

## HIGH BICKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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### Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday 8 January 2020 at 7.30pm in the Community Centre, High Bickington

**Present:** Neil Parker (Chairman) Councillors: Adam Bunting, Charmaine Coxon, Roger Keen, Chris McWhirter, Bob Boothby County Councillor Andrew Saywell, District Councillor Michael Clarke, PCSO Sandra Brown, Jenny Baker (Clerk)

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

#### **County Councillor Andrew Saywell:**

Happy New Year, the elections and the subsequent Christmas break, have delayed us getting the budget finalised. The figures have now been received from Central Government and they are as expected. I will be in a better position to tell you more in February.

Good news announced about on street parking for health and care workers who will now be allowed to park in restricted areas to carry out their calls without getting parking fines.

Fire consultation has closed and only two stations in the region are to be closed, Topsham and Budleigh. The fire service will look at new shift system for retained fire fighters and new system for paying on-call fire fighters which is hoped will help with retaining existing fire fighters and new recruitment. Barnstaple Station is not going to change to day crewing at the moment but this is conditional on new shift system.

#### **Councillor Michael Clarke:**

I can confirm that Dolton has now joined Winkleigh and declared a 'Climate Change Emergency'. Torridge Council is going to pre-empt Devon County Council revealing their scheme which could take some time, by inviting Parish Councils to a one day meeting at Caddesdown to learn about what Torridge want to achieve in the next five years. Janet Williams is leading this and I will be on the sub-committee. The first climate change meeting of the sub-committee will be in February to agree and put down the plans for Torridge.

As previously advised the Homeless Reduction Act Policy I established became effect on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2020. The Salvation Army have opened their centre in Barnstaple and is available for the all homeless in Northern Devon to take attend for a hot meal, dry clothes and a bed for the night. Centre is open from 7 pm – 10 pm and overnight for those staying.

30<sup>th</sup> January sees the first meeting of the Armed Forces Covenant Champion in Exeter to discuss changes and how they affect each area. There is budget from Central Government to employ two out-reach workers to look at helping 16-20 year old.

Due to the success of the work done with the disability funding scheme additional funding has now been allocated. We will now be able to take on an apprentice case worker to administrate the scheme in Torrington.

Councillor Coxon asked if Councillor Clarke could pledge any money towards equipment required for the Barton Meadow play area and he confirmed that £200.00 would be available to High Bickington but he would require details of what the money would be spent on.

## PCSO Sandra Brown

Crimes recorded in the region between 7/12/19 – 7/01/20 were: 1 burglary non-dwelling, 3 public safety, 2 transport.

There is no significant change in the number of crimes recorded between 2018 and 19. The way the Police record crimes can lead to some confusion as a public safety issue could be someone reporting not having seen a neighbour for a few days or it could be a domestic incident also with regard to vehicle crime, this could be a traffic accident or parking offence. PCSO Sandra Brown advised that if there was anything that she felt the Parish Council should be aware of in the area she would make sure that this was brought to their attention.

### 1. Apologies for absence

None

### 2. Declarations of Interest – none declared

### 3. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 11 December 2029.

All Councillors confirmed they had read the minutes and accepted them as correct. The Chairman signed the minutes.

### 4. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 11 December and not included elsewhere on the agenda.

No other matters raised.

### 5. Police Matters – no other matters raised.

### 6. Barton Meadow Play Area

Revised quote received from TK Play to commission and supply junior dual sport, football/rugby posts at the same price as agreed and paid for supply of football goal posts (£1,239.00 plus VAT. These to be installed at the same time as the new bucket swing, end January/early February subject to the ground being firm enough for the crew to work on the ground. Quotation also received for fencing around the new swing in wood to match existing or metal bow top. Price also provided to install natural hedge boundary closest to the road boundary as alternative to standard fencing. Councillors felt that moving to a natural boundary hedge would be a good idea but more time was required to make a decision and evaluate the different hedging options and prices and this could be something to look at in the future. In the short term the Councillors requested the Clerk speak to the insurance company to see if they have any guidelines with regard to fencing in swings and based on their response a decision would be made as to whether new fencing would be required at this time.

### 7. Matters raised by the Chairman

- (a) **Display of Disabled Parking Sign on school building.** The school approached Devon County Council Highways Department for approval to use the signs provided by the Parish Council showing times when the space is in use and were advised that as the bay is not an enforceable disabled parking space they would not condone the use of the signs as they could imply that the bay is enforceable. The Chairman will arrange for the signs to be collected from the school and returned to the sign maker for re-use.
- (b) **Damaged picnic bench – Barton Meadow.** The Chairman reported that the bench was found upside down in the corner of the field and it looked like it had been deliberately damaged. Councillor Adam Bunting has spoken to a contractor with regard to obtaining a quote to repair the damaged bench. As this is not the first time repairs have been necessary it was agreed that if the cost of repair is above **£25.00** then a decision should be made to scrap the bench.

**8. Maintenance**

- (a) Highways – nothing to report
- (b) Footpaths and Byways – inspection has taken place and nothing to report.  
P3 Pathways Grant Application – to be completed by Councillor Keen this month.

**9. Finance:****(a) General Finance**

(a)	Barclays current a/c statement as at 30 December 2029			£9,524.65
	Cheques not cleared:			
	100865 D Jones Grass Cutting	£140.00		
	100864 J Baker (Clerk Sal. & Exp.)	£323.40	£463.40	£9,061.25
(b)	Cheques to be issued:			
	100868 SNC (Southwest) Repairs	£474.00		
	100869 J Baker (Clerk Sal & Exp)	£326.57	<u>£800.57</u>	<u>£8,260.68</u>

**(b) Parish Precept Application 2020/21**

Councillors have reviewed the draft budget for 2020/21 and the Torridge Council Precept calculations. The Council decided it is necessary to increase the precept by 2% this year to keep the level of maintenance and upkeep of the village at the existing level. This increase would equate to .53p increase on an average Band D property. The last time the precept was increased was 2018.

**10. Planning**

No new planning applications received.

**11. Correspondence – nothing to report****12. Items for information – Councillor Keen reported a problem with overflowing drain in Nethergrove Lane due to mud/leaves and Councillor McWhirter offered to help clear the area.**

**Next meeting 12 February 2020**