

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
OF BUCKLAND BREWER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
THURSDAY 24th JANUARY 2019 AT 7:30 IN
THE PARISH CHURCH SCHOOL ROOM

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

Also in attendance Jane Lowe, Community Webmaster and John Hector, Chair of the Parish Plan Steering Group

Parish Clerk: Mr P Blossie

KEY: Actions are shown in bold blue type Decisions are shown in bold red type
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852. Apologies for Absence Andrew Hewitt, Rosemary Sanders, Cllr Barry Parsons (DCC)

853. Minutes of the Meetings of the Personnel Sub-Committee and the Parish Council held on 9th January 2019: The minutes of the meetings held on 9th January 2019 were agreed and signed.

854. Declarations of Interest None

855. Public Participation None

856. Parish Plan, Progress Report by John Hector, Chair of the Parish Plan Steering Group:

John Hector said that public consultation meeting is to be held in the Village Hall between 2 and 4 o'clock on Saturday 2nd February 2019. He hoped that parishioners would be able to express their views about the future of the parish and that feedback from the meeting would enable the Steering Group to finalize its questionnaire. The questionnaire will be delivered or posted to every property in the parish shortly after the meeting. It will also be made available on the community website. Responses will be collected a week or two later and the intention is to publish the final report, based on the feedback from the questionnaire, by the end of March or in April 2019. The document will be published online. There will be no bound documented, but printed copies of the online version will be made available to anyone who asks for one. Jim Lowe asked about the costs. John was not able to provide any detailed estimates but felt that it might exceed the £300 currently shown in the draft budget. It was agreed that the figure would be increased to £700 and that John would supply detailed costings in due course.

857. Website Report by Jane Lowe, Community Webmaster: Jane had distributed a report prior to the meeting and asked if any members had any questions. Jim Lowe noted that 'hits' on the site were increasing. Jane said that there had been 794 hits on the 'home' page since she wrote her report on 6th January and that the numbers seem to be increasing steadily. She explained that most websites take about 18 months to get established. There was a discussion about some groups who were not so interested in using the site and the difficulties that Jane encounters getting people to give her information and news. Nevertheless, it was unanimously agreed that

the site was excellent and that, at this stage, it was not thought necessary to try to introduce more content than was already being offered. Jane was happy to continue as Webmaster for the time being but was conscious that there will come a time when some 'new blood' should be invited to take on the role. Jim Lowe thanked her for all her hard work on behalf of all the members.

858. Clerk's Report:

- a. Correspondence: There had been 55 items of correspondence since the last meeting. The Clerk highlighted: i) Torridge Council: Polling Places Review. It had already been confirmed that the new village hall would be the new site for elections and had already been used once. ii) Buckland Brewer Hall Insurance – see item 863, iii) Royal Garden Party invitation – no members had asked to be nominated.
- b. Insurance for Projector: The 12-month guarantee on the projector will soon run out. As a fairly delicate piece of equipment that has to be transported to and from meetings, the Clerk felt that it would be advisable to have insurance for it. Under the terms of the Community First policy, it would only be covered for any loss or damage that occurred in the Clerk's home. Rather than take out a separate insurance, **the Clerk will ask Community First if they can modify the cover.**

859. Fields and Allotments:

- a. Works to Community and School Fields: Trevor Mills said that the grass needs topping and that he will do this soon. He has yet to sort out the final costings with Andrew Hewitt but estimated that there might be £250-£300 yet to pay them by way of reimbursement. Once that is done it will be possible to calculate the contribution from the Village Hall towards their part of the fencing. George Heywood said that there was a problem with dog mess on the path around the amenity field and that the dog bin was often overflowing and people were leaving bags beside the bin. **The Clerk will discuss the matter with Torridge Council and try to secure a second bin and/or more frequent emptyings. It was also agreed that notices would be put up along the fence.**
- b. School Field Rental Agreement and Proposed Amendment to Covenant: Although our solicitor has made all the necessary amendments to the lease document, as previously agreed, they had queried again whether it should include security of tenure for the tenant. The Clerk had reconfirmed that security of tenure should be included and the lease had been sent to the school for their comments. Our solicitor had reported that the revised covenant had not yet been drafted by the previous landowners' solicitor. The Clerk had asked them to draft a document themselves, which they had done and forwarded to the landowners' solicitor, but no response had yet been received. **George Heywood said that he would talk to them.**
- c. Other Field and Allotment Issues: The allotment gate is still to be done.

