

**MINUTES** of the Torridge Green Party meeting held on Saturday 14th January 2023 at 3.30 pm at Fairlight, Torridge View, Great Torrington.

**PRESENT** Peter Hames, Peter Christie, Rosemary Gent, Huw Thomas, Cathrine Simmons, John Simmons, Will Douglas-Mann, Keith Funnell, Ruth Funnell and Daniella Radice

**1. APOLOGIES** Colin Jones, Claire Leach, Rachel Marsh, Tony Pratt, Greg Southey, Gillian Stevens, Gill Douglas-Mann.

## **2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 19TH NOVEMBER**

These were accepted as a correct recording

**3. MATTERS ARISING** There were no matters arising

## **4. REPORTS**

**a) Treasurer:** There has been no change in our bank balance with stands at £2,517.24.

**b) Press:** Peter reported that he has written to the local press alerting people to the increased risk of flooding due to climate change.

**c) Membership:** Rosemary reported that Torridge now has one hundred members.

**d) Webmaster:** Colin had sent a brief report saying that the Facebook Page use has increased marginally. Please send him any items that would be of interest to put on the page.

## **5 FEEDBACK FROM COUNCILLORS**

Peter Christie reported that financial constraints had led to dropping the plan for storing recyclables at a new "Environment Centre" in Bideford though the centre is still planned as a hub for waste vehicles etc.. Instead the Council has decided to send everything to Brynsworthy which will mean it is incinerated rather than recycled.

The proposal by David Brenton to have a cruise ship moored in the estuary to take homeless people and asylum seekers is unlikely to happen but has generated a good deal of publicity. The whole issue of how to deal with waste, the need to run diesel generators and the problem of access on and off such a boat and its unsuitability for families should knock the idea on the head. Meanwhile the Council proposes using Sully House plus three housing pods at Caddesdown for homeless people.

The group identifying land for housing for the Local Plan consists of the leader of TDC, land owners and a land agent so is not representative.

Peter pointed out that the rules on business rates mean TDC keeps 100% of rates from renewable energy whereas most business rates go to central government.

The company proposing energy supply from Morocco says it will produce electricity for twenty hours a day. The objections so far have been on grounds of "spoiling the view" and misinformation about the amount of trench work needed: actually two trenches 65metres apart each carrying two cables.

Peter noted that the EU target for clean rivers by 2027 has been pushed back to 2063.

Peter Hames reported that Donna Sibley, the joint NDDC and TDC climate officer has been retained which is good news. She has completed a survey of carbon emissions from TDC's properties and transport which will form the basis for carbon reduction projects. However funding is the problem with TDC dependent on grants and other external funding due to the council's difficult financial situation. The Waste Manager at Torridge, who is also responsible for the Council's ground maintenance, is keen to replace diesel/petrol vehicles in his fleet with EVs but at present he says there is nothing on the market suitable for the distance involved in the rural area or with the ability to tow large trailers. However East Devon is now using a fleet of similar vehicles and Torridge is looking for grants to help make the change possible.

Next week there is a meeting of the Climate Emergency Committee looking at recycling and ways to increase "reduce and repair". In March the Council will be looking at implementing a biodiversity plan for Torridge's open spaces. for applications for funding.

Northam Town Council: Peter Hames reported that solar panels and battery storage have been installed at the Town Hall. There is engagement with local schools, in particular Appledore School. The Climate Emergency Committee has commissioned a design for a leaflet/poster on climate change to use in engaging further with the community. A representative of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust who lives in Appledore has provided a report on improving biodiversity on the council's open spaces which it is planned to implement.

Littleham and Landcross PC: There has been an application for five houses in a field which is a departure from the Local Plan. Objections point to loss of biodiversity and lack of services. The Council is planting trees at the Village Hall and in the Churchyard.

A March biodiversity event is being organised, similar to last years, and aimed at young people. The Council will also invite volunteers to do a carbon footprint survey.

## **6 DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTIONS**

Peter, Peter and Rosemary reported back on the Compass meeting last Tuesday. We agreed that it is difficult to stand aside for other parties at local elections. First the results are very unpredictable and second we do not know till after nominations are in which parties are standing in which seats. As most wards are now three seat wards we will go ahead with our plan to stand at least one candidate in the winnable ones.

Keith said we need candidates for Great Torrington and Hartland. He will approach Wendy and John to see if either of them are able and willing to stand in Northam. Cathrine will ask her contact in Winkleigh. We could also approach Steve Jarvis now h is in Bideford East. Rosemary said she is willing to stand in Monkleigh and Putford which delighted us all. Ruth will put a piece in the Green Info and also let people know that we plan to telephone them to see what help they can give.

It was agreed we need a different printer as our previous man seems to be semi retired. Daniella reminded us that there are templates for leaflets on the GP website and also left us a selection of leaflets to look at.

#### **7. SELECTION OF PROSPECTIVE PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATE**

A Devon wide call for candidates was made eight days ago. If there are no women volunteers for Torridge and West Devon there will be a repeat call. Lyn Daniel will organise a local hustings once nominations are clear.

#### **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Rosemary said she had signed up for two of the GP policy fest zoom meetings and will report back next time.

Ruth drew attention to the planned demonstration in Barnstaple against river and sea pollution. It will be on Saturday 28th January meeting at Castle Green at 10.15 am to march via the Strand and High Street to Selaine Saxby's office.

#### **9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

This will be at 3.30 p.m. on Saturday 25th February at Cathrine's house, Church Lane House, Church Lane, Torrington.