

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
OF BUCKLAND BREWER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 9th FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7:00pm
AT BUCKLAND BREWER METHODIST CHAPEL

Members Present: Mrs Barbara Babb, Mr Andrew Hewitt, Mr George Heywood, Mr Richard Hooper, Mr Jim Lowe, Mr Trevor Mills, Mr Frits Takken and Mr David Watson

Also in attendance: 2 members of the public

Parish Clerk: Mr P Blossie

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| KEY: Actions are shown in bold blue type Decisions are shown in bold red type |
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592. Apologies for Absence Rosie Beer, Cllr Phil Pennington

593. Declarations of Interest None

594. Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 27th January 2022: The minutes of the meeting held on 27th January 2022 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

595. Public Participation None

596. Presentation about proposed schools' merger: Gina Finch (Flying Start) and Matt Cole (Woolser School)

Matt Cole explained that it had been agreed by the governors of the Flying Start Federation (Buckland Brewer and Parkham schools) and Woolser School that a new federation should be established to include all three schools. There are currently 58 children in Buckland Brewer, 57 in Parkham and 159 in Woolser. The new federation would have one Executive Head, one shared SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) and a Head of Learning in each school. There would be one Governing Body for the federation. Matt said that the benefits would include:

- More opportunities to mix with children in their own age groups, at school and on residential visits
- More opportunities for competitive sports
- More after school clubs (as teachers would have less time devoted to other non-teaching responsibilities and specialisms)
- Financial savings, including losing one head-teacher, shared software licences and more bulk-buying powers
- More opportunities for teachers to share experiences with other teachers with the same aged children
- Better staff retention with more opportunities for staff to move up within the organisation (There are plans to replace fixed term contracts with permanent contracts)

He said that the federation needed to be sustainable both financially and academically and to avoid negative feedback from OFSTED. The schools have been piloting closer working relationships recently. Although they would be part of one federation, Matt said that each school would retain its own identity, branding and uniform. Jim Lowe and Trevor Mills both expressed their concern about poor communication with Buckland Brewer School, not only regarding the proposed merger but also in general terms over the past few years. It was agreed by all concerned that the school and the parish council would endeavour to keep lines of communication open and to share information more readily. In response to a question from George Heywood, Matt said that there would be no impact on any of the children's transport arrangements. **All the members were in support of the proposed new federation, which will be called 'Village Schools Partnership'.**

597. District and County Representatives' Reports:

- a. Cllr James Morrish, Devon County Council Not present
- b. Cllr Phil Pennington, Torridge Council Not present

598. Webmaster's Report Jane Lowe had provided a written report prior to the meeting. Following the busiest year in terms of 'hits; on the site in 2020 during the covid lockdowns, these have levelled off now at about 1,550 per month. Jane continues to spend much of her time hunting for up-to-date information for the site. In her report, she asked for feedback on how members see the website and her role developing in future. **The Clerk will ensure that the latest information about avian flu (especially the outbreak in Alverdiscot) is advertised on the website.**

599. Clerk's Report

- a. Correspondence: There had been 33 items of correspondence forwarded by email since the last meeting. He highlighted:
 - i. Royal British Legion: Planting a Tree for the Jubilee The Parish Council has already planted an oak for the jubilee. The Royal British Legion are offering a plaque to mark the occasion at a cost of about £120 + delivery. **Andrew Hewitt said that he would prefer to arrange for one to be purpose made.**
- b. Revised plan re wayleave at Thornhillhead sub-station Western Power need to amend the route of the proposed new cabling and supplied a revised map. **Members agreed to the change unanimously and the map was signed by the Chair.**
- c. Allotments One of the allotment tenants has opened a Facebook page for the allotment tenants to share ideas and information (*Buckland Brewer Allotment*). She has also suggested putting up a small communal shed as a hub for swapping seedlings, seeds etc. with, perhaps an honesty box to raise funds for deliveries of compost or shared equipment. The proposal was supported but members wished to select a suitable location for it themselves. **This will be included in the allotment inspection due to take place on 19th February.**

600. Industrial Units: Progress Report The Clerk has contacted the two firms that have not yet supplied quotations. Gale & Snowden are hoping to arrange a site visit during the week starting 28th February. Fearnley Lott has said they will have a quote ready in about one week's time. The Devon Elevation Fund opened today. **The Clerk will submit a grant application for funds to assist with fees etc for this and any other development schemes.**

601. Amenity Field: Adult Fitness Equipment The Clerk had written to Cllr Phil Pennington to complain about the lack of response from the Planning Department. **Jim Lowe suggested that he should write to the Leader of the Council.**

602. Tree Planting

- a. Devon Wildlife Treescaping Scheme/Creating a Parish Woodland Members were asked to consider the draft agreement supplied by Devon County Council. The County had confirmed that they would pay directly for all the costs relating to planting the woodland and maintaining it for 5 years. At the end of that period, it was expected that at least 85% of the planted trees will have survived. George Heywood was concerned about the loss of income and ongoing maintenance costs. The Clerk had distributed an estimate of these costs, showing that, on average, over 25 years it could potentially add £150 a year to the annual precept. George felt that this was an underestimate and that other, more favourable schemes might be available. It was suggested that Thornhillhead Moor might be a better location for a woodland scheme. **The Clerk will invite Andrew Heywood from Hicks and Co. to the next meeting to discuss this and other matters relating to the moor.**
- b. Offer from Phil Slocombe regarding tree planting in field 6552 The application to AONB was successful resulting in a grant of £150 towards the cost of trees. It was agreed that Phil will be asked to secure the trees himself. **The Clerk will ask Hicks & Co. to revise the lease of the fields to reflect the area lost to tree-planting.**

603. Thornhillhead Moor: Information Board No progress yet

604. Defibrillators for Thornhillhead The scheme is awaiting approval by the Methodist Church.

605. School Field Rental Agreement and Proposed Licence to Gain Access Gina Finch has contacted the County and our solicitors and has been told that they are awaiting confirmation that the holders of the two covenants on the land are in agreement that the lease can be executed. One is held by Pearce Construction and the other by the previous landowners. In view of the continued delay, **it was agreed that the Parish Council's solicitor will be asked to draw up a temporary licence to take effect from 1st April 2022, to permit the school to use the field pending execution of the lease.**

606. Feedback from DALC AGM – David Watson There had been no meeting recently.

607. Members Reports:

Barbara Babb reported on the Jubilee meeting that had been held recently. There had been 19 attendees. It had been agreed that they would organise a tea for 4:00pm on Sunday 5th June in Buckland Brewer Hall. The committee members will provide savouries and attendees will be asked to bring a cake. Lesley Blossie had volunteered to organise the supply and distribution of mugs to all the children in Buckland Brewer School and any other children of primary school age who live in the parish. Sufficient mugs will be available for others to buy if they wish. Bunting will be displayed. George Heywood said that he would organise a telehandler. There will also be a 'decorate your house' event over the jubilee weekend. It had also been agreed that a group photograph would be taken and that, if possible, a video would be created using a drone. It was noted that the Parish Council had a budget of £500 towards jubilee events (including the lighting of a beacon and any other activities yet to be agreed). They had also agreed a further grant of £200 towards the cost of mugs. A further £200 had been offered by Councillor Bob Hicks and the Jubilee Committee had about £178 left in its own funds from the last event. It was reported that the school did not want to get involved in any of the parish activities over the Platinum Jubilee weekend.

Andrew Hewitt noted that there was a road closure from the school to Brownswell planned for 22nd April. **He asked the Clerk to confirm with the contractor if the road would be completely blocked in both directions all day.**

George Heywood said that the stile that had been put in to access the footpath behind Capern Park will be replaced by a gate. Also, a new bit of footpath would be needed to ensure there was access for disabled people. The diversion at South Church Park was also discussed. **The Clerk will ensure that all the paperwork that is necessary for the diversion is up to date, including the part crossing George's field.**

Richard Hooper asked about the allotment hedges. Trevor Mills said that the work would be done by the end of February. He had been in touch with Ros Davies, the Footpaths Officer responsible for the P3 Footpaths agreement, together with the Clerk. He has arranged to go on a course and, so far, has 5 volunteers willing to help with inspecting and maintaining the footpaths. He also said that Tracy Cowling has not used much of the litter picking equipment supplied by the Parish Council but has bought a quantity of gloves over the past year or so. **It was agreed that she should be reimbursed if she can provide receipts.**

Trevor Mills had obtained some signs from NFU about keeping dogs away from livestock. **These will be erected at suitable sites.**

608. Planning

- a. Application: 1/0054/2022/FULM, Milford Farm, Proposed Parlour/Dairy, Collecting Yard, Handling Facility, Stalls and Loose Box's. (Affecting A Public Right of Way) – **supported unanimously**

- b. Application: 1/0058/2022/FULM, Land at Bulkworthy, 5 megawatt solar park and ancillary development (on 14.6 hectares of land) (Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 1/1177/2015/FULM) – **supported unanimously**
- c. Decision: 1/1292/2021/FUL, Taw Cottage, Erection of two storey side and rear extension – Granted permission - noted
- d. Decision: 1/1331/2021/FUL, Thorne Farm, Proposed cabin for holiday accommodation – Granted permission - noted

609. Accounts:

- a. Receipts and Payments for January/February 2022
 - i) Bank balances as at 31st January 2022 (£73,074.41):
 - (1) Parish Council Current Account was £13,599.99
 - (2) Thornhillhead Moor Account was £12,164.35
 - (3) Savings Account was £47,310.07
 - ii) Fund balances as at 31st January 2022 (£73,074.41):
 - (1) General Account - £32,910.06
 - (2) Thornhill Head Account - £40,164.35
 - iii) Payments for January/February 2022 (£1,576.16 + VAT)
 - (1) P G Blossie, January salary - £732.59 (including £125.20 PAYE and £79.99 Microsoft 365 Renewal fees)
 - (2) Buckland Brewer Methodist Church - £280.00
 - (3) Citizens Advice, Grant - £50.00
 - (4) Eon, electricity - £25.02 + VAT
 - (5) Bridgmans, Fencing for Well Park/Frog's Parlour - £488.55 + VAT

The payment schedule was proposed by Jim Lowe, seconded by David Watson and approved unanimously.

- iv) Receipts for January/February 2022
 - (1) NIL

It was noted that the monthly bill for the community landing lights had risen threefold in the past 2 months. This was due to an increase in the standing charge.
The Clerk will find an alternative, cheaper supplier.

There being no further business, the meeting closed 9:00 pm

Dates of Future Meetings:

Field and Allotments Inspection – Saturday 19th February 2022 (10:00am at Blackhorse Fields Allotments).

Fields and Allotments Sub-Committee Meeting – Monday 28th February (7:00pm in the Church Schoolroom)

Parish Council, Wednesday 9th March 2022 (Speaker: Frank Benbow, Bratton Fleming Parish Council and 361 Energy – 7:00pm in the Methodist Church)

Signed as a true record:

Chairman: **Date:**