

Frithestock Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 19th May 2015 at 7:30 pm in Frithestock Village Hall

Councillors Present: Mr M Baker, Mr Andrew Heard, Mr Roger Hunkin, Mr M Poole and Mr M Stokes.

Clerk: Mr P Blossie

Also in attendance: Cllr. Phil Pennington (TDC), PCSO Melissa Baker and 15 members of the public: Gwen Barrow, Dave Debnam, Mark Goldman, Melanie Goldman, Adrian Green, Jennifer Hearn, Colette Henerty, Lizzy Hunkin, Richard Joseph, Marcelle Paton-Smith, Mary Pearce, Maureen Poole, Nic Reid, E Riddell and Jean Short.

KEY: Actions are shown in bold blue type Decisions are shown in bold red type

Preliminaries:

- a) Before the meeting formally started the following signed declarations of acceptance and formally accepted their positions as elected members of Frithestock Parish Council:
Mr Mike Baker, Mr Andrew Heard, Mr Roger Hunkin, Mr M Poole and Mr M Stokes.
- b) Register of Members Interests were distributed to all members. These are to be returned to the Parish clerk who will take copies for the website and pass on the originals to the Monitoring Officer.
- c) Register of Gifts and Hospitality were distributed to all members

- 1. Election of Chairperson (item chaired by Mackie Poole, previous Chair)** Mackie Poole said that he would not accept a nomination as Chairman again having undertaken the role for many years. **Mike Stokes was proposed as Chairman by Roger Hunkin, seconded by Andrew Heard and he was elected unanimously.**
- 2. Welcome.** Mike Stokes welcomed all to the meeting and thanked Mackie Poole for his hard work over many years, saying that he would be a "hard act to follow". He also congratulated Phil Pennington on his success in the recent District Council election. Mike said that he had been disappointed by the abuse that had been aimed at the Parish Council, and Mackie Poole in particular, both verbally and by email recently and stated that he would not accept or tolerate that during his term of office.
- 3. Apologies for Absence** None
- 4. Election of Vice-Chairperson** Roger Hunkin said that he would not be accepting a nomination for the vice-chairmanship this year. **He proposed Mackie Poole, which was seconded by Mike Baker and agreed unanimously.**
- 5. To consider the requirement to co-opt two additional councillors** There were two unfilled positions on the Council following the recent elections. Four candidates had offered to be co-opted: Mark Goldman, Liz Hunkin, Maureen Poole and Nic Reid. Each of the candidates gave a brief presentation about themselves and why they were seeking co-option. It was suggested by the Clerk and agreed unanimously that voting should be done secretly by paper ballot. Following one round of voting **Liz Hunkin and Mark Goldman were duly elected as co-optees with both candidates being confirmed by a unanimous vote from the elected members present.**

