

**Minutes of the Black Torrington Parish Council Meeting held on
Wednesday, 6th March 2019, at 7pm, at the Chapel School Room**

Present: Cllrs S White (Chair), P Roberts, P Mills, C Lock, E Barns M Down, S Floyer & D Haywood

In Attendance: Parish Clerk, 3 member of the public (A-M Presswell, J Down, K Scrivener), M. Floyer the new BT Times editor, District Cllr P Hackett, County Cllr B Parsons.

0603/1 To receive and accept apologies.

It was **resolved** to receive and accept apologies from,

0603/2 Declarations of interest – Cllr Lock declared an interest in Item 20. Cllr Lock received dispensation to remain in the room but not vote. Cllr Roberts declared an interest in Item 19. Cllr Roberts received dispensation to remain in the room but not vote.

0603/3 Parish Council Minutes

It was resolved to approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9th January 2018, as a correct record.

0603/4 Matters Arising - None

0603/5 Order of Business – No change

0603/6 Public Question Time

The members of the public all wished to express their views on the issue of dogs being allowed on the playing field. They felt that the proposed notices and dog waste bins could encourage dog owners to exercise their dogs on the playing fields. They were opposed to anything that might be perceived as encouraging dogs on the playing field. The playing fields are well used by children including the School and they felt it was not worth anything that might pose a risk to the children.

The Chair informed the meeting that the reality is that dog walkers have a right to exercise dogs on the playing field, he felt it was disingenuous to infer otherwise by erecting signs banning dogs from the playing fields that could not be enforced. Dog control is a matter for Torridge District Council and currently dogs are allowed on public spaces provided the owners pick up any faeces and dogs are kept under control. There is no Public Spaces Protection Order on the playing field and one will only be granted by TDC, after public consultation, if there is a proven problem.

A general discussion ensued, with all Councillors given the opportunity to express their views.

0603/7 Councillor Reports -

County Cllr Parsons reported that DCC has just finalised its budget. The budget is to increase by 3.99% which includes a 1% increase for adult care. John Hart (Leader of DCC) is upset with the amount of funding coming to the South West from Central Government. Government funding to DCC has decreased by £25million to £30million annually. DCC has shed 6,000 staff. Torridge is a low wage area but its Council Tax is amongst the highest in England (Average for England at £1671 Average for London at £1405 Average for Torridge £1821). Cllr Mills asked about plans to reopen the Exeter to Okehampton railway line for passenger services. Cllr Parson confirmed it was being discussed but contingency planning for Brexit was the priority at the moment.

Ward Cllr Hackett reported that Torridge District Council have had their budget discussions. Cuts in central government funding mean that TDC will have to increase their council tax demand by the maximum amount permitted. TDC receives £4.0m in domestic rates, £4.3m in non-domestic rates and only £600,000 from central government. TDC is responsible for housing, homelessness is becoming a significant drain on resources with the need to temporarily house people in B&B increasing.

0603/8 Chairman's and Clerk's Announcements

Cllr Roberts has passed the keys to the Devon Air Ambulance cabinet in the public toilets to Cllr White

0603/9 Accounts Due for Payment and Receipts - To examine and agree the accounts due for payment, receipts, and bank transfers for the period 20th November 2018 to 9th January 2019 inclusive and to receive the bank reconciliation.

A bank reconciliation was circulated before the meeting and is appended to these minutes. The accounts were approved.

Accounts approved for payment -

Date	Payee	Amount ex VAT	Amount inc VAT	For what
09/01/19	Black Torrington Village Hall	£10.00	£10.00	Hall Hire January
31/01/19	Parish Magazine Printing	£233.30	£233.30	Parish magazine printing
28/02/19	CCC Finance	£13269.96	£15923.95	Sovereign Play deposit for new play equipment

Current Account Total For month inc VAT: £16167.25

Current Account Total for month ex VAT £13513.26

Current Account VAT Total for month: £2653.99

0603/10 Grants - To consider whether the Grant of £500 awarded to the Friends of Blake House Surgery lift appeal is still needed and if not, should the council still award the grant for the Friends to use as they see appropriate.
The amount needed for the lift appeal has been met. The Friends of Blake House Surgery would welcome a grant to use on other projects.
It was **resolved** to rescind the agreement to grant £500 to the Friends of Blake House Surgery for their lift appeal.

0603/11 Elections
Ward Councillor P Hackett informed the meeting that the closing date for applications will be 4pm on April 4th [in fact 3rd April]. The Clerk informed the meeting that you do not apply to stand for election but you are nominated by 2 parishioners about you have to consent to be nominated. Cllr Hackett said he will bring the nominations packs to the Parish Council.

0603/12 To receive a report from the Village Hall Committee.

The following report was noted:-

“We had a very successful last meeting where Hazel Turner agreed to join our committee and we now also have her husband, Stephen having agreed to join the committee. This is great news as we need as many members as possible to spread our workload.

Discussions were also had about the Fete and trying to work as closely as possible with those who do not wish to be active members of the Village Hall Committee but do want to be members or helpers for the Fete Committee.

Likewise, we are keen to build even stronger links with the Playing Field Committee.

Finances continue to be good and we are yet to decide on a contribution amount towards the building of the extended car park for the Village Hall/Playing Field/Parish.

We are looking at trying to reduce our energy costs and to use our Hall as effectively as possible. However, as funds are good, we will not be going overboard on fund raising for the time being.

