

# Black Torrington Parish Council

**Minutes of the Black Torrington Parish Council Meeting held on  
Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> June 2018, at 7pm, at the Chapel School Room, Broad Street, Black Torrington**

**Present:** Cllrs Mr S White, Mrs E Barnes, Mrs P Mills, Mr P Roberts, and Mrs D Haywood and Mr M Down

**In Attendance:** Mrs C Dalley, Parish Clerk  
Torrige District Councillor Mr P Hackett  
Devon County Councillor Mr B Parsons  
Mr P Mills  
2 members of the public

**1806/015 To receive and accept apologies**

It was **resolved** to receive and accept apologies from Cllrs Mr C Lock, Mr D Bates and Mrs S Floyer. (Proposed by Cllr White)

**1806/016 Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

**1806/017 Parish Council Minutes – To approve and sign the minutes of the Black Torrington Parish Council meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2018, as a correct record.** Copies had been circulated with the agenda. It was **resolved** to approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2018, as a correct record. (Proposed by Cllr Barnes)

**1806/018 Matters Arising**

Page 2, item 12 – Cllr Roberts confirmed an item had been inserted in the BT Times. Cllr Mills advised there is nothing on the notice board at Chilla to identify it as a Parish Council noticeboard. It was agreed to consider this item at the September Council meeting.

Page 3, item 13 – An update on the Parish War Memorial was requested. Cllr White confirmed he would be passing all the paperwork to the Parish Clerk for her to investigate further.

**1806/019 Public Question Time**

A member of the public expressed concern that Torrige District Council (TDC) were not collecting the recycling following the implementation of a new calendar for collections. Cllr Roberts advised he had been in contact with TDC and they would be sending a lorry on Friday. Cllr Hackett advised that TDC are aware of teething problems and requested the resident e-mail him so he can look into the issue further.

A member of the public objected to a recent planning application approved by TDC. The objections related to the adverse impact the development will have on his neighbouring

land, which is a nature reservoir, in particular the wildlife, such as bats and dormice, the septic tank soakaway as he believes the waste will not soakaway due to the ground conditions and the lack of notification to neighbouring properties. The Clerk confirmed she would investigate the complaints made. Cllr Hackett advised that as the application had been approved the only recourse would be a judicial review. He advised there would be a delegated report, created by the Planning Officer, detailing the process the officer would have gone through in making the decision. Cllr Hackett can only refer the resident to that report.

**1806/020 Chairman's and Clerk's Announcements**

The Clerk requested that Councillors complete new 'Register of Interest' forms as it appeared these had not been updated for some time. She circulated new forms and asked for them to be returned by the September Council meeting.

The Clerk advised Councillors that she had introduced a new 'Expenses Form' and asked Councillors to complete one when they were claiming expenses.

**1806/021 Order of Business**

There were no changes to the Order of Business.

**1806/022 Police Report**

No report had been received.

**1806/023 To receive a presentation from Mr Paul Mills regarding the creation of a 'helping hand' register of volunteers.** Cllr White welcomed Mr Mills to the meeting. Mr Mills explained his rationale behind the possibility of setting up a helping hand register of volunteers that can help residents in extreme weather events such as snow, flooding, heatwaves etc. He stressed this would be as an additional service to those already provided not as an instead of. It may involve checking on the elderly and vulnerable to make sure they are okay.

Cllr Haywood advised that this had been discussed after last winter and concern had been expressed about holding people's personal details.

It was suggested the Council could partner up with the Doctors surgery as they have volunteer car drivers who are DBS checked.

The Clerk suggested the formulation of an emergency plan and advised that Devon Communities Together run seminars on community resilience. Cllr Parsons advised that Halwill Parish Council have a rural plan in place and this would be a good starting point. The Clerk confirmed she would contact Halwill Parish Clerk and ask if the Parish Council would be willing to share their documents.

**1806/024 To receive a report from the Playing Field Committee.**

Cllr Down advised that there had been a very successful Fun Day since the last meeting. He confirmed the financial accounts are a work in progress and should be completed soon. Cllr Down queried the Council's payment towards the grass cutting as this had not been paid. The Clerk advised Councillors that there must a due process followed when providing funding to external groups and organisations to ensure transparency.

One Councillor expressed concern that the cost of grass cutting had risen significantly and it was queried whether three quotations were being obtained for the work.

