projects.

Bob Wilson had reported various potholes and noted that there had been flooding at The Glen but that this had been cleared recently.

175. Planning:

- a. Application: 1/1157/2019/FUL, East Hele, Agricultural Building **Supported unanimously**
- b. Decision: 1/1027/2019/FUL, Land At Grid Reference 242441 120919, Buckland Brewer, Change of use of land from agricultural to equestrian etc. – Granted Permission – Noted
- c. Decision: 1/1137/2019/FUL, Eastview, Proposed construction of single storey office accommodation & welfare building – Granted Permission – Noted
- d. Wildlife Surveys by Devon Biodiversity Records Centre Jane Lowe had been in touch with the Devon Biodiversity Records Centre who have admitted that they have very little information about species in Buckland Brewer. Jane had asked whether the Parish Council wished to take up the matter with Torridge Council, which relies on the Biodiversity Centre for planning consultations. **Jim Lowe said that he would ask the school if they would like to be involved in information gathering and will report back at the next meeting.**

- e. Application 1/0788/2019/FULM. 35 dwellings at Lower Abbots – status report The Clerk had asked the Planning Department for an explanation about delays on the Lower Abbots development application, and had received a reply to say that “planning officer James Jackson is still making considerations in relation to the application”.

176. Accounts

a. Receipts and Payments

- i) Bank balances as at 31st January 2020 (£60,324.95):
(1) Parish Council Current Account was £10,130.74
(2) Thornhillhead Moor Account was £15,916.35
(3) Savings Account was £34,277.86
- ii) Fund balances as at 31st January 2020 (£60,324.95):
(1) General Account - £24,408.60
(2) Thornhill Head Account - £35,916.35
- iii) Payments due (£913.05 + VAT) The following list of payments was approved:
(1) Parish Clerk’s salary, expenses and associated PAYE (January 2020): £821.84, including PAYE of £112.10, mileage of £69.60 (mainly a seminar in Plymouth) and software licences of £169.98
(2) E.on, electricity - £6.90 + VAT
(3) SLCC, books - £72.30
(4) South West Water, water charges - £12.01
- iv) Receipts (£11,915.02)
(1) Allotment rents and deposits - £85.00

It was agreed to transfer £1,000.00 from the Thornhillhead Moor account to cover salary, administration, office overheads and audit costs for 2019/20.

It was also agreed to transfer £8,000.00 from the Thornhillhead Account and £5,000.00 from the General Account to the Savings Account.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10:00 pm

Dates of Future Meetings:

Joint Parish Council/Parish Plan Steering Group, Monday 17th March 2020 (7:30pm in the Parish Church Schoolroom)

Parish Council (Planning only), Thursday 27th February 2020 (6:00pm in the Parish Church Schoolroom)

Parish Council, Wednesday 11th March 2020 (7:30pm in the Parish Church Schoolroom)

Signed as a true record:

Chairman: **Date:**