

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF Torridge Green Party held on Saturday 29th June 2024 at 2.30 p.m. at the Pannier Pantry in Bideford.

PRESENT Cathrine Simmons, Brian Garman, Wendy Lo-Vel, Huw Thomas, Peter Hames, Jack Gordon, Keith Funnell, John Puddy, Ruth Funnell,

1. **APOLOGIES** Lorraine Drake, Tracey Beresford, Callan Macdonald, Colin Jones

2. **MINUTES** The Minutes of the meeting on 18th May were agreed as a correct record.

3. **MATTERS ARISING** Cathrine said she has agreed to represent the Green Party at the Torrington Climate Changing room.

4. **REPORTS**

a) **Treasurer**: Our balance at the bank is £2,664.74 thanks to donations. Keith explained that our share of the Freepost leaflet for the GE will be £525. Judy has currently paid the £500 deposit which we are hoping to save. £57 has been spent on Stake boards and £57 on extra leaflets. So we will have a healthy balance to take us into the County Council elections next May.

b) **Webmaster**: In the absence of Colin we have no report.

c) **Press Officer**: Tracey is in Bristol today campaigning so again no report. Peter Hames was concerned that the Gazette has a far shorter entry for Judy compared to the other candidates. It is unclear why this happened.

d) **Membership**: Ruth reported that we have gained three new members since the last meeting.

5. **FEEDBACK FROM DISTRICT, TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS**

Torridge District: Huw put a motion relating to the planned East the Water depot, asking for options from the Planning Department rather than a fait accompli and got support from across the parties.

Wendy received an invitation from North Devon District Council to attend a panel of agricultural experts. Keith commented that Farming Today this morning had talked about moderating climate change and criticising planning delays on, for example, putting in ponds. The average age of farmers is over 60 which is worrying. The attendance at the NFU hustings was very low but possibly because it was held in the afternoon.

There will be four working groups jointly with NDDC for the Local Plan and Huw, Peter and Ricky Knight will be on the group of six for the climate.

Peter said that at the AGM the Community and Resources Committee's twelve members selected did not include anyone from one group so an increase in the size of the committee will be discussed at the next full council.

The Active Travel group has suggested measures to improve connectivity with the Tarka Trail in Bideford opposite Ethelwynne Brown Close. John Puddy said there are no facilities currently planned for boats to tie up at Brunswick Wharf which the Harbour Board has been raising.

At the presentation from XLinks people raised the impacts on roads, housing etc. It is a nationally funded project so will happen. It is hoped to secure funding from the applicants for community schemes such as cycle tracks.

GWR are supporting further investigation into the proposal for restoring the Barnstaple to Bideford Railway

The Torrington Water Alliance gave a talk to the Climate Change Emergency Working Group about water saving and water footprints.

Northam TC: The new Mayor is Nicky Tait (Ind). Peter gave cheques to the foodbank, Bideford College Hardship Fund and the Hen Welfare Trust at the Inauguration Ceremony having raised about £17000 for these charities during his year as Mayor.

Bideford TC: Jack is hoping to be a member of the Decarbonisation Committee. Last year's budget was not spent. He wants to push for electric trimmers instead of petrol – less noisy and no fumes. He is proposing an award for wildlife gardens. Ruth suggested Bideford Sustainability Group might be interested in producing an information leaflet on the topic including porous paving for car parking and advice on edging the garden with easy care shrubs that attract insects etc.

There are proposals to let a gym take over the old library. The Methodist Church has been offered to the TC but they are worried about the cost of maintenance. Keith suggested an approach to the Bridge Trust for help as it could be a very valuable asset and a better site for a gym with parking behind it.

6. GENERAL ELECTION UPDATE AND CC ELECTIONS MAY 25

Keith said the timetable for the Count is that verification will be complete by 2 am and the result should be declared around 5 am. The Election Calculus website suggests we will hang on to our deposit.

There is a hustings at The Plough on Tuesday 2nd July. Tickets should be booked online and it is already filling up.

At the County Council Elections we should aim to focus on two seats in the Bideford area. We can look at possible candidates at the September meeting.

7. AGRICULTURAL SHOWS

We had been planning to attend these as the beginning of our General Election campaign but this had been superceded by the July 4th election date so it was decided not to attend.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) **Beer Festival**: Huw said this will be on 20th and 21st September. He already has sponsors for nine beers and 5-6 ciders. We agreed to sponsor a barrel.

b) **Climate Committee, Bideford TC**: This will be on Tuesday 2nd at 6.30 p.m. at the Town Hall.

c) **Coal yard demolition**: The Council has agreed to demolition of the old coal yard at the bottom of Pitt Lane and Huw is calling it in. There is a lapsed planning for conversion but this proposal is for demolition with no proposal about what will happen then.

d) **Clarence Wharf**: This is at the end of Ethelwynne Close and John was asking that it be retained as a wharf. It is currently designated for housing.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on **Saturday 7th September at the Pannier Pantry at 2.30 p.m.**