

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
OF BUCKLAND BREWER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 12th JUNE 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

Also in attendance: None

Parish Clerk: Mr P Blossie

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

21. Apologies for Absence Councillor Barry Parsons (DCC)

22. Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 15th May 2019: The minutes of the meeting held on 15th May 2019 were agreed and signed.

23. Declarations of Interest None

24. Public Participation None

25. Clerk's Report:

a. Correspondence: There had been 50 items of correspondence since the last meeting. The Clerk highlighted:

- i) Cllr Barry Parsons: Holsworthy Rural - County Councillor Update (May 2019), which is attached at Appendix 1.
- ii) Devon Highways - Update - W191230944, Overgrown hedge obscuring village sign The Clerk had received a complaint about an overgrown hedge obscuring the village sign near the Hillpark entrance. When reported, Devon Highways said that they did not maintain this type of sign but, in fact, it had since been cut back by the DCC contractor. Members believed that the Gardening Club were maintaining various plots around the village and they might be willing to take on responsibility for keeping the village signs clear. **Andrew Hewitt also said that the fingerpost at Bowden Cross needed re-seating and that he would report this to Devon Highways.**
- iii) Devon Communities Together: Rural Futures Conference 2019: At the Heart of the Community: Event Reminder and Further Details **Trevor Mills and Andrew Hewitt will attend. The Clerk will book tickets.**
- iv) Grant request from Friends of Buckland Brewer School (FOBBS): A request had been received from FOBBS for a grant towards new ICT equipment for the school. The Clerk had responded to say that this was outside the Parish Council's powers.

- v) Torridge Council: Play Audit: A letter had been received asking for details of all play areas and open spaces within Torridge District to help with the creation of a Play Strategy. Members identified:

- The playing field
- The amenity field
- The School playing field
- The village green, and
- Thornhillhead Moor

The Clerk will notify Torridge Council.

- vi) Advertising sign for the community shop: The Clerk had contacted DCC about a sign for the shop and had been advised to apply for a brown tourist sign. However, having read the application form it would probably not qualify and would be expensive – between £400 and £700. **Andrew Hewitt said that he will get the existing sign on the finger post cleaned. Trevor Mills will investigate adapting one of the old Hillpark, yellow signs.**

- b. Grant Schemes Replacing the old TAP Fund Scheme: The grant previously known as the TAP (Town and Parish) Fund, (latterly the Communities Together Fund) has been replaced by three alternative sources of funds:

- i. DCC Doing What Matters Community Grants Fund – for grants of between £5,000 and £20,000 (25% match funding required) [see <https://www.devon.gov.uk/economy/business-support/doing-what-matters-communities-grants-fund/>]
- ii. Making the Connection Grants – for grants of up to £300 for small, local schemes (no match funding required) [<https://www.devon.gov.uk/communities/making-the-connection-grant/>], and
- iii. Crowdfund Devon – generating donations from the general public and businesses for local schemes (if enough can be raised through crowdfunding it might unlock extra resources from the Torridge Community Chest) [<https://welcome.crowdfunder.co.uk/crowdfund-devon/>]

Members were asked to study the terms and conditions online and consider any projects that might be suitable for any of these schemes. Closing dates are January 2020 for the current financial year.

- c. Internal Audit Report 2018/19 Copies of the annual audit report had been distributed prior to the meeting. The most significant item was the management of the Education Support Fund, which members were already aware of, and which is to be discussed later on this agenda. Members noted the report.

d. Vacant Allotment Plots Two allotment holders had given notice in the past week and the plots have been offered to two people on the waiting list. Both are half-plots. Another keen gardener has also been added to the waiting list this week.

26. Co-option of New Councillors: Notices and adverts have been issued but, so far, there have been no further nominations received. As explained at the last meeting, there has been one enquiry from an ex-resident who now lives East the Water. Having made further enquiries, this person does not own any property or work in the parish so could only qualify by the proximity of his house. From the nearest part of the parish boundary to his house is, according to online route maps, about 4.5 miles by road, and, by reference to the Ordnance Survey map, just over 4 miles “as the crow flies”. The Clerk has asked the Elections Officer at Torridge for their advice and has been told that the members of the Parish Council must use their own judgement as to whether he qualifies or not. The Clerk had also asked DALC but has received no reply as yet.