We have found a volunteer for the Bookings Secretarial role and we now also have a cleaner who will replace Sarah as our cleaner. Ken Tyrrell will be our Bookings Secretary and Elizabeth (??) will do our cleaning for an hour a week, with the occasional extra hour cleaning when needed.

The AGM is coming up in April and we will hold the AGM and the ordinary meeting on the same day, April 3rd.

Sally Hill has stood down from the committee and Sarah will no longer be cleaning for us so we would like to thank them for all that they have done for us. We would also like to welcome our new volunteers and Committee members. Furthermore, I would like to thank Emma for agreeing to be Vice Chair for us.”

0603/13 Overflow car park

Quotes have been asked for since November. We have received one original quote for the work on the overflow car park. With a contribution from the

Village Hall the quote is affordable out of reserves. If a decision is delayed It may not be possible to schedule the work for this summer.
It was **resolved** to accept the quote from D Hockin Groundworks

0603/14 Black Torrington Playing Field

a. To receive a report from the Playing Field Committee

The following report was noted

1. The left over stuff from the fireworks night bonfire has been burned up so the playing field is looking tidier.
2. The play equipment groundwork was done by the Bowdens on 27th Feb (no invoice yet).
3. We installed a french drain at the bottom end of the MUGA (the landing light end).
4. We've received the initial play equipment invoice from Sovereign of £15923.95 (which includes £2653.99 of reclaimable VAT), and I believe Don and June have arranged a cheque to be sent.
5. I'm starting the Leader5 grant reclaim paperwork today, and I will work with Don to get all the evidence docs we need (which will include proof that the bill was paid from the PC account, so will unfortunately involve dealing with the bank). If we don't get the Bowden invoice in time, I am expecting the initial grant claim to be for the net amount of the Sovereign invoice, which is £13269.96.
6. We had our Pizza Fest on Saturday which raised £94.90 and made us all just a little bit fatter.
7. I've done a part-cut of the playing field but the playing field's ride-on mower now has slipping drive belts and needs replacements and servicing; I will be looking for quotes.
8. Because we now have very little play equipment we are thinking of cancelling our normal Rospa inspection and asking Sovereign to inspect those items when they are on site.
9. Expected play equipment dates: pre-installation site survey w/e 29th March, installation starting 29th April (and taking 7 to 10 days).

b. Progress on new children's play equipment

See report above

c. Progress towards clarifying the status of the Playing Field Committee.

The draft terms of reference for the Playing Field Committee (PFC) have been read and accepted by the PFC. It was agreed to adopt the terms of reference (appended to these minutes).

0603/15 Dogs on the playing field

a. To consider the wording of the proposed Guidelines for dog owners using the playing fields.

Discussed in public question time. It was agreed to allow 1 month or comments and suggestions on the wording of the proposed guidelines to be submitted to the Chair for consideration.

b. To consider the purchase of a new "dog poo" bin and possible locations.

Cllr Barnes asked if the existing bins are full and if further bins are required. They are not.

It was **resolved** to purchase a new dog poo bin to be sited opposite the parish noticeboard

- c. **To consider the purchase of a new “dog poo bag dispenser” and possible locations. Approximate cost £61.**

It was **resolved** to purchase a new “dog poo bag dispenser” to be sited by the new dog bin

0603/16 To discuss the Black Torrington Times Newsletter, including its future production, editing, advertising and delivery.

Mark Floyer is to take over editorship from Cllr Roberts. The current compositor is also standing down so Mr Floyer will also take on that role. Mr Floyer’s skills are mainly in proofreading. Cllr Roberts said the layout was straightforward. The deadline for article for the April issue is 15th March. Future delivery in outlying areas was discussed. Cllr White will draft a request for people to help with delivery to outlying areas for inclusion in the BT Times

0603/17 Communities Together Fund (formerly TAP fund)

The clerk has applied for a grant in conjunction with Halwill Parish Council

0603/18 Police Report

The police were not in attendance. A written report was circulated before the meeting. (Appended)

0603/19 To consider organising and funding an event to recognise the contribution of Mr and Mrs Roberts to the community.

The Village Hall has been booked for a cheese & wine/tea & cake event on Thursday 25th April 18:00 to 19:30

Cllr White was given a maximum budget of £200.

0603/20 Torridge District Council - Planning Applications

Reference: 1/0062/2019/FUL

Proposal: Two-storey rear extension to replace existing barn to create ground floor swimming pool and a two bedroom holiday apartment/annexe on the first floor all ancillary to the main property

Location: Kneela Cottage, Black Torrington, Beaworthy

BTPC Comment: No objection

Reference: 1/0124/2019/FUL

Proposal: Erection of no. 1 dwelling

Location: Land At Chestnut, Chilla, Beaworthy

BTPC Comment: Objection on the grounds of scale and contrary to the planning appeal decision for a modest, single-story building. Cllr Mills will circulate a draft objection.

Reference: 1/0147/2019/FUL
Proposal: Proposed side conservatory
Location: Kingsley Cottage, Black Torrington, Beaworthy, Devon
BTPC Comment: No comment

Reference: 1/0175/2019/FUL
Proposal: Proposed extension and alterations.
Location: The Spinney, Winsford Lane, Halwill Junction
BTPC Comment: No comment

Reference: 1/0157/2019/FUL
Proposal: Variation of Condition 2 of 1/0069/2018/FUL (Plans Schedule)
Location: Black Torrington Reservoir, Black Torrington, Beaworthy
BTPC Comment: No comment

0603/21 **To note May 14th as the date of the Parish Council AGM**
Duly Noted

0603/22 **Close**