

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
OF BUCKLAND BREWER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 8th SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 7:00pm
AT BUCKLAND BREWER METHODIST CHAPEL

Members Present: Mrs Barbara Babb, Miss Rosie Beer, Mr Andrew Hewitt, Mr Richard Hooper, Mr Jim Lowe, and Mr David Watson

Also in attendance: 2 members of the public and Lewis Clarke (Journalist, Reach plc)

Parish Clerk: Mr P Blossie

KEY: Actions are shown in bold	blue type	Decisions are shown in bold red type
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468. Apologies for Absence James Doble (JD Commercial), George Heywood, Trevor Mills and Frits Takken

469. Declarations of Interest None

470. Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 11th August 2021: The minutes of the meeting held on 11th August 2021 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

471. Public Participation None

472. Industrial Units Development, Presentation by James Doble James Doble was unable to attend and will also not be available for the meeting on 13th October. It was agreed to hold an extra meeting on 23rd September for this item and any other urgent matters.

473. District and County Representatives' Reports:

- a. Cllr James Morrish, Devon County Council – not present
- b. Cllr Phil Pennington, Torridge Council
 - i) The district council's Community and Resources had recently considered a report showing that the council had achieved a surplus last year of £771,000. It had been decided to earmark the funds primarily for leisure facilities, many of which had accumulated a backlog of maintenance.
 - ii) Cllr Pennington also said that housing was high on many people's agenda at present. A new pressure group had been formed recently. He noted that the Torrington Creamery site had approval for a large number of new properties, but it would not include any affordable homes due to the expense of cleaning up the site. Torridge is keen to work with partners willing to set up Community Land Trusts, for which some funding might be available. They are also willing to consider self-build schemes.

474. Clerk's Report

- a. Correspondence: There had been 36 items of correspondence forwarded by email since the last meeting. He highlighted:
 - I. A grant opportunity from Devon Communities Together for the Reconnect Rebuild Recover Community Fund. (see item 478)
 - II. Torrington Town Hall Community Fayre taking place on Tuesday 2nd November 2021 **It was agreed that this should be advertised among local groups and organisations.**
- b. Atlantic Academy Governors An invitation had been received for members to consider applying to become governors at the Atlantic Academy. Noted
- c. Wrestling Belt A resident of New Zealand has offered the parish a wrestling belt won by his great-grandfather in 1884. The competition was fought between the parishes of Buckland Brewer, Abbotsham, Alwington, Parkham and Littleham and was won by William Sanders of Buckland Brewer. The Clerk has put the current owner, John Sanders, in touch with Janet Few, who has been able to supply some interesting family history but no further information about the wrestling competition. The Council was pleased to hear that Mr Sanders is keen to see the belt returned to the parish and **agreed to purchase a glass case so that it could be displayed**, probably in the Methodist Chapel.

475. Amenity Field:

- a. **Football Posts:** A pair of 12' x 6' posts had been bought and have been set up in the amenity field. A resident, Keith Berry, has kindly offered to pay for them.
- b. **Orchard Scheme and Planting an Oak Tree for the Platinum Jubilee** Andrew Hewitt said that Trevor Mills planned to order 20 apple trees and 1 oak tree later this week.

476. Affordable Housing: Progress Report by Jim Lowe Jim Lowe reported that Aster Homes are keen to talk to the Parish Council about a possible scheme. Aster Homes' policy is to enter into a Community Land Trust Agreement for developments like the one we propose. They have asked their agent's, Middlemarch, to attend an initial meeting and we hope that they will be available for 13th October 2021. Aster will only consider developments with a minimum of 10 properties.

477. Grant Applications 2021:

- a. Annual, budgeted grants: **The following grants were approved:**
 - i) Village Hall
 - (1) To meet the cost of this year's insurance premium, up to but not exceeding £1,000
 - (2) £150 towards the cost of installing broadband

It was suggested that the Parish Council should have a joint meeting with the Village Hall Trustees to discuss the future development options for the hall. **Andrew Hewitt will discuss this with the Chair of the Trustees.**

- ii) Youth Services - £300
- iii) Playing Field Association
 - (1) To meet the cost of this year's insurance premium, not exceeding £800
 - (2) To pay directly for grass-cutting – estimated to £1,000 for the season, depending on the number of cuts required (an annual invoice will be received at the end of the growing season)
- iv) Church of St. Mary and St. Benedict - £1,000
- v) North Devon Records Office - £200
- vi) Community Shop - £1,000 towards the cost of electricity

b. Ad-hoc grants:

- i) Torridge Volunteer Cars - £400
- ii) History Group - £200

478. Post-Covid Events:

- a. **Torrington 100 Grant** Last year the Parish Council received a grant of £500 from Torrington 100 to help with the cost of hosting a post-covid event and to provide an album of memories (stories and photographs) of our residents' experiences. **Jim Lowe offered to put together a suitable plan and will report back at the next meeting.**
- b. **Devon Communities Together: Reconnect Rebuild Recover Community Grant**
This grant opportunity is one that could be used to supplement the Torrington 100 grant. The Clerk suggested, and **it was agreed unanimously, that the Parish Council should apply for a grant to support the wide range of activities that are re-starting or which need help to get re-started.**