- 1806/025** **To consider a grant funding request from the Playing Field Committee for £4,500, which will be used as match funding towards the purchase of new play equipment.** Further information had been issued with the agenda. The request was discussed by Councillors and the Clerk expressed concern that a due process had not been followed. It was **resolved** to send a letter of support to the Playing Field Committee confirming the Council supports the application for new play equipment and that the Parish Council will be making a financial contribution. (Proposed by Cllr Roberts) It was further **resolved** to defer making a decision on the level of grant funding to be provided until further information is received regarding the proposed project and up to date financial accounts. (Proposed by Cllr White)
- 1806/026** **To receive a report from the Village Hall Committee.** Cllr Roberts advised that all the information is contained in the latest edition of the BT Times. The next event is the Village Fete on Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> July 2018.
- 1806/027** **To receive an update on the infestation of rats in the village.** A letter prepared by Cllr Roberts, which he proposed sending to all residents affected by the rat problem, was circulated and considered by members. A couple of amendments were suggested and made. Cllr Roberts advised that fifteen properties needed to sign up to gain the discounted rate. It was **resolved** to send the letter to all properties in and around Broad Street. (Proposed by Cllr Haywood) Cllr Haywood volunteered to distribute the letters.
- 1806/028** **Accounts Due for Payment and Receipts - To examine and agree the accounts due for payment, receipts, and bank transfers for the period 1st April 2018 to 20th June 2018 inclusive and to receive the bank reconciliation.** The schedule of payments and receipts were issued prior to the meeting. It was **resolved** to approve the payments totalling £2,311.88, receipts totalling £16,095.50 and accept the bank reconciliations, copies of which are attached to these minutes as Appendix One. (Proposed by Cllr White)
- 1806/029** **Budget Review - To review the budget for the year to date.** The Clerk apologised as she had not had sufficient time to prepare a budget sheet. She confirmed this would be available for the September Council meeting.
- 1806/030** **To consider the internal audit report from the Council's Internal Auditor, Mr Tim Cartwright, for the financial year 2017-2018 and agree any action.** The Clerk confirmed she had received the internal audit report with no issues. It was **resolved** to note the Council's internal audit report with no issues. (Proposed by Cllr Roberts)
- 1806/031** **To receive and agree the Council's accounts for the financial year 2017-2018.** A copy of the documentation had been issued prior to the meeting. It was **resolved** to agree and approve the Council's accounts for the financial year 2017-2018. (Proposed by Cllr White)
- 1806/032** **To consider and agree the Annual Governance Statement 2017/18 detailed in the external audit annual return.** A copy of the annual return had been issued prior to the

meeting. Each item was considered individually and it was **resolved** to agree the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31st March 2018. (Proposed by Cllr White)

**1806/033 To discuss and agree the Annual Accounting Statements 2017/18 detailed in the external audit annual return.** A copy of the annual return had been issued prior to the meeting. It was **resolved** to agree the Annual Accounting Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018. (Proposed by Cllr White)

**1806/034 To consider whether the Council wishes to submit an Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor at a cost of £200 plus VAT, or whether it wishes to certify itself as exempt having reviewed the exemption criteria.** It was **resolved** for the Council to certify itself as exempt from submitting an Annual Governance and Accountability Return having reviewed, and satisfied itself, that it meets the required exemption criteria. (Proposed by Cllr White)

**1806/035 Torridge District Council – Planning Applications**

Torridge District Council, the determining Authority, has asked for comments from this Town Council on the following planning applications:

Reference: 1/0554/2018/CPE

Proposal: Certificate of Existing Lawful Use for the use of garage as C3-dwellinghouse

Location: Hole Station, Highampton, Beaworthy, Devon

Applicant: Mr Gregory Brown

It was **resolved** to make no comment. (Proposed by Cllr Roberts)

Reference: 1/0551/2018/FUL

Proposal: Extension and installation of lift and internal alterations

Location: Blake House Surgery, Bowhay Close, Black Torrington, Beaworthy

Applicant: Dr A Howlett

It was **resolved** to STRONGLY APPROVE the application due to the expansion of an essential service within the Parish. (Proposed by Cllr Mills)

**1806/036 Torridge District Council – Planning Decisions**

It was **resolved** to note that Torridge District Council, the determining Authority, has APPROVED the following applications with conditions as filed. (Proposed by Cllr White)

Reference: 1/0218/2018/FUL

Proposal: Retrospective application for replacement of conservatory, sitting room and utility area at rear of property

Location: Hole Station, Highampton, Beaworthy, Devon

Reference: 1/0321/2018/FUL

Proposal: Proposed dwelling

Location: Long Cross House, Sheepwash, Beaworthy, Devon

**1806/037 To consider and agree the new Calendar of Meetings for the year.** A copy of the new calendar had been issued with the agenda. It was **resolved** to agree the new calendar of meetings for 2018-2019. (Proposed by Cllr Barnes)

