

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
OF BUCKLAND BREWER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 13th NOVEMBER 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: 6 member of the public

Parish Clerk: Mr P Blosse

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

108. Apologies for Absence Bob Wilson, Cllr. Barry Parsons and Cllr. Phil Pennington

109. Minutes of the meetings of the Parish Council held on 9th October 2019: The minutes of the meetings held on 9th October 2019 were agreed and signed.

110. Declarations of Interest None

111. Public Participation Jim Lowe spoke about four items: i) he had been approached by residents of Orleigh Close wishing to know what grass cutting would be taking place there. A report is due to be presented at the next meeting. ii) the scheduled defibrillator training had not taken place as the hall was not unlocked. He asked if a telephone number could be displayed outside the hall in case a similar occurrence happened again. iii) On the subject of climate change, he had been encouraged by the Parish Council's previous comments and noted that Buckland Brewer had been the only local parish to support the wind turbine array. He noted that Fremington Parish Council was taking an active interest in the subject and suggested that they were asked to attend a meeting to explain their approach. Jim also suggested that one way to contribute would be to encourage everyone to do one thing. It was suggested that someone should be invited to facilitate a public meeting to find out about what the parish could do. Andrew Hewitt had looked at the Fremington website and felt that no practical suggestions were being offered on there yet. He felt that Buckland Brewer should be doing something to contribute. Using more public transport, reducing traffic speeds, planting trees and solar panel were all suggested as possible ideas. **It was agreed that Cllr Peter Christie would be asked to attend the Annual meeting in 2020 as he has a particular interest in these matters.** iv) Jim also asked for permission to speak again after the presentation of the Parish Plan, which was granted.

112. Presentation of Forward Plan for Thornhillhead Moor: Andrew Heywood explained that the current agreement expires on 31st May 2021 and the earliest that another application could be submitted would be 1st January 2022. There would be a period of about 7 months for which the Parish Council would get no financial support. It might be possible to extend the current agreement by 12 months but there was no guarantee and could depend on Brexit. Any new agreement should provide about the same level of financial support as the present one, ie, about £8,800 per annum. He said that any money remaining in the fund should go to the graziers but suggested retaining a sum of about £5,000 for maintenance. This was disputed. George Heywood believed that any uncommitted funds could be used by the Parish Council for future

maintenance of the SSSI. **Andrew was asked to double check and report back. He was fairly confident that the cattle grid maintenance is the responsibility of the County Council, but he will also check this and the legal liability for the barbed wire fencing alongside the road.**

Andrew was asked to ensure that the management fee invoice is submitted annually in future years.

- 113. Presentation of the Buckland Brewer Parish Plan:** Jo Miles, supported by Alan Sutton, presented the Parish Plan Report. It was a resume of the results of the consultation process, which included a number of public meetings and a questionnaire. All parishioners (393 homes) had been provided with the questionnaire and could respond by post or online. There had been a 44.2% response rate, representing the views of 335 parishioners. Jo highlighted demographics of how long parishioners had lived in Buckland Brewer, showing that 65% had lived here for less than 20 years, and 44% for less than 10 years. Jo picked out one or two of the suggestions that had emerged from the exercise, such as, mirrors for blind junctions, a new road around the village, more speed warning signs and speed humps and making more people aware of the self-reporting opportunities for potholes and other works that are needed from the County Council. There were a number of complaints about parking issues, dog fouling and comments about not wanting to see any further development in the parish. Andrew Hewitt suggested that the report should be presented at the next Annual Parish Meeting. Jim Lowe said that he was disappointed that the report offered no solutions and that without further development, the parish could lose the facilities that it currently enjoys, such as the pub and the community shop. Andrew thanked Jo and the rest of the Steering Group for all the work that they had put into the report. It was agreed that the Steering Group would remain active at least until after the review at the Annual Parish Meeting. It was noted that Jon Hector, who had chaired the group throughout the past 2 years, had recently resigned.

114. County and District Councillors' Reports:

- a. Councillor Barry Parsons (Devon County Council): Not present
- b. Councillor Phil Pennington (Torridge Council): Not present

115. Clerk's Report:

- a. Correspondence: There had been 76 items of correspondence since the last meeting. The Clerk highlighted:
 - i) Torridge Council: Annual Rough Sleeper Estimate: The Clerk had submitted a NIL return.
 - ii) Jane Lowe: copy of email to Cllr Barry Parsons, our meeting re Buckland Brewer speeding:
Jane had supplied copies of her correspondence with Cllr Parsons about speeding in the village in order to keep the Parish Council informed – noted.
 - iii) Torridge Council: Area Advisory Groups: Andrew Hewitt will attend the Torrington Area Advisory Group meeting on 26th November 2019
 - iv) Jane Lowe: website update: Members noted the comments from Jane Lowe in her email of 30th October, in particular the difficulty that she continues to experience in getting people to notify her of news and events, and that the Parish Council needs to plan for the time when Jane will no longer be able to continue to act as Webmaster.