860. Village Hall Update, Marie Douglas: Marie reported that minutes were now being added to the community website. Meetings are now held once every two months and the next will be in March 2019. It had been confirmed at the last meeting that the Trustees would be pursuing Hallmark accreditation.

861. 3rd Age Activities/Luncheon Club: Mark Keeley from *One Small Step* gave a talk about healthy living to the 4 o'clock Club on 12th January 2019 and it is hoped that he will attend a coffee morning on 6th February. There had been a meeting between a number of interested parties about a potential luncheon club, but it seemed that, at the moment, there are both insufficient volunteers and insufficient possible users to make it a viable proposition. The subject is going to be included as part of the Parish Plan consultation exercise. In the meantime, it had been proposed to run a one-off *Soup and Sweet* event to gauge interest and then to review the future. One person at the meeting had suggested, as an alternative, for the Parish Council to fund a mini-bus trip to venues outside of the village but this suggestion was not supported by the Parish Council.

862. Flashing Speed Signs and Wireless Monitoring Systems: Jim Lowe reported that Julie Pepworth from Devon Highways had informed him that the type of sign that we hoped to purchase had not yet been approved and that a risk assessment was needed for changing the batteries. He had responded to express his extreme disappointment that the process is being yet further delayed and that this could have an impact on both this Parish Council's and Abbotsham's Communities Together Fund grant application. **The Chair and the Clerk will continue to pursue the matter.**

863. Grant Application from Buckland Brewer Village Hall: The Village Hall Trustees had provided a copy of this year's insurance premium renewal. **It was agreed unanimously to offer a grant of £964 to cover the full cost of the premium.**

864. Members' Reports:

Elisa Hurley said that she had spoken to the ladies in the Craft Group who had said that they would prefer to have lightweight table if the Parish Council agreed to purchase any.

George Heywood thanked all those who had helped at the time of his father's heart attack and in his recent loss. He also talked about the Thornhillhead mast and pointed out that 5G was now being discussed and that we should ensure that any lease arrangements are renegotiated if the mast is upgraded.

Jim Lowe reported that the Air Ambulance lights had failed again but had been repaired by MAT Electrics under the terms of the maintenance agreement. **It was agreed that a letter of thanks should be sent to Barry Noakes for his continued voluntary role in checking the equipment every week.** The Clerk said that water had got into the lights again but that the unit had now been replaced by a newly designed, sealed aluminium unit which should be more resilient to the weather. Jim also reported that Pal Knox of Pierce Construction had provided a new layout for the proposed Lower Abbots development which will be put on the website. **An item will be added to the next agenda.** A second quote had been received for tarmacking the road around the village green. It was for a higher amount and for a considerably less robust construction. Members agreed unanimously to accept the quote from Vanstone's. Trevor Mills and Jim Lowe will arrange a site visit with Vanstone's next, probably for Tuesday 29th January. Trevor said that the Council should consult with the owner of the neighbouring property, especially as there was a possibility that they might not be aware exactly where the boundary ran. **He will talk to them.** Jim asked the Clerk if he had yet

contacted Clinton Estates about the proposed industrial development at Blackhorse Fields. He had done so but had received no reply.

Trevor Mills said that the new defibrillator was up and running. The Clerk had informed South West Ambulance and will arrange for a training session in the near future. Trevor said that Bruce Brown's family had discussed the proposed use of the rest of Bruce's bequest and felt that it should be set aside to provide for maintenance and consumables for the two existing defibrillators.

David Watson said that, in the light of Trevor's report, the Parish Council should consider purchasing another defibrillator for Thornhillhead from its own funds. Jim suggested that, as the Council was already committed to purchasing the VAS unit and resurfacing the village green, this proposal should be revisited during the next financial year.

865. Accounts

a. Receipts and Payments

I. Bank balances as at 31st December 2018 (£57,375.97):

1. Parish Council Current Account was £10,617.59
2. Thornhillhead Moor Account was £12,548.94
3. Savings Account was £34,209.44

II. Fund balances as at 31st December 2018 (£57,375.97):

1. General Account - £24,827.03
2. Thornhill Head Account - £32,548.94

III. Payments due (£1,671.63 + VAT)

The following list of payments was approved:

1. Parish Clerk's salary, expenses and associated PAYE (Dec 2018): £506.23, including PAYE - £79.00 and Microsoft Annual Fee, £79.99
2. Mr C Layton, Remembrance Day expenses - £106.44
3. Buckland Brewer PCC - £80.00
4. E.on, electricity supply - £14.96 + VAT
5. Buckland Brewer Village Hall, grant - £964.00

IV. Receipts (£3,066.35)

1. Arqiva, Communications Mast rent - £3,000.00
2. Barclays Bank, interest received - £66.35

- b. Transfer of Funds to Savings Account/Bank Mandate Amendments** The Clerk reported that the attempt to transfer £7,000 into the savings account had been thwarted because the bank said that the signatures on the letter did not agree with the mandate. In light of the fact that it might be necessary to renew the mandate after May 2019, it was agreed to take no further action at this time.

- c. Approval of the 2019/20 Budget and Precept** The Clerk had previously distributed a copy of the proposed budget that had been agreed at the meeting on 9th January 2019. This was updated at the meeting to reflect the decisions that had been taken today. He explained the impact of the increase in precept by 3.5% and that, due to a fall in the taxbase, this would result in a 5% increase in the average band D council tax charge. He also highlighted a number of other specific items in the budget, including:

- I. Budgeted income in 2018/19 of £760 from the Communities Together Fund towards the VAS
- II. £3,000 income that had just been received for 2019 for rent on the Thornhillhead mast, and a further £3,000 due on 1st January 2020.
- III. £600 of income in 2018/19 and 2019/20 transferred from the Thornhillhead Account to cover some of the Clerk's time and other expenses.
- IV. Budgeted expenditure on the Parish Plan increased from £300 to £700 in 2019/20.
- V. Budgeted spend of £250 in 2018/19 for replacement tables. Following further discussion, it was agreed that the PCC should be consulted before proceeding and that, if possible, lighter tables should be purchased if they are sufficiently robust.
- VI. 'Fencing and Other Works' previously budgeted at £4,000 per year reduced to a £500 annual maintenance budget for the Amenity Field from 2019/20.
- VII. Budgeted spend of £6,000 for resurfacing the Village Green in 2019/20
- VIII. Budgeted spend in 2018/29 of £2,328 on the Vehicle Activated Sign
- IX. Establishment of a Community Services budget of £1,500 from 2019/20
- X. Budget for 3rd Age Activities/Luncheon Club to remain at £500
- XI. Grant payable to the Village Hall of £964 in 2018/19
- XII. Grants not yet paid to the Youth Centre and the Playing Fields Association to be shown as expected expenditure in 2018/19 and to be carried forward as a reserve if unpaid by 31st March 2019.

It was explained that the 2019/20 budget would show an overspend in the year of £3,435 to be financed from the General Reserve. This would be reduced to slightly less than £5,000 by 31st March 2020. Although this was slightly below the recommended level for General Reserves, the Clerk explained that the Parish Council maintained another £10,000 in specific reserves and that he was confident that the total reserves were sufficient to meet any unexpected demands. **The budget, as shown in Appendix 1 was approved unanimously. The Clerk will submit the precept form to Torridge Council on 25th January 2019.**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:50 pm

Dates of Future Meetings:

Parish Council: Wednesday 13th February 2019, 7:30pm, Parish Church School Room

Signed as a true record:

Chairman: Date: