

**Minutes of the Fremington Parish Council Meeting
Held on Monday 4th December 2017 at 7pm at The Tomlin Hall,
North Lane, Bickington**

Present: Cllrs Mrs S Kingdom (Chairman), F Biederman, R Cann, D Chalmers, Mrs J Dyson, Miss L Goodger, K Groves, Mrs C McCormack-Hole, A Rennles, Ms M Scott, B Sherborne, G Turner and T Wood
Mrs V Woodhouse, Parish Clerk and Mrs E Badcock, Services Officer.

In Attendance: 3 Members of the public

1712/01

Apologies

Cllrs Mrs J Flynn & D Brailey.

1712/02

Declarations of Interest

Cllr Rennles declared a Personal and Prejudicial Interest in Item 1712/27 planning application 62616 as his family own the land adjacent.

Cllr Mrs Kingdom declared a Personal Interest in items 1712/13 & 1712/15 as Treasurer of the Fremington Parish Hall Management Committee.

Cllr Biederman declared a Personal Interest in items 1712/13 & 1712/15 as Chairman of the Fremington Parish Hall Management Committee and Item 1712/16 as Chairman of the Fremington & District Community Group and item 1712/20 as a member of the Committee.

Cllr Ms Scott declared a Personal Interest in item 1712/30 as her family live at the Quay.

1712/03

Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman circulated a copy of the notes from the recent Parish Forum and explained that Devon County Council had reported that its funding was being cut by a further 22 million and by 2020 there would be no funding from Central Government.

1712/04

To agree the agenda between Part A and Part B (Confidential)

It was **resolved** to agree the agenda between Part A and Part B (Confidential).

1712/05

To receive a report from the Police

The Police report was circulated and is attached as appendix one.

1712/06

Public Participation Period

A member of the public was concerned at the length of time it was taking to get approval for planning application 52351, the North Lane Development, and they were still waiting for the matter to complete with the District Council. Cllr Cann believed there had been a delay in the legal matters and would investigate and report back to the member of the public.

1712/07

To approve and sign the minutes of Fremington Parish Council meeting held on Monday 20th November 2017

Copies were circulated with the agenda.

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting on the 20th November 2017 as a correct record. Cllr Mrs Kingdom duly signed the minutes.

- 1711/08 **To receive and to ratify the decisions therein, the minutes of the following Committee meetings**
- Parks & Playing Fields Committee meeting held on Thursday 23rd November 2017
It was **resolved** to receive and ratify the decisions therein, the minutes of the Parks and Playing Fields Committee meeting held on Thursday 23rd November 2017.
 - Finance & Personnel Committee meeting held on Thursday 23rd November 2017
It was **resolved** to receive and ratify the decisions therein, the minutes of the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting held on Thursday 23rd November 2017.
 - Tews Lane Committee meeting held on Thursday 23rd November 2017
It was **resolved** to receive and ratify the decisions therein, the minutes of the Tews Lane Committee meeting held on Thursday 23rd November 2017.

1712/09 **Highways issues – update**
Cllr Biederman reported that DCC's minutes had incorrectly reported that a trial of temporary traffic lights at the Cedars roundabout had been agreed. A Highway Officer had in fact confirmed that this would not be possible and the two County Councillors for the area would be meeting with the Officer next week to discuss the eight options and Cllr Biederman would report back to the January meeting.

Cllr Chalmers reported that the recent highway conferences had received positive feedback at DALC. Cllr Biederman reminded members to report any issues via the DCC website and not to use fix my street.

Cllr Groves asked for an update on the issue with the traffic islands on Church Hill. It was noted that there was still an issue with ownership of Military Road.

Cllr Biederman provided clarification on the enhancement fund and extra money Devon had been given to undertake works and explained the importance of reporting defects.

Cllr Mrs Dyson and Ms Scott left the meeting.