479. Citizens Science Investigations: Report by Trevor Mills Deferred, Trevor Mills not present.

480. Consultation: Taxi and Private Hire Licencing Policy No comment

481. Climate Change Open Day: Progress Report The Clerk reported that three speakers will be giving presentations as follows:

- i) Cllr Peter Hames: Torridge District Council's Climate Emergency Commitment
- ii) Frank Benbow, Bratton Fleming Parish Council and 361 Energy: What Does Net Zero Mean for Your Community
- iii) Graham Reed, Bere Ferrers Parish Council

George Heywood said that there should also be an NFU speaker present, but the name has not yet been confirmed.

So far, 5 organisations have agreed to attend as exhibitors: Balanced Energy, Blights Motors, Devon Communities Together, Project Solar UK and Devon Wildlife Trust. Richard Haste has been invited to provide a stand about recycling but had not responded at the time of the meeting. Sadly, eleven other organisations, all of which are signed up to the Devon Climate Assembly Declaration, have either refused the invitation or simply not responded and the Clerk also had similar responses (or lack of) from about a dozen other companies and organisations that he had contacted. He is still keen to find a company willing to demonstrate air-source and/or bio-mass heating solutions.

Posters have been distributed around the village and the event has been publicized on the website, in Village Scene, on Facebook and on the 'Great Big Green Week' website. More advertising is planned, including a second poster with more details about the speakers and exhibitors. It was suggested by Jim Lowe that this should be reproduced in the form of a leaflet for distribution to every household.

At last night's Education Support Fund AGM, it was suggested that a competition could be organised (possibly using one of Blight's Motors electric vehicles), with the proceeds going to the Education Support Fund. Although there will be no charge for exhibitors or for entry, the Clerk said that he would be pleased to receive any offers of donations, either from exhibitors or from visitors on the day.

The Clerk asked for volunteers to help on the day to help set up, provide refreshments and to meet and greet exhibitors and visitors.

482. Marking of car parking spaces on the village green – progress report Following last month's discussion the Clerk had been asked to obtain a new quote to include NO PARKING signage across the entrance to Northwood Lane and opposite the entrance along the edge of the green. **The new quotation of £365.00 + VAT was approved unanimously.**

483. Back Lane – Overgrown hedges and trees The Clerk reported that Devon County Council has now responded about the Parish Paths Partnership Agreement and a representative will be attending the meeting on 13th October. The draft contract that had been submitted had suggested an annual grant of £150.00.

484. School Field Rental Agreement and Proposed Licence to Gain Access The solicitors are awaiting responses on two items:

- Japanese Knotweed: The school's solicitor has asked for details from us about the treatment our contractor has provided. **Andrew Hewitt is liaising with the solicitors about this.**
- Vesting Power to an Official Custodian: The school's solicitor needs confirmation from the Village Hall's solicitor that the licence can proceed and would then need to be changed when power is vested in the Official Custodian, or that vesting needs to be completed first.

It was suggested that the Chair and Clerk should ask to attend the next Village Hall meeting to discuss the issue face to face with the Trustees. **Andrew Hewitt to arrange with the Trustees.**

485. Feedback from DALC Monthly Meeting – David Watson David Watson reported that Ilfracombe Town Council has declared a housing emergency. David will be attending the DALC AGM later in the month and some of the 3-day conference. **The Council agreed that he should vote for the motions at the AGM according to his own preferences.**

486. Members Reports:

Barbara Babb had been approached by residents from Hillpark who are concerned about the speed of traffic at that end of the village and asked whether PCSO Liz Rendle could carry out speed checks there as well.

Richard Hooper i) Richard had received a request from a resident with a second home in Barton Road for the Parish Council to trim a chestnut tree that overhangs the road as they were concerned about falling conkers. The Council has no powers to do this but, in any case, since the tree has been there for as long as anyone can remember without incident, it was agreed to take no action. ii) Richard noted that there had been some comments in the revised Parish Plan about some residents not being in favour of further developments and suggested this might apply to the proposed light industrial units at Blackhorse Fields. Jim Lowe pointed out that this development had been agreed with parishioners following lengthy consultation and was now part of the North Devon and Torridge Local Plan. iii) Richard had received some complaints about the increase in allotment rents. It was pointed out that they have not risen in 7 years, that the tenancy would now include a water supply and that the rates agreed were comparable with others in the area. There will now be no increase until at least 2028. The Clerk had received no direct feedback from allotment holders. It was suggested that, when a plot becomes available, the Council should consider dividing it up into either half or quarter sizes as some people are reluctant to take on a full-size plot. iv) Richard also asked whether residents could use the new footpath yet. The Clerk reminded members that there has been no approved diversion of the existing footpath and that this is unlikely to happen for some time. The Council, together with the adjacent landowner have agreed to provide an alternative route and to encourage people to use it whilst keeping access to the existing path open. This work cannot be completed until a small part of the hedge into the adjacent field can be removed, which will require a gate to be fitted, and to continue the fencing along one side of that field. This work cannot be done until the autumn.

Jim Lowe i) asked David Watson whether any progress was being made about a defibrillator for the Methodist Church. David said that the project was on track. ii) Jim also asked about progress with the BT box. The Clerk said that he had been assured that painting would be done by the end of this month. He has already obtained new signage and has an electrician ready to transfer the defibrillator that is currently in the bus shelter to the outside of the BT box. **He will purchase shelving when that work is completed and, together, with the works sponsor, will ensure that it is stocked with books.**

David Watson i) reported an issue with an articulated lorry attempting to cross Glen Bridge that had had to reverse back up the hill. **Jim Lowe said that he would talk to Paul Knox of Pearce Construction to ensure that contractors and suppliers are aware that large vehicles cannot access the Lower Abbots development from that direction.** li) David said that ivy on the churchyard wall is encroaching on the benches. Andrew Hewitt said that the paths around the village Hall also need some attention. **He will ask Matt Fry to attend to both issues.**

487. Planning

- a. Work undertaken at a property within the conservation area without planning permission It had been brought to the Clerk's attention that the owners of a property in Castle Gardens have been adding cladding without first seeking planning permission. The property is within the conservation area. **It was agreed the matter would be referred to Torridge Planning.**
- b. Decision: 1/0724/2021/FUL, East Hele, Proposed roof over existing silage stores as part of a Mid-Tier Countryside Stewardship – Granted permission – Noted
- c. Decision: 1/0830/2021/FUL, The Cottage, Gorwood Road, Conversion of existing garage to no.1 holiday let including additional domestic storage – Granted permission – Noted
- d. Decision: 1/0801/2021/FUL, Land to West of Tower Hill, Outline application for 5 dwellings, including access and parking for 1 & 2 Bell Cottages and 1 & 2 Tower Hill (Affecting Public Right of Way)- (Variation of condition 3 of planning permission 1/0784/2016/OUT (Amended plans to include Plots 1 & 2) (Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 1/0505/2020/FUL) – Granted permission – Noted
- e. Decision: 1/0802/2021/FUL, Land to West of Tower Hill, Reserved matters application for 5 dwellings, pursuant to outline application 1/0784/2016/OUT (Variation of condition 1 of planning permission 1/0634/2018/REM) (Amended plans to include Plots 1 & 2) (Variation of condition 1 of planning permission 1/0504/2020/FUL) – Granted Permission – Noted

488. Accounts:

- a. Receipts and Payments for July/August 2021
As no bank statement has been received since the last meeting, the bank statement balances are shown as at the end of July, but the current account cash book balance has been shown for information purposes
 - i) Bank balances as at 30th July 2021 (£63,078.99):
 - (1) Parish Council Current Account was £12,003.60
 - (a) Cash book balance as at 08/09/21 = £7,757.34
 - (2) Thornhillhead Moor Account was £3,770.05
 - (3) Savings Account was £47,305.34
 - ii) Fund balances as at 30th July 2021 (£63,078.99):
 - (1) General Account - £31,308.94
 - (2) Thornhill Head Account - £31,770.05

iii) Payments for August/September 2021 (£2,551.32 + VAT)

- (1) P G Blosse, August salary - £1,108.49 (including £119.20 PAYE, £411.11 for goalposts, a padlock, gloves, other equipment and office expenses and VAT of £81.38)
- (2) Bridgmans, wall couplings - £6.80 + VAT
- (3) ICO, Data Protection Fee - £35.00
- (4) Source for Business, Water charges - £10.00
- (5) E.on, Electricity - £13.25 + VAT
- (6) Parish Gardener - £42.00
- (7) Mimick Signs, Telephone box signage - £39.81 + VAT
- (8) ARS Smallridge & Son, Gate posts, wire, netting etc. - £1,062.65 + VAT
- (9) RAW Piper & Sons, Concrete & cement - £51.70 + VAT
- (10) McVeigh Parker, Marlow gate - £263.00 + VAT

The payment schedule was proposed by Jim Lowe, seconded by Barbara Babb and approved unanimously.

iv) Receipts for August/September 2021 (£265.78)

- (1) Field rent - £110.00
- (2) Western Power, Wayleaves - £155.78

There being no further business, the meeting closed 9:10 pm

Dates of Future Meetings:

Parish Council, Thursday 23rd September 2021 (Buckland Brewer Methodist Church, 7:00pm)

Parish Council, Wednesday 13th October 2021 (Buckland Brewer Methodist Church, 7:00pm)

Signed as a true record:

Chairman: **Date:**