- 6. Appointment of Snow Warden** Terry Warrington had only recently taken over this role from Greg Ball and had given no indication that he wished to stand down. **His continued appointment was agreed unanimously.**
- 7. Appointment of Representatives to Village Hall Management Committee** **The current representatives are Mackie Poole, Roger Hunkin, Peter Hutchings, Gale Riddell and Eileen Brown and it was agreed unanimously that these five people would continue in post.**
- 8. Appointment of Representatives to the Poorlands Charity** It was noted that it was not necessary to make any changes to these appointments at this time.
- 9. To confirm the appointment of the Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer** It was proposed by Mike Baker, seconded by Andrew Heard and **agreed unanimously that Patrick Blossie should continue in post as Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer.**
- 10. Dispensations** Dispensations were agreed and signed by all present to permit all councillors to debate and vote on all issues concerning a) **Village Hall** and b) **Precept setting** for the full 4-year term of this Council.
- 11. To Reconfirm Membership of DALC and Consider County Committee Nominations** **It was agreed unanimously that the Parish Council would continue its membership of the Devon Association of Local Councils.** Mark Goldman nominated himself for appointment to the County Committee and was passed an application form to complete.
- 12. DALC Training Opportunities** The Clerk explained that DALC offered a number of courses throughout the year and that suitable courses for new councillors, chairpersons and clerks were currently available. An email had been distributed showing the courses available and will be distributed again.
- 13. Review of Banking, Insurance and Audit Arrangements including arrangements for Appointment of an Internal Auditor** **It was agreed unanimously to continue to use HSBC as the Council's bankers and Zurich Municipal as Insurers.** Adrian Green had decided to stand down as the Council's internal auditor after 5 years and he was thanked by the members for all his hard work. Adrian had recently completed the internal audit for 2014/15 and copies of his report were available for inspection. The Clerk recommended using South and West Internal Audit in future, who also audit the accounts for Buckland Brewer, Monkleigh, Yarnscombe and a number of other parishes in the area but this decision was deferred to a later date. The two councillors co-opted at this meeting were asked to sign a bank mandate and it was reconfirmed that, in future, it would only be necessary for two councillors to sign cheques (previously three).
- 14. Review of Dates for Future Meetings** **It was agreed unanimously that the Council would continue to meet once in each alternate month on the first Tuesday of the months of January, March, May, July, September and November. Meetings will start at 7:30pm in the winter months and 8:00pm in the summer months and will normally take place in the Village Hall. Additional meetings might be called by the Chairman to meet consultation deadlines for planning applications or other urgent issues.**
- 15. Review of Standing Orders and Code of Conduct** **The Council re-affirmed the existing Code of Conduct unanimously** (Proposed by Mike Stokes and seconded by Mike Baker). The Clerk had advised the previous Council that a review of Standing Orders was advisable and that the Council should consider using the NALC (National Association of Local Councils) model as the basis for a revised document. This was a substantial document and he felt that the two new co-optees should have every opportunity to contribute to its composition. **He will compile a suitable draft document and distribute it to all members so that it can be discussed in full at the next meeting.**

16. Review of the Use and Management of the Parish Website, Internet Communications and Social Media
Mike Stokes felt that this also required a full debate and it was agreed unanimously to defer it to the next meeting.

17. Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2015 The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2015 were agreed and signed. (Proposed by Mike Baker, seconded by Roger Hunkin and agreed by 6 votes with 1 abstention)

18. Declarations of Interest None

19. Public Participation Adrian Green asked the Clerk to add to the next agenda an item to discuss the cost of photocopying for *The Prior* which was currently being met by the Village Hall but this did not meet the strict terms of the hall's charitable status. He felt that the Parish Council should take on the responsibility.

20. Matters Arising:

- a. Parking in Hele Lane: Adrian Green explained that the Village Hall Management Committee had agreed a 12-month trial to rent parking spaces in the hall car park at £10 per month, which he hoped would help with parking problems.
- b. Potholes and drainage issues: Dave Debnam said that he had been in touch with DCC Highways a number of times with little success. The spoil that had been removed last year had been piled up next to the drain was now being washed in again.

21. Issues Arising from the Annual Parish Meeting:

- a. Presentation by Adrian Green Concerning a Planning Officer's Reference to Frithelstock as a "Settlement Without Services" Adrian Green explained that Frithelstock had been referred to at a TDC Planning meeting as a "settlement without services" and that this was not true and reflected poorly on the parish. **He offered to draft a letter for the Parish Council to consider.** Liz Hunkin was concerned that the parish might be highlighting itself as a potential development area.

22. Arrangements for a defibrillator demonstration by Dr Aussie Connor – 5th June 201
Mackie Poole had invited Dr Connor to give a demonstration of the defibrillator at 8:00 on the night of the next social evening in the village hall, 5th June 2015. The event will be advertised by Richard Joseph on the website, in *The Prior* if there is time and by notices on the parish notice boards.