- 1712/10 **Matters to Note** (all held in the office unless specified as enclosed)
- Notification of External Auditor Appointments for the 2017/2018 Financial Year (information enclosed for Cllrs)
 - Local Plan Update – Inspector's Note (information enclosed)

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to note the information.

1712/11 **County and District Councillors' Reports** - To receive reports from the County Councillor and District Councillors for information only.
Cllr Cann reported that NDC had agreed to support the Surfers Against Sewage Plastic Free Campaign and had created a working party which would be engaging with town and parish councils in Northern Devon.

Cllr Biederman reported that he had taken a motion to DCC to support the campaign which was supported at Cabinet but required ratification at Full Council.

1712/12 **To consider recommendation from the Finance and Personnel Committee to apply for a Public Works Loan to complete the Replacement of the Beechfield Centre Project**
The Finance and Personnel Committee recommended that the Parish Council applies to the Public Works Loan Board for a loan of £150,000 over a 9 ½ but not over 10 year period at an interest rate of 1.79% and a repayment cost of £8,224.69 a year.

The Parish Council currently has a loan from the PWLB, which was for the purchase of Griggs Field, and matures in September 2018 (with only one payment to be made in the financial year 2018-2019 of around £2,141).

The portacabin, which currently forms the Beechfield Centre, was closed to the public in June 2017 having long expired its shelf life and due to the state of repair. The replacement of this community facility, the Beechfield Centre, is a priority for the Parish Council with a provisional date of spring 2018 being set for demolition and replacement.

The purpose built replacement building will provide a community building with changing facilities for a number of sporting and/or leisure activities, Parish Council Offices and a hall which will have dual occupancy as a Parish Council Meeting Chamber and a community room for hire.

The recent community facilities audit carried out through the Neighbourhood Plan process has shown that the parish does not have enough community buildings and those that are in situ are at capacity with no plans to expand.

It was noted that although the project may fit loosely with Leader 5 the application process could delay the project significantly and agreed not to proceed with an application.

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to apply to the Public Works over a 9 ½ but not over 10 year period at an interest rate of 1.79% to complete the replacement of the Beechfield Centre project and to allow a provision for the repayments in the 2018-2019 precept proposals.

Cllrs Biederman and Mrs Kingdom declared a Personal Interest in the following item.

1712/13

To consider entering into discussions with the Fremington Parish Hall Management Committee to use the Annex as a temporary office during the Replacement of the Beechfield Centre Project

It was noted that the Parish Council will need to consider selling the current Parish Council Offices to release equity to put towards the Replacement of the Beechfield Centre Project. However, prior to considering whether or not to sell the premises at 12 Higher Road, the Parish Council will need to consider an alternative location for the Council Offices to bridge the gap between the current office being sold and the Beechfield Centre being completed.

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, for the Parish Council to approach the Fremington Parish Hall Management Committee and enter into discussions to lease the annex in the interim period.

Cllrs Mrs Dyson and Ms Scott returned to the meeting.

1712/14

To consider, amend or agree the draft budgets and set the precept for the Financial Year 2018/2019

The draft budgets and recommendation from the Finance and Personnel Committee were circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that the draft budgets provided a realistic financial forecast of the forthcoming year and included: -

- A reduction of 50% of the Parish Grant from the North Devon Council which will be reduced to zero in 2019-2020.
- A reduction in the Council Tax Support Grant.

- An additional cut for the highways grass – this was requested by the Parish Council's Contractor due to the mild conditions through the winter period and endorsed by both the Park & Playing Fields Committee and the Finance & Personnel Committee.
- An increase in the Play Ground Renewals and Repairs budget.
- Repayments for the recommended loan of £150,000 towards the Replacement of the Beechfield Centre project.
- A general increase in running costs.

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary and one abstention, to increase the precept to £152,969.45 for the financial year 2018-2019. It was noted that, although this increase appeared a high percentage (16.8%), due to the increasing tax base it was actually an increase of approximately £5.73 a year or 11p a week

per Band D based on last year's tax base (it was further noted that the Council Tax paid to the Parish Council in based on Band D had actually decreased from £34.75 a year in 2016-2017 to £34.13 a year in 2017-2018).

It was noted that the tax base would again increase due to the amount of development in the parish and as a result the actual impact on Council Tax payers would likely be less.

It was further **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to accept the draft budgets and to viro the balance of the Cemetery Extension EMR (approximately £1,247) the EMR for the Community Building Project (£20,000) and £75,000 of general reserves to the EMR for the Replacement of the Beechfield Centre project, giving an estimated EMR at the 31st March 2018 of £140,890 towards the project (minus any costs incurred prior to the 31st March 2018 associated with the project).

1712/15

To receive a recommendation from the Finance and Personnel Committee regarding the Grant Applications received for the financial year 2018/2019

Cllrs Biederman and Mrs Kingdom declared a Personal Interest in the Fremington Parish Hall Application.

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to accept the recommendation from the Finance and Personnel Committee and award the grants as follows:

1	Age Concern Barnstaple & District	£100
2	Barnstaple Disabled Fellowship Club	£100
3	Bickington Brownies	£100
4	Citizens Advice Bureau	£200
5	Elmfield Boat Project	£136
6	1 st Fremington Air Scouts, Beaver Colony	£100
7	1 st Fremington Air Scouts, Cub Section	£100
8	1 st Fremington Air Scouts	£100
9	1 st Fremington Brownies	£100
10	1 st Fremington District Rainbows	£100
11	Fremington Gardening Club	£100
12	1 st Fremington Guides	£100
13	Fremington Parish Hall Management Committee	£200
14	Fremington Senior Citizens	£100
15	Instow & District Social & Friendship Club	£100
16	Instow, Westleigh and West Yelland Parish News	£60
17	Lady Linscott Club	£100
18	50 th North Devon Scouts	£100
19	The Tomlin Hall	£200
	Total	£2,196

1712/16 **To receive update on the future management of the open space on the Former Army Camp Development site**

Members were informed that the Working Party had met with both the Scouting Groups and the Fremington Football Club along with the North Devon Council's Parks, Leisure and Culture Officer to discuss the future management of the Formal Open Space which consists of:

- Community Building
- Football Pitch
- Storage Building
- MUGA
- Local Equipped Area of Play (Leap)
- Local Area of Play (LAP)

Several options for management were discussed, however, following professional advice it was believed that the following proposals were the most appropriate to manage the Open Space: -

- Lease the community building to the scouting groups with a right of access to the Football Club for use of the changing facilities.
- Lease the Football Pitch to Fremington Football Club.
- Lease the storage building to the Fremington Football Club with a condition that the Scouting Groups can also use the storage hut.

The Parish Council will then manage the MUGA (options for management are being investigated), LEAP and LAP.

Cllr Biederman declared a Personal Interest as the Chairman of the Fremington & District Community Group and expressed an interest on behalf of the group in the storage building. Cllr Biederman was advised that the Community Group should write to the Parish Council as soon as possible to register its interest although, during discussions, it had been noted that it was likely that there would not be enough storage for the Scouting Groups and Football Club and other storage options may need to be considered.

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, that the Parish Council instructs its solicitor to draft a lease for the Fremington Football Club and Scouting Group for consideration and discussion and obtains a valuation for hire charges.

1712/17 **To consider consultation on the Revised Order for diversion of Public Footpath 17 at Tews Lane, Bickington**

Members considered the Revised Order and concerns were raised about the diversion. It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to express the Parish Council's concerns that it is uncertain of the impact on the amenity and to request a site visit with the ward members, Chairman of the Council and Footpath's Officer.

1712/18 **To consider consultation for proposed changes to Stagecoach Bus Services**

Members discussed the consultation and it was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, that the Parish Council would be concerned by any reduction in services especially given the growth and traffic issues in the area, the Parish Council would like to see an enhanced service to meet the expansion of the area.