- v) Cllr Barry Parsons: County Councillor Update: Cllr Parsons latest update report is attached at Appendix 1.
- vi) Devon Communities Together: Council Emergency Plan Preparation & Big Energy Saving Network Programme: It was agreed that Martin Rich would be asked to present this to the 2020 Annual Parish Meeting.
- vii) Lynton Town Council: Can you help save our fire & rescue service?: Andrew Hewitt said that the Fire Service is closing stations in order to pay for more retained firefighters and 4 more roaming engines. Lynton Town Council has asked for financial contributions towards a judicial review to try to stop the cuts. It was agreed that the Parish Council would express its support for Lynton Town Council's position but could not offer any financial support.
- viii) NALC: CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BULLETIN: The Clerk highlighted advice in one of the recent NALC newsletters concerning the period of purdah prior to the general election and asking councillors to exercise caution in any communications that could be perceived to be political or controversial. Also, a new Code of Conduct is due to be published by the LGA.
- ix) Letters and emails of thanks: Letters and emails of thanks had been received from Torridge Volunteer Cars, Citizens Advice and the North Devon Record Office for the grants awarded last month.
- b. To appoint members to the Fields and Allotments Sub-Committee and to approve dates for inspections and meetings:** An inspection had taken place on 9th November but had not included the fields. Another inspection will take place on 30th November and the Clerk was asked **to instruct Hicks & Co. to do a dilapidation inspection of the field that has recently been given up by the existing tenant. Trevor Mills will confirm his availability for a sub-committee meeting to take place around the first week of December.**
- c. Purchase of telephone box and arrangements to move the defibrillator:** A contract for the purchase of the telephone box, at a cost of £1.00, was agreed and signed by the Chair. As soon as it is countersigned by BT the box becomes the responsibility of the Parish Council. The Clerk was authorised to appoint an electrician and to arrange for the transfer of the defibrillator from the bus shelter to the telephone box at an estimated cost of £300.00. **The Clerk will write to the Chapel which currently supplies the electricity for the defibrillator box.**
- d. Confirm appointment of new Internal Auditor:** Members approved the appointment of Sarah Jenkins of Pinhoe, Exeter to act as Internal Auditor for the coming 12 months. Her appointment is to be reviewed after the completion of the internal and external audits for 2019/20.

e. 2020 Annual Parish Meeting – To agree a date and guest speaker: It was agreed that the following would be invited as guest speakers:

- Cllr. Peter Christie – Climate change and meeting the carbon zero target
- Martin Rich – Emergency Planning
- Tom Dixon – Devon Climate Emergency

No date has yet been set. **The Clerk will try to find a day that is mutually acceptable to the speakers.**

f. Defibrillator Training: The training organised for 25th October had not taken place because the village hall had not been unlocked. Unfortunately, the trainee and trainees had to return home. The Village Hall Trustees have apologised for the oversight and have offered to provide the hall free of charge for a future session. It was agreed that another session will be organised on a date suitable to Julia Landolfi and the Village Hall.

g. Clerk's Appraisal: The Clerk had attended the appraisal meeting on 31st October but none of the councillors arrived. A new date was agreed for Monday 18th November 2019 at 7:00pm in the Church Schoolroom.

116. Co-option of New Councillors: There had been no further nominations for the three vacant councillor posts.

117. Devon Climate Emergency: Tom Dixon of Devon County Council has asked Parish Councils to assist in publicizing the Devon Climate Emergency website and general awareness of the issue. He wants individuals and organisations to submit ideas and evidence to the Net-Zero Task Force and has suggested that the Parish Council might consider declaring a climate emergency and/or endorse the Devon Climate Declaration. Members noted that information was available on the DCC website. Davis Watson said that grants were available for installing electric charging points. **It was agreed to invite Tom to the Annual Parish Meeting as a guest speaker.**

118. VAS: Review of System Reports: The flashing sign was turned around again on 4th November. The Clerk had distributed monthly reports covering August to November and a summary of all the results since April 2019. The reports showed that there was slightly less traffic leaving the village at the north end than enters it at that point and that there were more drivers at or below the speed limit and less vehicles travelling at more than 25 mph. There were also considerably fewer vehicles travelling at over 40 mph. The possibility of a Community Roadwatch scheme was discussed.

119. Devon Highways Conference: Feedback from Andrew Hewitt: Andrew explained that the County was installing an asset register system to plot where all the drains are and that there were 2 schemes for tree-planting. He will investigate these further and report back. It was noted that the Parish Council needed to confirm that the Snow Warden contact details were up to date. Andrew had complained about the blocked drain at Orleigh Hill and had been told that there was a plan to plough the area.

120. DALC: Feedback from AGM and update on future management proposals: David Watson said that there had been discussions at the AGM about the new governance arrangements but gave no details. He also said that the importance of communicating with parishioners, especially through community websites and other electronic means, were becoming more important, and that these should be accessible through mobile phones. **It was agreed that the Clerk would take photos of the councillors for the website at the next parish council meeting.** The next DALC meeting will be on 9th December 2019.

121. School Field Rental Agreement and Proposed Amendment to Covenant: It was agreed that the covenantors' solicitors and County solicitors would be contacted again to try to progress this issue.

122. Devon County Council: Devon Permit Scheme and Formal Consultation: Noted; no comments submitted.

123. Parking Issues Outside the Community Shop: A pothole outside the community shop is causing some parking difficulties. **Andrew Hewitt offered to repair it.**

124. Members' Reports:

Barbara Babb i) said that the Community shop had asked again for permission to erect a permanent 'A' frame advertisement on the village green. This was turned down again. li) Permission was also sought to erect an advent scene on the village green. This was granted provided that it did not obscure sightlines.

David Watson reported that the Chapel was now operating a '0 to pre-school' age toddler group on Monday mornings.

125. Planning:

- a. Feedback from CPRE Seminar: David Watson said that he felt that the course had been worthwhile.
- b. Feedback re Barton Court Application (called-in): Andrew Hewitt reported that the Plans Committee had turned down his suggestion to refer the plan for investigation by Highways saying that Buckland Brewer "was not different to any other village" and had approved the development at Barton Court
- c. Application: 1/0908/2019/LBC, West Eckworthy Farm, Installation of two new ground floor windows **Supported unanimously**
- d. Decision: 1/0745/2019/FUL, Timber Lodge, Proposed agricultural building for calf rearing –
Granted permission – noted
- e. Decision: 1/0861/2019/FUL, Higher Thornhillhead, Retrospective application for the change of use of existing building for the commercial production of beer – Granted permission – noted

126. Accounts

- a. Receipts and Payments
 - i) Bank balances as at 31st October 2019 (£49,113.79):
 - (1) Parish Council Current Account was £7,854.60
 - (2) Thornhillhead Moor Account was £7,069.75
 - (3) Savings Account was £34,209.44
 - ii) Fund balances as at 31st October 2019 (£49,113.79):
 - (1) General Account - £22,064.04
 - (2) Thornhill Head Account - £27,069.75

- b. Payments due (£2,634.37 + VAT) The following list of payments was approved:
- (1) Parish Clerk's salary, expenses and associated PAYE (September 2019): £514.10 including PAYE of £95.70
 - (2) E.on, electricity - £5.40 + VAT
 - (3) M Fry, Grass Cutting - £194.00
 - (4) CPRE Devon, Planning Seminar - £10.00
 - (5) Plough Arts Centre, Reminiscence Workshop Grant - £25.00
 - (6) Royal British Legion, Memorial Wreath - £40.00
 - (7) Buckland Brewer Parochial Church Council, Room hire - £120.00
 - (8) South-West Water Business, Water charges - £10.87
 - (9) Clystnet Ltd, Domain Name Renewal - £15.00 + VAT
 - (10) Grants approved at the meeting held on 9th October 2019:
 - (a) Buckland Brewer Playing Field Association - £500.00
 - (b) 2018 Youth Project - £300.00
 - (c) Church of St Mary & St Benedict (Churchyard) - £200.00
 - (d) North Devon Record Office - £200.00
 - (e) Torridge Volunteer Cars - £100.00
 - (f) Citizens Advice - £50.00
 - (g) Horwood Coombe Forest School - £350.00
- ii) Receipts
- (1) Field Rents - £775.00
- c. Change to Savings Account rate: Barclays Bank has announced a change in their savings account rate from 0.2% to 0.1% with effect from January 2020. It was agreed that the Clerk would look for an alternative savings account.

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

Dates of Future Meetings:

Field and Allotments Inspection, Saturday 30th November 2019

Parish Council (Planning), Wednesday 11th December 2019 (7:30pm in the Parish Church Schoolroom)

Signed as a true record:

Chairman: **Date:**

Appendix 1

County Councillor 'Update' Holsworthy Rural (05 November 2019)

Dear Members and Officers,

The number of potholes on Devon's roads has dramatically reduced in the last 12 months. In 2018, the average number of recorded potholes for each month between April and August was 9,667, 6,284, 5,096, 5,021 and 4,385. However, the 2019 figures showed that the numbers of recorded potholes have more than halved, with 3,608, 3,089, 3,253, 2,260, and 1,826 potholes recorded respectively for each month.

Whilst, the weather hasn't helped recently, it seems that we are beginning to see the benefits of the Public Interface Portal triage process that has been county wide since June. **Gangs are now fixing 97% of all the defects they attend first time, compared to a figure of 68%** recorded in June 2018.

You may have heard that there is a second Highways initiative in the **"Doing What Matters"** project being run at the moment - which is focusing on reactive works done on the network, alternative solutions, and trying to reduce the amount of defects out on the ground. Yet again, Holsworthy is at the front of innovation with an experiment in our ward with the 'Dragon Patcher' which uses flames to dry out surfaces prior to repair to see if we can use it in a truly reactive way.

The premise is this:

- Currently, we have the annual inspection of the 8-10 network being done by the inspectors.
- If they find more than 10 defects along a single road, they can request that the Dragon Patcher attends. (Isolated potholes will continue to be repaired by the pothole gangs).
- Additionally, when a member of the public reports a defect and the triage inspector attends, they, too, can request the Dragon Patcher.
- The Dragon Patcher will then tackle both the safety defects found by the inspector and any serviceability defects found. In theory this seals the road and will mean less potholes will develop in the future.
- The aim is to tackle the minor network with an engineering solution which is suitable, longer lasting and will result in less return visits.

I have met several times over the last fortnight with officers in Highways as well as with our maintenance contractors (Skanska) in relation to improving works on our rural roads and am very hopeful of matters being improved.

On the matter of **Waste - Devon has maintained its status as one of the top recycling counties in England, recycling 56% of household waste.** Devon no longer sends any rubbish from kerbside collections to landfill. All residual waste now goes to Energy Recovery Facilities and is used to create heat and electricity.

The latest 2018/2019 draft figures show that the **recycling rate has increased by 2%** when compared to the previous year and over the same period the total quantity of residual black bag waste collected across Devon has gone down by 4.4%, meaning that people are throwing less into general 'non-recyclable' waste.

Of the eight Devon districts the highest rate was in East Devon – their recycling rate is at 59.1%. Torridge saw the biggest increase from 41.2% to 51.3%. This follows the introduction of a fortnightly residual waste collection from a weekly one and separate food waste and garden waste collection. This means that Devon residents are throwing away less waste – ‘dustbin’ waste is down by 6472 tonnes.

Some further good news is that Devon is among two regions in the country to have been awarded the highest rise in school funding. After years of local lobbying by councils and teachers for more cash, the government has announced the south west will get a 5% increase in per pupil funding in the next financial year.

It means Devon schools will receive just over £19 million extra. That’s £228 more for each pupil in a primary school and £184 for each secondary student. Along with the East Midlands, it is the highest percentage regional rise in the country and compares with London on 3.2% and the North West on 4.1%. The new figures mean Devon still lags behind the national average with every pupil worth £263 less than their counterparts throughout the country. Devon will also get an extra £6 million next year to help vulnerable children with special needs.

One of the things I am particularly proud of at Devon County Council (DCC) is that of its work with **apprentices**, which is a part of my Cabinet Portfolio. Just over a month ago DCC won the Large Apprenticeship Employer of the Year Award for the South West Region at the National Apprenticeship Awards. We are very proud of our achievements and the support that Members, senior and local managers have given those already with us as well as joining us in opening up apprenticeship placement opportunities.

Finally, a public consultation has been launched by Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) ahead of undertaking a fresh procurement to find contractors to provide **superfast broadband**.

CDS, which is responsible for rolling out publicly-funded broadband across the two counties, is establishing the remaining area where there are no current or credible future plans to deliver Next Generation Access (NGA) broadband infrastructure capable of download speeds of at least 30Mbps.

Nearly one million homes and businesses in Devon and Somerset now have access to superfast broadband thanks to the Government supported CDS programme and stimulation of the commercial market which is an important element of CDS’s role. Of these, over 300,000 homes and businesses have access to superfast broadband as a direct result of investment by CDS.

A link to the CDS news release can be seen at:

<https://www.devonnewscentre.info/superfast-broadband-public-consultation-launched/>

Please don’t hesitate to get involved.

Every best wish, Barry