

**MINUTES** of the meeting of Torridge Green Party held on Saturday 25th March at 2.30 pm at The Pannier Pantry, Bridgeland Street, Bideford.

**PRESENT** Gillian Stevens, John Simmons, Cathrine Simmons, Keith Funnell, Colin Jones, Tracey Beresford, Peter Christie, Wendy LoVel, John Puddy, Rosemary Gent, Lorraine Drake, Ruth Funnell

**1. APOLOGIES** Tony Pratt, Sue Clarke, Miranda Cox, Peter Hames

## **2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25TH FEBRUARY**

These were accepted as a correct record

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising not already on the Agenda

## **4 REPORTS**

a) **Treasurer:** Cathrine reported that the bank balance is about to reduce to £2,397.24 when she pays the £120 cost of printing Peter Hames election leaflet.

b) **Press:** In the absence of Peter Hames, it was commented that letters had been published in the Journal from Will Douglas-Mann and Stephen Jarvis. Peter Christie pointed out that now the Election has been formally called the papers will impose "purdah" on letters from Political Parties.

c) **Membership:** Rosemary reported that we have gained two new members in the last month bringing our total to 104.

d) **Webmaster:** Colin said he has the "Election page" up and running and will put copies of all the leaflets there when they are ready. The most interest was shown in the "Dirty Water Action" last Saturday. He has also put the Climate Forum video there.

## **5. FEEDBACK FROM OUR COUNCILLORS**

a) **Littleham and Landcross:** Rosemary reported that the Climate event in Littleham attracted over one hundred people from a wide area. There were activities for the children who came, an opportunity for people to check their carbon footprint and eight large trees were planted to replace losses.

Rosemary said they have had two resignations from the Parish Council leaving ten councillors.

b) **Torridge District Council:** Peter reported that activity at Torridge was very quiet in the run up to elections. John Puddy was congratulated on getting £141,000 grant plus matching funding from TDC for Fresh Spring.

The joint Local Plan for North Devon and Torridge is in preparation but the Government has asked for a simplified version which is shorter and quicker to do but will rule out plans for renewable energy.

John asked about the Local Plan and the need to do the longer version in order to ensure the environmental proposals are in it. Peter replied that they would need more staff to achieve this. Also, the core of the plan is Planning with Environment as an add on. Peter Hames has proposed at the Joint Local Plan Review Committee that, as a solution, a Supplementary Planning document on Climate Change is prepared and this was approved. This would form part of the current Local Plan Review.

Cathrine suggested that GP members should attend meetings on the Local Plan as observers. She also pointed out that the current new build estate in Winkleigh is having ground source heat pumps installed.

Peter H also informed the meeting that the Climate working Group is now under the remit of the Property Manager given that the main thrust is improving the energy efficiency in Torridge's buildings. Donna Sibley still has a lead role on climate.

It was suggested that Peter Hames draft a lobby document for newly elected Green Councillors in May on the Climate change supplement. Keith pointed out that an emerging plan in first draft can be taken into account in Planning decisions.

The Planning Application for 71 houses in Winkleigh next to the current new build is on land excluded in the neighbourhood plan from development but TDC have ignored this in approving it because, if the builders appeal, it is likely TDC will loose incurring costs they cannot afford.

On Thursday 30th March there is a planning meeting of TDC with seven more planning applications to consider.

Tim Steer, a Fremington Parish Councillor, is leading moves to re instate the railway from Bideford to Barnstaple and Peter understands from Geoffrey Cox that this line is top of the list for GWR to reinstate. Peter has suggester combining the rail link with flood defences which would attract a second funding stream.

Peter Hames has raised the use of concrete at the projected Clean Maritime Centre not being environmentally friendly with Adrian Redwood, the officer responsible. As a result the amount of concrete to be used has been halved.

John Puddy said there is £15.6million coming to Torridge for ithe new Marine Centre to enhance the local economy. Rosemary said we need to lobby Geoffrey Cox to ensure the centre promotes green growth.

Peter Christie said TDC has looked at electric vehicles to collect rubbish but currently they appear to have insufficient power to manage steep hills. Electric trucks in Newcastle are being built with recycled engine parts. There

is a You Tube video describing this and Colin will endeavour to provide a link on our website.

**Bideford Town Council:** The new Town Clerk in Bideford is keen that the Morocco link be used to produce hydrogen rather than just electricity. John Puddy said the Cornwall array, which is 80 km offshore, will hopefully be serviced by vessels built at Appledore Shipyard, bringing a boost to Torrridge.

**Northam Town Council:** Peter Hames informed the meeting that they are planting wild flowers at Anchor Park in Appledore and have agreed a climate poster and leaflets with suggestions about what people can do to mitigate climate change for circulation in the Parish.

The climate committee has obtained a grant for hedge planting at Appledore School and Peter and fellow councillors joined the children to plant it. Peter has submitted projects to wild flower plant two green areas in Appledore and proposed that one of the maintenance men goes on a Rosemoor Horticultural Course.

In April at Town Projects Committee there will be the usual battle to persuade Councillors to invest in an EV van to replace a vehicle at the end of its life.

## **6. TDC, TOWN AND PARISH ELECTIONS**

Keith reported that the closing date for Nominations is 4th April. He has submitted four candidates: Peter Christie (Bideford North), Wendy LoVel (Northam), himself (Torrington) and HuwThomas (Bideford East). There are three more to complete: Peter Hames (Appledore), Rosemary (Monkleigh and Putford) and Tracey ((Milton and Tamarside). Colin is standing for Dolton PC, Rosemary for Landcross and Littleham PC and Lorraine Drake for East and West Putford PC. Peter Christie will stand for Bideford TC and Peter Hames for Northam TC.

Peter Christie reported that Ken James, the current leader of the council, may not be standing in Tamarside. Also David Brenton is, after all, standing for Labour in Bideford South. Cheryl Cottle Hunkin (Lib Dem) has moved from Torrington to stand in Shebbear. Peter also understand that approximately half of Bideford Town Council are not standing for re election. It is not clear if national politics are putting people off.

Keith said the time for delivering leaflets is tight as there are only nine days between closure of nominations and the postal votes being sent out. Ideally we need to get the leaflets out by 18th April.

Peter Christie emphasised that the way to win is to knock on doors.

## **7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Climate Changing Room project in Torrington:** Ruth said this had been drawn to her attention. The plan is for the CDT to provide a dedicated space

where information, education and debate in relation to climate and environmental change. Anyone who wants to get involved can contact Phil Topham. Ruth will put more detail in the next Green Info.

**Electric Chargers in South Street Car Park, Torrington:** John Simmons said these are now working again. Colin commented that a holiday let complex in Dolton has found that offering a charging facility has increased bookings.

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

This will be on Saturday 1st July at 2.30 pm at The Pannier Pantry on the corner of Bridgeland Street and The Quay.