- 1712/19 **To consider request from W.S Gayton & Son for permission to erect a small gate providing access to the Cemetery from the proposed new site**
Members considered the request and it was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to defer consideration of this item until a Planning Application is determined by the Planning Authority.
- Cllr Biederman declared a Personal Interest in the following item.
- 1712/20 **To consider Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan (2018-2022) Consultation**
Cllr Biederman gave an overview of the document. Members were concerned at any proposals that would reduce the number of firemen responding to an incident. It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary and one abstention, for Councillors to make any comments to the Clerk who would collate the comments and respond.
- 1712/21 **To discuss the consultation process for planning application** (item requested by Cllr Mrs Kingdom)
Members discussed the current system for responding to planning applications and NDC's planning portal which was difficult to use, it was noted that NDC had confirmed that a new system would be in place for April 2018. Options were discussed for a small Committee or Working Party to take over the responsibility of responding to planning consultations and the impact on resources was considered.
- Cllr Biederman left the meeting.
- Cllr Rennles outlined the process at Barnstaple Town Council and it was noted that the Parish Council does not have the resources to facilitate a similar system. Members discussed ward members taking responsibility for applications within their ward.
- Cllr Biederman returned to the meeting.
- Cllr Chalmers suggested asking DALC if other town and parish councils are having similar problems.
- It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to continue with the current system until NDC introduces its new software and then to reconsider this item, it was further agreed for Cllr Chalmers to speak to DALC and to reiterate the Parish Council's dismay at the change in the consultation process.
- Cllr Wood left the meeting and did not return.
- 1712/22 **To consider Economic Productivity Consultation for Devon and Somerset** (Item requested by Cllr Chalmers, further information can be found at <http://heartofswlep.co.uk/news/consultation-open-heart-south-west-productivity-strategy/>)
Cllr Chalmers reported that this document had been produced as part of the devolution process and would be considered at the joint committee meeting in January 2018. The issues surrounding economic productivity in the south west such as broadband connection, the roads and general infrastructure were discussed. Members were still concerned that little reference had been made to North Devon and felt the document really needs to sell the south west. It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary and one abstention, that the Parish Council welcomes the initiative but would draw attention to the need to promote Devon especially the rural areas and would ask that a platform is provided for town and parish councils.

- 1712/23 **To consider the likely impact of Brexit on the Parish of Fremington** (item requested by Cllr Chalmers)
Cllr Chalmers explained that DALC would be lobbying the Government and would like to ascertain the likely impact of Brexit on communities. The Parish Council was concerned about the impact on services and the economy but felt it was too early to discuss the impact, it was agreed to place the item on the January Agenda.
- Two members of the public left the meeting.
- 1712/24 **To consider a Councillor Advocate to liaise with the Police and Crime Commissioner** (item requested by Cllr Chalmers)
Cllr Chalmers reported that the Police and Crime Commissioner had set up a scheme and was asking Councils to nominate an advocate to liaise with the Police. It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to nominate Cllr Chalmers as the Parish Council's advocate.
- 1712/25 **To consider representations to the Government on highway issues**
Members were concerned at the lack of infrastructure to support the development in the area and the impact that traffic congestion has on the local economy and productivity through missed appointments and arriving late for work etc. and the education of young people who are having to sit on buses in traffic for long periods of time. Concerns were also raised about the pollution the traffic was causing. Cllr Cann confirmed that the area has been monitored and the pollution is not at a problem level yet. Members felt that highway issues were not being given proper consideration especially when relating to planning applications. Cllr Biederman explained that, due to a change in policy, the County Council has to enable development and the National Planning Policy Framework is letting the area down.
- It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to make representations to the Government and to ask the Government to clarify what is classified as "serve" under the National Planning Policy Framework, and to copy in the Chief Executive of DCC and DALC.
- 1712/26 **To consider making representations to NDC on the changes to the green waste service**
It was noted that the reduction in service would not commence next year until later in the year and the full service would commence early in the New Year. It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to write to NDC to confirm that the Parish Council would like to see an 11 month service retained and no increase in the annual charge.
- Cllr Biederman left the meeting and did not return.
- 1712/27 **North Devon Council – Planning Applications**
North Devon Council, the determining Authority, has asked for comments from this Parish Council on the following planning applications:
It was formally noted that participation of the Councillors who are also members of NDC in both the debate and subsequent vote (in respect of any of the above, were preliminary taking account of the information matters) was on the basis that the views expressed made available at the time to the Parish Council. The District Councillors were reserving their final views on the applications until they were in full possession of all the relevant arguments for and against
- Cllr Rennles declared a Personal and Prejudicial Interest and left the meeting for the following item. A member of the public left the meeting.

