

Frithelstock Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 1st September at 8:00 pm in Frithelstock Village Hall

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

Clerk: Mr P Blossie

Also in attendance: Cllr. Phil Pennington (TDC) and 10 members of the public.

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

51. Welcome. Mike Stokes welcomed all to the meeting.

52. Apologies for Absence PCSO Melissa Baker

53. Minutes of the meetings held on 7th July and 18th August 2015 The minutes of the meetings held on 7th July and 18th August 2015 were agreed and signed.

54. Declarations of Interest None

55. Public Participation i. Pam Sandby spoke about the traffic on Rakeham Hill. She said there is a lot of heavy traffic that takes the hill at speed and that 4 cats had recently been run over near her property. She said she would like a speed restriction and speed bumps, which she felt would not affect farm traffic. Mackie Poole said that the Parish Council had been talking about this for 25 years. Four or five years ago a local landowner had been approached to provide land for car parking but this hadn't met with everyone's approval. He suggested that the Parish Council should talk to the DCC councillor on site. Pam Sandby wanted a proper survey and felt that removing the parked cars would mean the traffic would go faster. Phil Pennington said that the Council should continue to press the County Council and would be happy to attend a site meeting. Pam Sandby felt that the parking problems and traffic speeds were two separate issues and there was some discussion about the difficulties caused by the fact that 3 of the five properties on Rakeham Hill are tenanted. One parishioner felt that speed bumps had proved to be ineffective. ii. Adrian Green reported that Wi-Fi and a large screen TV should be installed by the time of the next parish council meeting. iii. Adrian Green also reported that there had been an accident in the village hall car park resulting in damage to a parked car. The person responsible was not known and there had been no witnesses.

56. Matters Arising:

- a. Parking in Hele Lane: Mike Stokes said that this was still a problem, with people parking on the pavement and cars getting damaged. Phil Pennington felt this was a County Council issue. Building work and builders' vehicles were adding to the problem.

- b. Potholes and drainage issues: The potholes on Rakeham Hill had been repaired. The gully between the village hall and Huskhill had been reported again following Dave Debnam's comments at the last meeting. There was some discussion about DCC's questionable selection of which potholes to fill in the area.

57. Clerk's Report:

- a. Correspondence The clerk had distributed 36 items of correspondence since the July meeting. Two items were discussed: TDC had sent an email about emergency plans in the event of needing to establish local evacuation centres. **Details will be passed on to the Village Hall Committee.** The desirability of creating a local emergency plan was discussed and it was agreed to add an item to the agenda for November 2015. DCC had sent details of a campaign to reduce the amount of **'junk mail' which the Council agreed to sign up to.**
- b. Automatic Enrolment Into a Pension Scheme: The Clerk explained that a change in legislation will require the Council to establish a Pension Fund, even if the present clerk chooses not to take advantage of it. **There is a basic, government backed scheme which he advised the Council should use and this was approved unanimously.**
- c. Members' Register of Interests: Liz Hunkin supplied her completed form.

58. Members' Reports:

Cllr Phil Pennington reported on the consultation in progress about the closure of Bridge Buildings and the consolidation of all contact points at Riverbank House in Bideford and Holsworthy. Mike Baker asked whether the recycling service was still operating. Phil said that, despite a few initial hiccups the scheme was still operating. Any problems should be reported to Elaine Lester on 428754. Phil also reported that the newly formed Torridge Council had no will to work with North Devon Council and the two authorities seemed to be growing further apart.

Cllr Gaston Dezart was not present as he is still recovering from a traffic accident. Members were concerned that the County Council has not been represented at parish council meetings for some months and the Council has no-one to represent when there is an issue concerning County services. **The Clerk was asked to write to Devon County Council to register the Council's concerns.**

Mackie Poole had received some complaints about S W Highways work on potholes, some of which were a waste of money. **The Clerk was asked to write to DCC Highways to express the Parish Council's concerns.** He also said that the acoustics in the village hall were very bad and asked whether a microphone could be supplied for future meetings.

Roger Hunkin said that he agreed with earlier comments that a lot of money was being wasted on unnecessary Highways works while some essential jobs were being overlooked.

59. Planning Mike Stokes opened this item by reminding members about TDCs enforcement of the 21-day consultation period and pointed out that an extra meeting had to be called last month to discuss one of the applications. Others had been dealt with by email but he felt that this was not transparent or fair on the parishioners. **Roger Hunkin proposed that extra meetings should be called when necessary to meet consultation deadlines. All members agreed.**

- a. Application: 1/0704/2015/FUL and 1/0705/2015/FUL, Cloister Park, Extensions and alterations The consultation period for this application had expired. No responses had been received by email so no comments had been submitted.
- b. Decision: 1/0281/2015/AGMB, Drexill, Prior notification for the change of use of agricultural building to 1 No. dwelling/s under Class Q (a) and Q (b) – Refused
- c. Decision: 1/0623/2015/TRE, Cloister Park, Prune 12x mature beech, lime, sycamore and ash. Remove 5x sycamore stems – Granted Permission
- d. Decision: 1/0641/2015/FUL, Horwood Barton, Proposed Straw Storage & General Purpose Building – Granted Permission

60. Review of Standing Orders The Clerk had circulated a draft following the working group that had met following the last meeting. Mike Stokes had made further cuts relating to references to committees and sub-committees. All agreed the final document, which the Clerk will publish and distribute.