27. Election of County Committee of DALC 2019 – 2023: Nominations are invited for Parish Councillors to sit on the DALC County Committee. Torridge is entitled to send 5 representatives from the 48 parishes in the district. David Watson completed a nomination form which **the Clerk will submit to DALC.**

28. School Field Rental Agreement and Proposed Amendment to Covenant: An email had been received from the Parish Council’s solicitor explaining that the County Solicitor, on behalf of the school, were still questioning the clauses concerning the parish council’s right to use the school field when the school is not using it and to provide access for wayleaves etc. Her advice is that the clauses should be acceptable to the lessee and are reasonable. She has also queried whether the parish council would insist on clause 9.5b which requires all building and structures to be removed on termination. **It was agreed that clause 9.5b should be re-instated but that the words “if required” should be added between the words “shall” and “remove”.**

29. Future Administration of the Education Support Fund: to consider a paper offered by Jim Lowe: As previously discussed and highlighted in this year’s Internal Audit Report, the Education Support Fund needs to be managed in a different way in future as the Council is not empowered to make grants to individuals. Jim Lowe had submitted a paper offering to take on the responsibility of establishing a separate, not-for-profit, community-led organisation comprising about 6 parishioners who would administer the scheme in the same way as it is now by the Parish Council. Such an organisation would have the added advantage of being able to raise additional funds through local events and campaigns. It would be required to submit applications for grants from the Parish Council, supported by audited accounts, like other organisations in the parish. **It was agreed unanimously to accept Jim Lowe’s offer.** It is expected that the Parish Council will be asked to nominate one or two representatives to serve on the management committee, but the Parish Council would not want a controlling interest.

30. Condition of Roads in the Parish Andrew Hewitt said that he would be attending a county-wide HATOC meeting on the next day and wanted to draw up a list of roads in the parish that needed attention. Members identified:

- Monkleigh Mill Lane
- The middle of the road through the village
- Moorhead to Yeo Bridge

The drains in Orleigh Hill were also noted as in need of repair. Andrew will also ask about replacement salt supplies.

31. Members' Reports:

George Heywood asked whether dog owners had insurance in relation to worming due to the potential harm to sheep and other livestock from worms in dog faeces. **The Clerk will investigate, if possible.** He also noted that the hedge along Back Lane behind the Westward Housing Association properties was overgrown. **The Clerk will write to Westward.**

Trevor Mills asked whether the Parish Council ought to take on the responsibility of paying for the cutting of the communal verges in Orleigh Close. It was thought that currently the residents pay a total of about £200 a year for the service. There are no other verges in the parish that the Parish Council would need to cut. **It was agreed unanimously that the Parish Council would pay for the cuts in future. Trevor Mills will talk to the residents and ask our local grass-cutting contractor to add Orleigh Close to the Parish Council's works programme.**

Trevor also said that he hoped that another Parish Boundary Walk could be arranged. The route is about 20 miles in total and would require permissions from all of the landowners. This had been given willingly 20 years ago and it was hoped that the same response would be received for this event. It had been suggested by the Village Hall Trustees that a representative from each of the parish's organisations should form a working party to make all the arrangements and that it had been suggested that April 2020 would be the best time. Refreshments would be provided, and it would be possible for walkers to do as much or as little of the walk as they wished. **The idea was supported unanimously.**

32. Planning:

- Decision: 1/1050/2014/OUTM. Land Adjacent To, Orleigh Close, Buckland Brewer, Bideford, Outline application for up to 27 dwellings – Granted Permission – noted
- Decision: 1/0082/2019/FUL, Hembury Castle Annexe, Removal of condition 2 of planning permission – Granted Permission - noted

33. Accounts

- Receipts and Payments
 - i. Bank balances as at 31st May 2019 (£56,807.29):
 1. Parish Council Current Account was £15,528.10
 2. Thornhillhead Moor Account was £7,069.75
 3. Savings Account was £34,209.44
 - ii. Fund balances as at 31st May 2019 (£56,807.29):
 1. General Account - £29,737.54
 2. Thornhill Head Account - £27,069.75

iii. Payments due (£6,899.08 + VAT)

The following list of payments was approved:

1. Parish Clerk's salary, expenses and associated PAYE (May 2019): £431.13 including PAYE - £81.70
2. Michael Vanstone Plant Hire, resurfacing - £5,920.00 + VAT
3. SLCC, Annual Fees - £146.00
4. Community First, Insurance Premium - £205.81
5. Alison Marshall, Internal Audit Fee - £175.00
6. E.on, electricity - £8.93 + VAT
7. South West Water, water charges - £12.21

iv. Receipts (£3,361.27)

1. Field rent - £460.00
2. Openreach, wayleaves - £191.00
3. VAT Rimbursment - £2,710.27

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:30 pm

Dates of Future Meetings:

Parish Council (Planning only), Tuesday 2nd July 2019 (6:00pm in the Parish Church Schoolroom)

Parish Council, Wednesday 10th July 2019 (7:30 in the Parish Church Schoolroom)

Signed as a true record:

Chairman: **Date:**

Update – Holsworthy Rural (May 2019)

Notes for Holsworthy Rural Parishes and Holsworthy Town Council – May 2019

Dear Members,

I'd like to take this opportunity of congratulating all new parish, town, and district councillors to their respective parishes, Holsworthy Town, and to all district wards across the Holsworthy Rural County Ward. I would also like to express my appreciation for all the hard work done, too, of those previously representing our communities and look forward to the building of even more positive future outcomes for the residents we serve. My thanks go to our most able and hard-working Parish and Town clerks, too. Our clerks do a particularly good job in support of us all.

Elections can be a distraction from 'business as usual' for us all, and irrespective of which tier(s) of local government the focus sits. In this brief 'Update' I would like to mention just one or two matters of recent development. The first relates to that of funding for our schools for which many are aware falls some way short of the average national funding for children countrywide.

The Cabinet Member responsible for Children's Services, Cllr McInnes, following input from his colleagues has written to Education Secretary Damian Hinds on behalf of all the political parties on Devon County Council offering to meet him with headteachers from around the country to discuss school funding. Every child in one of our Devon schools receives £294 less than the national average - a loss to our schools of £27 million every year.

The maintenance of our roads is always a concern, and, not just locally nor county-wide, but nationally. Devon County Council Members spend much of their time trying to address related issues which are not inconsiderable. The Corporate, Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee 26 March 2019 had an item on its committee agenda "Highways Maintenance for Communities – findings of the East/Mid Devon trials" (a report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste). For those wishing to see that report please visit the link: <https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/documents/s24553/Maintenance%20for%20Communities.pdf> With my own Cabinet portfolio including Organisational Change (and, with a focus on 'Doing what Matters'), on 1 May 2019 along with the Cabinet Member for Highways, Cllr Hughes, I met with the Highways Asset Management Team to try and address some of the concerns being raised by our residents. In terms of pothole repairs I can confirm that Highways are rolling out a process which at the same time deals with repairs to specified potholes and also areas within the section of road which will within a short period of time also become a pothole. This process has been trialed and has shown to be successful by treating areas of carriageway which may not yet be a safety defect pothole in accordance with our policy but will clearly develop into such. This is seen as an efficient way of dealing with such repairs by reducing the number of visits to a specific location to deal with occasional potholes. It is, indeed, common sense!

We don't always get it right and I would be the first to put my hand up in that event. However, I do refer you to a recent national survey ... "Thriving Places Index (TPI)". (www.thrivingplacesindex.org) Please have a look at the link. TPI is a new way of looking at the strengths and challenges of where we live across the UK.

My every best wish,

Barry