62616 Proposal: Temporary use of land at Yelland Sewage Works as a logistics depot, to include the provision of necessary structures including office & welfare facilities (amended drawings & documents)
Location: Yelland Sewage Works, Yelland, Barnstaple
Applicant/Agent: Mr J Bentley, Viridor Waste Management Ltd

The Parish Council is concerned about the amount of development in this area and it was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to recommend that a temporary consent of three years is given.

Cllr Rennles returned to the meeting.

64136 Proposal: Siting of 1 internally illuminated totem sign, 3 non-illuminated pedestrian totem signs & 1 non-illuminated welcome wall sign.
Location: Sainsbury's Supermarket Ltd, Gratton Way, Roundswell, Barnstaple
Applicant/Agent: WYG

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to recommend APPROVAL.

64143 Proposal: Extension to dwelling
Location: 22 Becklake Close, Roundswell, Barnstaple
Applicant/Agent: Mrs A Crocker

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to recommend APPROVAL subject to an appropriate design and no adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties. Concerns were raised at the lack of parking that may result from the proposal.

1712/28

North Devon Council – Planning Decisions

North Devon Council, the determining Authority, has APPROVED the following applications with conditions as filed:

63905 Proposal: Retrospective application for the continued siting of one storage container
Location: Little Bridge House, Redlands Road, Fremington, Barnstaple
Applicant/Agent: David Wilson Partnership

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to note the information.

Cllr Groves left the meeting and did not return.

1712/29

It was **resolved** that under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item as it involves the likely disclosure of confidential information.

PART B

1712/30

To receive report independent's valuation on the business plan proposals for Fremington Quay

Members considered the independent valuation on the proposals. It was noted that the tenants were proposing to add a significant investment to Parish Council property, were paying a commercial rent and in a timely manner, had built a successful business with an excellent reputation. For these reasons and based on the report received the Parish Council was confident that it is receiving and will continue to receive best value for money by committing to renew the lease with the current tenants and in supporting the business plan and proposal for an extension of the kitchen at Fremington Quay to meet current demand.

It was therefore **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary and one abstention, to support an extension to the kitchen in principle and subject to the tenants providing financial evidence that they can meet the costs, the Parish Council will appoint a Project Manager to oversee the construction of the extension to ensure it is to the standard expected by the Parish Council and the tenants must follow a diligent tender process to appoint the contractor. The Parish Council will in principle commit to a new 10 year lease with the current tenants and the Council's solicitors will advise the best way forward in implementing this new lease. As in line with the professional advice that the Parish Council has received, the rent will remain at the current level until the next scheduled rent review as contained within the lease. All costs of the work including professional fees are to be borne by the tenant. The terms of the lease will mirror the terms of the exiting lease, save for any modernisations deemed necessary by the solicitors. All new building works will become tenant's improvements under the lease, and are to be disregarded within the rent review provisions of the new lease. The new lease will be drawn outside of the Security of Tenure provisions of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 (as per the existing lease).

It was noted that work was being undertaken on the infrastructure for the area and how this could be improved to meet future aspirations of the site.

1712/31

Close

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Signed Dated