61. Review of the Use and Management of the Parish Website, Internet Communications, Broadband and Social Media: Report by Mark Goldman Mark Goldman and Liz Hunkin had met with Richard Joseph. Mark said that he felt that it was unfair on Richard Joseph to have to meet all the requirements of the Transparency Code and that a solution was to create a separate .gov.uk website that could be managed by the Clerk but seamlessly linked to the parish website. DALC were currently offering grants to help with these costs. He also reported that Wild West Net were installing internet access in the Village Hall and he felt that it would be possible to offer parishioners computer training sessions. He recommended that parishioners should sign up to Richard Joseph's email network to get up to date information on Frithelstock news and events. Mark, Richard and Liz had discussed the use of Social Media but did not believe that the Parish Council should try to make any use of it at this time. Liz and Mark had also attended a presentation by the Get Up To Speed team recently. The team offers free training sessions but they did not feel that the parish needed to use their services as we should be able to do this ourselves. **It was agreed unanimously to obtain a .gov.uk domain, to develop a separate website for the Parish Council and to submit a grant claim to DALC for these costs and the cost of the equipment that would enable the Council to make use of the internet connection in the Village Hall.**

62. Welcome Pack: Update from Adrian Green Adrian distributed a draft for the councillors' comments. Mike Stokes asked for the final version to be ready by the next meeting.

63. War Memorial: Update from Judith Seaman re potential names to be added In Judith's absence, this item was deferred to the next meeting.

64. Grant Request: Northern Devon Foodbank Christmas Fund 2015 Members turned down this request, preferring to limit grants to activities that had a more local impact.

65. Torridge Public Consultation – Single Reception Point in Bideford Councillor Phil Pennington had updated members about this in his earlier presentation. The consultation period ends on 21st September 2015.

66. Update re Flashing Sign Following lengthy negotiations with Western Power, ESS and EDF, the Clerk had obtained a quotation from ESS for them to carry out all the work necessary to install a wide-based post and connect it to the adjacent lamppost. The work should be completed within the next few weeks. An unmetered supply has been arranged with EDF and the sign manufacturers are ready to install the sign once the post is erected.

67. Use of the Village Green Frithelstock Fest had taken place last week at the Clinton Arms. Ian Robertson reported that it had raised £1,200 for the Children’s Hospice Charity. Mike Stokes pointed out that the Parish Council had not been consulted before the event and, as the village green was owned by the Parish Council, he asked Ian to ensure that the Council was consulted before any similar future events. Roger Hunkin congratulated Ian on the event and also all the people who helped with car parking. Ian thanked Richard Joseph for his assistance and hoped that the Frithelstock Fest would be an annual event.

68. Rakeham Hill Traffic See item 55, Public Participation.

69. Finance

a. The following expenses were approved (£750.40 + VAT):

Frithelstock Church: 2nd instalment of grant - £250.00

Clerk: Salary – Net Pay and expenses, May – Aug (Net £290.40; PAYE element £69.00)

Grant Thornton – Audit Fee - £150.00

DALC – Training courses - £60.00

b. Bank Balances:

Community Account - £7,761.87as at 11/08/15

Business Money Manager - £664.69 as at 11/07/15

c. External Audit: The external audit report had been received. It had pointed out that future accounts should be prepared on a receipts and payments basis.

70. Chairman’s Report

i. Mike Stokes thanked Roger Hunkin for moving the village green notice board. ii. He asked members to approve the purchase of a wreath for the war memorial service, which was given unanimously. iii. He noted that the playing fields rubbish bins were full and that they were being used for the disposal of babies’ nappies, which he thought was unacceptable. The Playing Fields Association will be asked to put up some suitable signs.

The public was asked to leave at this point while the Council discussed a Part II item.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:30 pm

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD: (Chair)

NAME: DATE:

**Next meeting will be held in Frithelstock Village Hall on Tuesday 3rd November 2015 at
8:00pm.**

DRAFT

PART II Item: Clerk's Hours of Work and Annual Review of Performance

The Clerk reported that, on average, he spends the following time on regular activities:

- Emails and correspondence - ½ - 1 hour per day per day
- Preparing papers for meetings and agendas - 4 hours per meeting
- Attending meetings - 2-3 hours per meeting
- Writing minutes - 2-3 hours per meeting
- Distributing notices - 1 hour per meeting
- Maintaining accounts, bank reconciliations, paying bills etc - 2 hours per month

In addition, he is required to undertake other task from time to time such as the annual review of standing orders, prepare the annual accounts for audit, monitor ongoing schemes such as the flashing sign, defibrillator etc. He estimated that he spent a minimum of 18 hours per month on Frithelstock Parish Council matters. He explained that a report by the NALC about 2 years ago recommended that the minimum number of hours for Clerks of this size and type would be 17 hours per month. However, he stressed that he was very pleased that the Council had agreed last month to increase his hours to 12.5 hours per month and that he was not asking for or expecting more. As a resident in the parish, he considers any additional time input necessary to carry out his duties is his contribution to the local community.

After advising the Parish Councillors of his average monthly time input, he left the meeting.

With the departure of the Clerk, the Councillors discussed the Clerk's performance during the past year. Without exception, Councillors are very satisfied with the way he carries out his duties and have every confidence in the advice that he gives. They see it an advantage that he is also Clerk to two other local Parish Councils as it enables him to take a broader view of the needs and workings of the wider community.

It was agreed that the Clerks next review will be undertaken at the July 2016 Parish Council meeting.