23. Update re Flashing Sign Mike Stokes gave an update on the scheme to install a flashing speed sign. At the Annual Parish Meeting, Dave Debnam had suggested using a solar panel as a power source but Mike pointed out that this was not recommended by the manufacturers of the sign. The Parish Council had met with DCC Highways and agreed a position for the sign. Provided that it was sited on our land the unit would remain the Parish Council's property. Various alternatives for running cables to it had been examined. Due to the problems associated with underground drainage and cables Mike had approached Western Power to see if power could be taken from the nearby street light. A galvanised steel box would be needed (at a cost of

approximately £100) into which Western Power would route their supply (at a cost of about £400). Erection of the sign, including linking it to the power supply via the galvanised box, is part of the total cost of the sign. The Parish Council would need to supply and fit a suitable post (at a cost of about £100). Mackie Poole offered to install the pole and dig the trench to carry the power supply from the galvanised box at no charge to the Parish Council. The Clerk will contact EDF to negotiate for an unmetered supply (estimated to be for about 21 units per year). **It was proposed by Mackie Poole, seconded by Mike Baker and agreed unanimously to follow this course of action and for the Clerk to submit the order for the sign.**

24. Welcome Pack Adrian Green reported that the pack was now almost ready. Richard Joseph had waived any copyright claims regarding pictures that he had taken and **it now only needed the Chairman's Statement to be added, which Mike Stokes will do.**

25. Members' Reports:

Cllr. Phil Pennington was pleased to report a 77% turnout locally in the recent elections and he felt that this reflected the greater involvement by people in rural communities. TDC now had 16 new councillors and an overall conservative majority, as did North Devon District. It had been announced that there would be a summer budget with changes likely to local government funding and welfare budgets. He was waiting to see the outcome of support grant settlements and felt that the coming months would be dominated by economic issues. Mackie Poole said that he had been approached by a resident who had complained that he had not seen anything about applying to become a district councillor in the local press. Phil Pennington was not sure that this was a legal requirement anyway but was sure that it had been advertised properly on town and parish notice boards and on websites where possible.

26. Planning:

- a. Consultation re Certificate of Lawful Development: Coombe Villa, Non-compliance with an Agricultural Occupancy condition for a continuous period greater than 10 years (1/0387/2015/CPE) It was agreed that no agricultural work had been carried out at the property during the past 10 years. Mackie Poole said that there had been no such activity for at least 30 years and **it was agreed that the Clerk would notify the Planning Department accordingly.**
- b. Application: 1/0354/2015/FUL, 7 Meadowstone Close, Conservatory to the rear of the property (Retrospective) **This application was supported unanimously.**
- c. Appeal: 1/0845/2014/FULM, Horwood Combe, Erection of a single wind turbine with a tower height of up to 50m and tip height of up to 77m along with associated infrastructure. This application had gone to appeal. Councillors had been informed on 5th March that any further responses must be lodged by 25th March. No further action had been taken.

27. Finance, including approval of the accounts and annual return for 2014/15

- a. The following expenses were approved (£1,195.19 + VAT):

Clerk: Salary – Net Pay and expenses (Net £152.46; PAYE element £34.50)

Adrian Green re: Gala Tent - £953.23 + VAT

Mrs M Poole, Picture Framing - £55.00

b. Bank Balances:

Community Account - £9,515.02 as at 11/05/15

Business Money Manager - £664.57 as at 11/04/15

c. Annual Accounts and Returns The Clerk presented the annual accounts for 2014/15 together with the annual audit return and governance report. **These were approved unanimously and signed by the Chairman.**

d. Audits The Clerk reported that the internal audit had been completed this week and the audited accounts and the annual returns would be submitted to Grant Thornton for external audit on 6th June 2015.

28. Chairman's Report: Mike Stokes thanked Mackie Poole for his offer to dig the trench and fit the pole for the flashing sign.

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

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD: (Chair)

NAME: DATE:

Next meeting will be held in Frithelstock Village Hall on Tuesday 7th July 2015 at 8:00pm.