- 1806/038 To agree/amend a new Black Torrington Parish Council Data Protection Privacy Policy, General Privacy Notice and Privacy Notice for Staff, Councillors and Role Holders in accordance with the new General Data Protection Regulation.** A copy of the new Data Protection Privacy Policy, General Privacy Notice and Privacy Notice for Staff, Councillors and Role Holders had been issued with the agenda. It was **resolved** to approve and adopt with immediate effect the Town Council's new Data Protection Privacy Policy, General Privacy Notice and Privacy Notice for Staff, Councillors and Role Holders. (Proposed by Cllr Roberts)
- 1806/039 To consider the provision of a phone for the Clerk and agree a course of action.** The Clerk advised that she had been using her mobile phone to make and receive calls on behalf of the Parish Council. She also advised that she was able to access the Parish Council's e-mails on her phone, which allowed her to stay in touch with matters even when not on line at home. She advised that her phone allowed unlimited calls, texts and 5Gb of data for £12 per month, which seemed sufficient for the Parish Councils requirements. It was **resolved** to reimburse the Clerk £12 a month, on receipt of a completed expense form and copy of invoices, for her using her mobile phone for official Parish Council business. (Proposed by Cllr White)
- 1806/040 To consider paying the Clerk for additional hours worked and agree a course of action.** It was noted that the Clerk had been working in excess of the allocated hours due to the current workload. It was **resolved** to temporarily increase the Clerk's hours immediately to 6 hours per week, to assist in bringing the Council up to date. This arrangement will be reviewed at the September Parish Council meeting. (Proposed by Cllr White.)
- 1806/041 To confirm that the Council wish to open up the Devon Local Government Pension Scheme to the Parish Clerk.** It was **resolved** to confirm that the Council wishes to open up the Devon Local Government Pension Scheme to the Parish Clerk. (Proposed by Cllr White)
- 1806/042 To discuss the Black Torrington Times Newsletter, including its production, advertising and delivery and agree any actions.** Cllr Roberts advised it is a magazine not a newsletter. The Clerk advised that moving forward advertising fees would be invoiced annually in April to avoid any advance payments between financial years. Anyone wishing to advertise during the year would be invoiced on a pro-rata basis. Cllr Mills requested clarity on who printed the publication and Cllr Roberts advised on this. The distribution was discussed and the Clerk suggested that rather than delivering the newsletter to every household it could be placed at distribution/collection points in the Parish, as well as being available electronically on the Council's website. Councillors felt that it is important that the newsletter is delivered to all households, however, there was currently no volunteers to deliver the publication in the more remote parts of the parish such as Chilla. It was **resolved** to put a flyer in the next edition of the magazine asking for volunteers to help with the distribution. In the meantime, Cllrs Barnes and Mills will distribute the next edition in the Chilla area and on the main road. (Proposed by Cllr White)
- 1806/043 To consider Devon County Council's and Libraries Unlimited consultation regarding improvements to the library service in rural and isolated communities in Devon and**

**agree any actions.** Further information had been issued with the agenda. It was **resolved** to note the consultation and to make no comment. (Proposed by Cllr Roberts)

**1806/044 Councillor Reports** - At the discretion of the Chairman, to receive reports from Councillors (Parish, District, and County) and representatives of the Council - strictly for information only.

Cllr Parsons:

- Mr Simon Phillips the Devon County Council Neighbourhood Highways Officer, has been seconded to another area. He is being replaced by Ms Vicky Bradham. If Councillors have any highways issues, could they please direct them to Cllr Parsons in the first instance.
- There are regular meetings, every two weeks, regarding the future of Holsworthy hospital. The draft minutes of a meeting that took place yesterday will be available shortly. Everyone involved is pushing forward to find solutions.
- Wished to put Councillors minds at rest that the financial problems faced by other Councils in the country, such as Northamptonshire Council, is not happening in this part of the country.

**1806/045 Correspondence and Matters to Note** - **To receive Council correspondence and matters to note.** Copies of the correspondence and matters to note had been issued with the agenda.

**Correspondence**

1. *Caretaking of War Memorial*
2. *HMRC – VAT Treatment – playing field equipment*
3. *P3 – Scheme 2018 -2019*
4. *Save Our Hospital Services – Invitation*
5. *Barnstaple Town Council – Devon Records Office*
6. *SWW – Rat Update*
7. *PKF Littlejohn – confirm ext to audit deadline*

**Matters to Note**

1. *DALC Newsletter – June*
2. *DALC Newsletter – May*
3. *TDC – Watersports Survey*
4. *P3 – Brushcutter training available*
5. *TDC – Gambling Act Consultation*

It was **resolved** to note the correspondence and matters to note. (Proposed by Cllr White)

**1806/046 Close**

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm.