

# Frithelstock Parish Council

## Minutes of the 14<sup>th</sup> Combined Annual Parish Meeting and Village Hall Management Committee AGM held on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at 8pm in the Village Hall

**Councillors Present:** Mike Stokes (Chair), Mackie Poole (Vice Chair), Lizzie Hunkin, Roger Hunkin, Mike Baker, Andrew Heard, Mark Goldman, District Councillor Phil Pennington and County Councillor Andrew Saywell

**Village Hall Management Committee Representatives Present:** Adrian Green (Chair), Lizzy Hunkin (Secretary), Marcelle Paton-Smith (Chair, Entertainments Committee), Maureen Poole (Deputy Bookings Secretary), Eileen Brown, Ruth Blake, Derek Raymont, Mike Stokes

**Playing Fields Committee Members Present:** Mark Thomas

**Parish Clerk:** Zena Tett

**Also in attendance:** 15 members of the public

- Welcome:** the Chairman of the Parish Council, Mike Stokes, welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- Apologies for Absence:** Mike Baker
- Minutes of the 13<sup>th</sup> Combined Annual Parish Meeting and Village Hall Management Committee AGM:** held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2017 were agreed and signed as a true record, proposed by Mark Goldman and seconded by Roger Hunkin, all in favour.
- Waste & Recycling:** guest speaker from Torridge District Council Waste and Recycling Manager, TDC, Richard Haste spoke about the changes to waste and recycling services. As of the 4th June 2018 the current waste and recycling services will be changing; this is the first change to collections in 30 years. There is black bag refuse which will be collected fortnightly; a caddy for food waste (indoor) and an outdoor (lockable) caddy for the food waste collection; separate bags for paper and cardboard; a black box for glass and a green box for plastic and tins. It will be possible to recycle a wider range of plastics, including margarine tubs (all plastics will have to be recyclable by 2025) and the glass box is designed to stack into the plastics box to save space. The changes should result in a more efficient and tidier service and help to reduce litter. There will also be the option to subscribe to a garden waste collection and this will be a chargeable service, costing £35.00 annually. The reason for the charge is this is not a statutory service and until now, while other districts have charged for this collection, Torridge has offered it free; the charge for this service is still the cheapest in Devon. Torridge District Council has to hit a 50% recycling rate by 2020 and is currently at 43%. Householders will receive through the post, a comprehensive list of what can be recycled as well as a calendar,

detailing collection dates. Richard Haste also highlighted the need for traceability with waste and the fact that the waste and recycling service is rigorously regulated. There is currently not enough waste in Devon for a waste Energy plant.

**5. Annual Crime Report:**

PCSO Melissa Baker was unable to attend the meeting.

**6. Village Hall Management Committee AGM**

6.1 Apologies for Absence: Eileen Brown and Collette Henerty.

6.2 Minutes of the AGM held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2017 were agreed as a true record.

6.3 Matters Arising: None

6.4 Report of the Chairperson of the Management Committee including a report of the Entertainment Committee and the Financial Statements: Marcelle Paton-Smith remains as a member of the Entertainment Committee and the Chairperson is on a rotational basis.

**Entertainment Committee**

Five events were organised in the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

2017 Spring Quiz

This was held in April and was well attended. Thanks to David and Marcelle for the difficult task of organising the Quiz and acting as question masters.

The notional profit from entry fee and bar profits was slightly up on the prior year at just over £300.

The raffle proceeds of £88 were donated to the Frithelstock Poorlands charity.

Scrumpy Stroll

This was held on the Sunday before the last Bank Holiday in May. The number taking part in the walk, which crossed East Ash, Smythacott, Knoworthy & Cholash farms, was similar to the previous year. A trailer ride back to the Hall for a BBQ was organised. Thanks to Steve Beer for this and the provision of the toilet at the end of the walk.

However, a prediction of poor weather seemed to have put off those who hadn't taken part in the walk from coming along to the Hall for the BBQ afterwards, (which they did in the previous year), so takings from the BBQ were down significantly.

Overall the Stroll, including the BBQ and bar profits raised £230.

Annual Summer Event

This was held on the playing field on the nearest Saturday to mid-summer day with music from Big Al and the Wild Strawberries, a tug-of-war competition and other games.

Although the facilities for enjoyment were excellent the number of paying adults was down by about a third on the prior year apparently due to clashes with several other events and commitments. This had a knock on effect on BBQ and bar takings.

However, the overall result, which was a notional profit of just under £1,200, was close to the average, it just followed on from a couple of very good years.

### Autumn Quiz

This was organised again by Adrian with a format intended to be more sociable than exacting, with several picture rounds which enabled plenty of time for teams to mull over their answers.

Attendance was good and the notional profit from entry fee and the bar was almost £390.

The proceeds of the raffle of £60 were donated to the North Devon Animal Ambulance.

### Christmas Fun Night

This year we were fortunate in attracting enough acts to revert to the format of having a stage with several excellent performers to entertain the audience following a sing-along of carols and before a period of games for the younger ones.

This appears to be the most popular style for the pre-Christmas get together and one we would hope to repeat again this year if we can get enough acts to volunteer.

As there is no entry fee - and it is a Bring & Share Finger Buffet - it is not intended as a fund raising activity however profits from the Bar contributed a healthy £150 after the only expense, which was hiring the stage.

The raffle proceeds of £150 were donated to the Frithelstock Poorlands charity.

We have already had one event in the current year which was the Spring Quiz, which unfortunately was very poorly attended, which was a great shame because David and Marcelle had put in a lot of effort and made for a very interesting quiz enjoyed by those few teams attending. The evening still made a notional profit of just under £100 and raised £46 for the Northam Lodge charity but we would hope that in future we can secure greater participation from the Parish for these events.

Two further events are being planned for the coming months:

The Scrumpy Stroll and BBQ which will take place on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2018

The Annual Summer Event which will take place on the Playing Field on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2018.

If anybody has any suggestions for further events – either fund raising or purely social – please let a member of the Entertainments Committee know particularly if you can think of something for the dark evenings in October and November.

### **Chairman's Report**

Use of the Hall by the many activities classes has once again held up well during the year and, together with other regular users such as the Parish Council, Skittles and the WI and more intermittent users such as Young Farmers, has led to a 20% increase in rental income for the period. Some costs, such as electricity, have correspondingly increased but there is still a healthy margin of recurring income over recurring expenditure.

Once again the hourly rates for use of the Hall have been kept unchanged but this will be reviewed by the Committee when they meet in the Autumn to determine whether a small increase is justified after several years of the same rates.

Bar income looks to be down significantly in the year but this is largely due to a one-off event in the previous year's figures and a decline in the number of people attending the Annual Summer Event. The margin on the sales by the Bar remains slightly above 50%.

As recorded last year the Entertainment Committee now has a rotating chair dependent on events rather than a permanent chair and so I will now give a quick report on behalf of the Entertainment Committee which explains why income from events was also down in the year. [Report attached]

I would like to record the thanks of the Committee to Michael Short and Jenny Hearn for organizing the '50 Club' and maintaining the generous donation to the Hall which for the year just ended was £960. The higher figure in the financial statements is because a prior year amount was also received in the year.

So much for income sources. What about expenditure?

Again this year has been one of modest expenditure on new equipment. The gross cost of the Notice Boards being covered by grants from Torridge District Council and reimbursement from the Parish Council.

The legal requirement of a full electrical certification every 5 years was fulfilled in the year and that accounts for most of the £864 shown under electrical maintenance. The other significant item is that we had a team of cleaners in to do a deep clean of areas which we can't expect Maureen to get to in the limited hours she has available normally. This is something we will only do every few years but now was also the right time to get all the internal woodwork washed down so that the decorators can paint the door frames and internal wooden windows etc. In addition, with changes in EU regulations, we may have to register the Hall as a Food Business which could lead to detailed inspections. Even if this is not the case it is still good practice on an occasional basis to have a thorough overhaul of kitchen tiles etc.

As several of the other intended projects did not progress in the year, other expenditure has also been limited. It had been intended to purchase a shipping container to place on the playing field but as the indicative quote rose from around £1,500 to £2,700 on the final quote, the Committee decided to postpone this purchase and revisit the storage issue later.

Two other builders have been asked to provide estimates on the outstanding roof repair at the western end of the Hall and this will be done when the weather turns dry. I will also have another go at the ivy on the car park walls and then press Bryan Hutchins to do at least the most crumbly sections over this summer.

The possibility of extending the Hall with a new room as a Committee Room and social space is still being investigated. The possibility of extending upwards above the bar and toilets was considered but after obtaining the opinion of builders on the outline plan it was determined that it would be too disruptive, complicated and expensive especially as it would have required the provision of a lift for disabled people. We have therefore reverted to the position that if it is to happen the only feasible option is to have a single storey extension at the end of the rear car park coming out about as far as the septic tank. Preliminary discussions have been had with a builder to get a rough idea of costs and current grant availability is being looked into again.

If anyone has any other ideas or requests for equipment or improvements at the Hall please feel free to suggest them at any time.

Our financial position is comfortable. At the year-end we had £ 17,000 in the Bank but as we account on a strict Receipts and Payments basis there was an additional item not reflected in this figure. The agreed donation from the Parish Council had been rolled over for two years with the intention that it be used to acquire the shipping container previously mentioned. As this has not happened it means that in the current financial year we can still rely on that additional £1,500 when something suitable is identified plus whatever the Parish Council decides to donate in the year to March 2019.

At the year-end we also had bar stock of approximately £800 and cash in hand of £200. As there was only a small balance on the electricity account and no significant outstanding bills the position, as of today's date, is very little changed.

Thanks are due to Maureen and Arthur Poole for cleaning and caretaking; Jean and Michael Short for attending to the bookings; Mel Goldman for acting as Bar Manager and keeping the bar stocked and the other officers for fulfilling their roles, Lizzy Hunkin as Secretary, Colette Henerty as Treasurer and Julian Carrington for acting as an Independent Examiner of the financial statements. Finally, thanks to all the other members of both the Management and the Entertainment Committees for their hard work over the year.

- 6.5 Adoption of Financial Statements (subject to net change). The adoption was proposed by Mel Goldman and seconded by Roger Hunkin.
- 6.6 Election of Elected Members:  
This was proposed by Mark Goldman and seconded by Andrew Heard; there were no changes and the Elected Members remain as:  
Adrian Green  
Melanie Goldman  
Eileen Brown  
Derek Raymont  
Marcelle Paton-Smith  
Andy Haville
- 6.7 Confirmation of Representative Members:  
There have been no notifications of changes from the appointing organisations to their representative Members so they remain as:  
Skittles - Arthur Poole  
Playing Field - none as yet  
Church - Jean Short  
WI - Ruth Blake  
Parish Council: Mackie Poole, Roger Hunkin, Gale Riddell, Peter Hutchings, Mike Stokes
- 6.8 Confirmation of Officers:  
There has been no notification from any of the Officers to change and they remain as:

Commented [1]:

Lizzie Hunkin - Secretary  
Colette Henerty - Treasurer  
Julian Carrington - Auditor  
Jean Short - Bookings Secretary  
Maureen Poole - Assistant Bookings Secretary

6.9 Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson for current year:  
Andrew Heard proposed and Mark Goldman seconded Adrian Green as  
Chairperson; Andrew Heard proposed and Mark Goldman seconded Mel  
Goldman as Vice Chairperson.

6.10 Any other business: None

6.11 Date of next meeting. 25<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

## **7. Playing Fields Annual Report**

Following the Annual Inspection of the Playground Equipment in March 2017, maintenance was carried out including, new Bearings for the Roundabout supplied and installed through Mike Palmer and Anthony Palmer, with the help of TK Play. The TK Play team carried out several repairs, and refurbishment to the equipment, re-fixing items and replacing swing seats and chains as per the report. The play committee supported the annual Music Festival, ensuring another success. The playing field first ever Vintage Tea event was a great success, thanks to Eileen, Ian, and Lorraine Brown who worked very hard along with committee members and families as always, we raised £ 951.00. Ian Brown carried out an excellent job of cutting the grass and working well with the committee and footballers, this is paid for by the Parish Council through precept monies. Stuart Faulkner has carried out strimming work throughout the year keeping the grass intact and working closely with Ian. Pete and Derek Hutchings cut the hedges and always do a great job working with the neighbours to keep everybody happy, up until now this has always been a free service. The gates are kept locked through the help of Charlie Heckman and Mike Stokes, this helps keep the play area safe for all users and avoids undesirable behaviour. The Equipment has been in use up to 10 years plus and will need maintaining annually or will deteriorate quickly. The bank balance is very healthy £3,310.23

## **8. Poorland Charity Report**

Maureen read out a statement on behalf of Mary Goaman who sent her apologies. Both Gale Riddell and Richard Bond have resigned from the committee. The new Chair is Maureen Poole and Mary Goaman remains as Treasurer and Secretary. The current balance is £722.08 which includes the proceeds of the raffle held at the Christmas party which came to £150.00. £140.00 was withdrawn to pay for gifts to 14 householders. Mary thanked all who have donated to and supported the charity.

## **9. 50 Club Report**

Michael Short said the 50 Club is still going strong. Last year there were 79 members and they hope to maintain these numbers this year. The club was begun in 1989 and has raised just over £24,000 for the village hall, to date.

## 10. Speedwatch Report

Richard Joseph reported that in the past 12 months, the volunteers had met on 14 occasions using the three approved locations. The number of drivers caught could not be disclosed but on average between 8 to 12 per cent of passing traffic was found to be travelling at 35 or above during the hours monitored. The volunteers have now been carrying out speedwatch sessions for 10 years and are now one of the more experienced teams in Devon. During last year the volunteers lost the use of one site for seven months, however, this turned out to be the result of a misunderstanding by the police and it was duly re-instated in early January. Mr Joseph thanked the volunteers, who turn out in all weather conditions, boiling sun to freezing cold, rain, or hail. The team consists of Mark Goldman, Dave Debnam, Marcelle Paton-Smith, Julian Carrington, Nigel McCree, and Sid Adams. In brief and on an allied matter, in late October last year there was an abandoned car in Church Lane and Mr Joseph was asked, as coordinator of Speedwatch, to alert the police. Emails to Torrington Police were not getting the response sought so he went first to Torrington and then Bideford Police Stations to seek action. Unfortunately, both were closed to the public so he called 101 and he was sad to report that the lady he spoke to was simply not interested and referred the matter to TDC for the removal of the car. When called, TDC stated that the car was neither taxed nor insured, however, shortly afterwards it was removed by the owner. Mr Joseph submitted a formal complaint about stations being closed with two suggestions to remedy this. Dr Karen Mellowdew who, working for the Commissioner's Office, had been given the task of improving police services agreed to meet with Mr Joseph and she recorded his suggestions and more information about the abandoned car. She also alerted him to the possible increased responsibilities and opportunities for volunteer Speedwatch Teams.

## 11. Website Report

Mr Richard Joseph reported that the Frithelstock.com site had received 81,860 hits since it was launched. Since the site had been moved from his servers in Frithelstock to the web hosting company, many of the robot searches have ceased and the hits now average 140 plus a month. There is a direct link on the Frithelstock.com to this site and a reciprocal link to this site on the PC's site. Many residents, Mr Joseph felt, may not be making use of the information posted. A summary of the types of items posted were mentioned:

- Announcements of Parish Council Agendas
- Traffic and road closures
- Alerts sent out by Devon & Cornwall Police (But only those relevant and applicable to our parish)
- Waste collection and council services
- Church services
- Stolen car appeals
- Accounts and minutes for the Village Hall, Entertainment Committee, and Playing Field
- The Prior when published

Any item of news about North and Central Devon that appears in the National Press. He encouraged residents to make more use of the site. About 30 postings are made to the site each month. As a matter of policy, items of any forthcoming events are not posted to the site but are circulated to everyone on the mailing list. If you are not on the list and wish to be included, there are forms here that you should complete. Everyone on this list will receive an email to acknowledge that they understand why and what we use their addresses for in order to comply with the new data protection regulations coming into force next month (GDPR).

## 12. Rowing Club Report

Lizzy Hunkin reported that due to a lack of interest, the Rowing Club has now ceased to exist. Either Di Beer or Lizzy Hunkin or both attended every Friday with rowing machines but support was inconsistent and in spite of a notice on the Facebook page suggesting a restart of the club in January, no further support was generated and it was decided that the club should close.

## 13. Parish Council Annual Reports

### 13.1 Finance Report

The Clerk confirmed the opening balance of the Parish Council's accounts was £6,483.13. Payments during the year totalled £7,095.44 and receipts were £15,895.09 giving the Parish a total of £15,282.78. (10K of this is grant money for the trampoline)

### 13.2 Chairman's Report

Cllr Stokes said that most, if not all of what he would wish to say this evening has been debated at length throughout the year and the minutes of the Parish Council meetings are available on the website. He will therefore restrict his comments to what he considers are perhaps the major highlights and issues that have involved the Parish Council since last April.

1. The PC has met on 7 occasions including an additional meeting to discuss a planning application, the response time for which fell outside of the Parish Council's regular meeting schedule. For minor non-contentious planning applications that were received outside of the regular meeting schedule, Councillors reviewed the applications separately and corresponded via email. The subsequent decisions being recorded at the next PC meeting.

2. During the year, the Parish Council has reviewed and agreed its Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Asset Register and Insurance Documents. On this latter item, it was realised that the playground equipment was never included in the insurance policy taken out by the playing field committee and so this has now been included in the Parish Council insurance policy. The new trampoline will be added as soon as it is installed.

3. Planning: 12 planning applications have been considered by the Parish Council and of these 3 objections were registered. The one causing the most widespread concern was the closure of the Clinton Arms and as I'm sure most of you know, the TDC refusal to allow the building to be converted into a residence has been taken to appeal by the owners. The deadline for



comments to the Planning Inspectorate is tomorrow and the Parish Council has submitted what they believe is a strong objection to the proposal.

4. One of the most frequent issues that have been discussed at Parish Council meetings this year has been highways and in particular, potholes and drainage issues. Devon Highways has strict criteria with regards what flooding constitutes a danger and this can cause frustration on occasions. As an example, at the beginning of April following a sustained period of wet weather, he reported major flooding on the bend at Old Pound; his notification was acknowledged. This week, he received an email from Highways advising that an inspection was carried out on Monday of this week and that no flooding was observed and no further action required – what a surprise after the very hot and dry weather of the past week. He spoke with a person at Highways and the Highways representative agreed fully with him that the system does not work. He also copied the response to our Devon CC Councillor, Andrew Saywell and he has agreed to follow this up on our behalf. Andrew is like a breath of fresh air in giving the parish support at county level, compared with what we have experienced over the past 4 years.

5. At last years' meeting a complaint was made that the parish road signs were looking decidedly dirty. Although road signs are a DCC responsibility, the Parish Council took it upon itself to do something about it and accordingly those signs, which could be reached (some were in a dangerous situation without traffic management), were pressure washed.

6. The Parish Council are rightly, required to ensure that public funds are spent with full transparency and accordingly, tenders were invited for the supply and installation of new playground equipment and the grass cutting on the playing field.

Finally, Cllr Stokes thanked members of the Parish Council who had supported him as Chairman this past year.

**14. Village Clean Up Date**

It was decided to meet on Monday 30th April 2018 at 6.30pm at the Village Hall. Please bring black bags and gloves.

**15. Hele Lane Village Sign**

The sign needs to be moved. The new site will depend upon where the builders put the new entrance.

**16. War Memorial**

The Chairman received a letter criticising the Parish Council for not sweeping the steps of the memorial, prior to Remembrance Sunday. This upset some members of the Parish Council but as the Chairman commented, maintaining the memorial is not one of the duties of the Parish Council.

**17. White Stones**

The white stones need to be maintained as they demarcate the Village Green. Richard Joseph and members of the Parish Council have repainted them over the years, this needs to be discussed at the next meeting. **Action Clerk**

**18. Open Forum**

Cllr Phil Pennington commented that due to the high turnover of staff in the Planning Department of TDC, continuity was difficult. It is hoped that Planning will improve in the near future.

Cllr Andrew Saywell reported that 600 - 700 potholes are being reported per day and that there is a huge backlog. The Highways contractor is putting out more gangs but they are having to prioritise. North Devon County Council has an extra £6.5 million to deal with potholes and drainage issues. The Council Tax precept has increased by 4.9% and the extra revenue has been directed to the Adult Social Care budget, Highway's and also Children' services. Cllr Saywell added that Children's services must be a priority. Cllr Saywell also thanked Mike Stokes, Chair of the Parish Council for his kind words of appreciation.

Maureen Poole asked that the mirror in the hedge opposite the Village Hall be adjusted. It was suggested this be done on Monday evening during the village clean up.

Jenny Hearn and Jean Short complained about the poor accoustics in the Village Hall and next time the Parish Council will use the PA system. The question of how to address the sound issues of the Village Hall is not a new one and Adrian Green commented that lowering the height of the hall ceiling had been suggested and rejected, as it would spoil the look of the hall. Baffles are to be considered but advice needs to be sought from a specialist. Cllr Saywell mentioned that he has extra grant money (10K) for capital projects.

Cllr Mackie Poole thanked the Chairman, Mike Stokes, for his chairmanship.

**19. Proposed date of next meeting** was confirmed as Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at 8pm to be held in the Village Hall.

**With no further business the meeting concluded at 9.35pm**

**SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD:** ..... (Chair)

**NAME:** ..... **DATE:** .....