

NEWTON POPPLEFORD & HARPFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the remotely held Parish Council Monthly Ordinary meeting on Monday 18th May 2020 at 7pm via Zoom Webinar Platform as per legislation contained within section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 * (meeting also “livestreamed” to Council’s Facebook Page)

ACTION by:

	<p>Present (remotely): Cllrs. Burhop (Chair), Dalton (Vice-Chair), Bilenkyj, Carpenter, Chapman, Hughes, Lipczynski, Tillotson and Walker (Quorate) Clerk, Paul Hayward. EDDC Cllr. Val Ranger Hon. Footpath Warden 1 member of the public (via Zoom link, multiple viewers on Facebook)</p>	
	<p>Chair welcomed all Councillors, and members of the public to Council’s May Ordinary ‘virtual’ meeting, made necessary by the current CV-19 situation which requires social distancing measures, held in accordance with Clause 78 CA 2020 *</p>	
	<p>Public Forum:</p> <p>a) Police Representative. Crime report received to date and discussed. Chair wished PC Lee every happiness upon the occasion of his retirement from the Police Service and thanked him for his many years of dedicated service to the residents and community of Newton Poppleford and Harpford.</p> <p>b) County Councillor Report. No report had been forthcoming, beyond those reports being routinely received in relation to DCC health and wellbeing matters, particularly in respect of ongoing CV-19 situation.</p> <p>c) District Councillor Report. Written copy provided and published online. Cllr. Ranger answered questions from members of Council and from the public.</p> <p>d) P3 / Hon. Footpath Warden. Hon. Footpath Warden gave a verbal report including: Update on path maintenance across parish. Ongoing issues with path users and interactions with livestock - Cllr. Ranger suggested that some signage be erected reminding users of the Countryside Code and the need to exercise caution when walking near cows etc, especially when with dogs. Update re: FP17 and the issue of “historic use” of the Green Lane; Mr Swan to liaise with Cllrs. Dalton and Tillotson to obtain evidence to support those historic claims. Himalayan Balsam project ongoing (but constrained by CV-19); Mr Swan being assisted by other residents. Works at Goosemoor Farm postponed until July (CDE involvement). Cllr. Dalton asked about possible obstructions on FP3. Mr Swan will assess and report back to Council. Chair thanked HFW for his continued support and enthusiasm.</p> <p>e) Public Representations and questions. None</p> <p>With no further representations, Chair closed the public forum.</p>	

20/043	<p>Apologies for absence: None received. Also, apologies from Cllr. Claire Wright (DCC), PC Steve Lee.</p>	
20/044	<p>Declarations of Interest made / Dispensation Requests:</p> <p>All members present are, by definition, members of the NPPFF Trustee Board and declare a personal interest in that capacity. Cllr. Tillotson was afforded a dispensation * to discuss and vote upon matters pertaining to parish allotments at the Ordinary meeting held 22/7/19. This dispensation applies until May 2023 (unless rescinded prior to that date) and is afforded in respect of her personal and disclosable pecuniary interests as Allotment Manager. * <i>Localism Act 2011 (s.33)</i></p>	
20/045	<p>To consider request from Cllr. Howard Hughes for a dispensation pertaining to tree matters, to remain in effect until May 2023 in respect of personal and pecuniary interests: Clerk outlined legislation which allows this dispensation and the subsequent basis on which Council may consider this request. Chair proposed that this dispensation be afforded. Seconded by Cllr. Lipczynski. Resolved 8/0/1 abstention (HH). Clerk: please note on future minutes and agenda.</p>	
20/046	<p>To consider and, if thought fit, approve minutes of previous Ordinary meeting held Monday 27th April 2020: Cllr. Carpenter highlighted a small typographical error on page 1. Noted by Councillors. Chair proposed approval of the duly amended Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 27th April 2020. Seconded Vice-Chair. Resolved unanimously and therefore approved. Chair was unable to sign the minutes as a true record of that meeting and therefore this action has been deferred until such time as it is possible. <i>Matters arising from these minutes:</i> None raised.</p>	
20/047	<p>To consider and, if thought fit, approve the proposed amendments to Council's extant standing orders to allow temporary changes to procedure in light of ongoing CV-19 situation; revisions previously circulated to members: Chair summarised the changes proposed, as recommended by National Association of Local Councils to allow the ongoing business of Council to continue primarily in "virtual" session. Members expressed some reservations that "online" meetings might disenfranchise those without online access/IT equipment. It was suggested by Cllr. Hughes that Council discuss the hosting of further "Digital Confidence" sessions as previously held. Chair will talk to session hosts to investigate potential. Amendments as circulated proposed by Chair, seconded by Cllr. Carpenter. Resolved unanimously. Clerk: Please incorporate and diarise for May 2021 to review and revert back to previous Standing Orders if possible / recommended.</p>	

20/048	<p>Chair's Announcements / Matters of Urgency / Statement on ongoing CV-19 situation:</p> <p>Chair gave a verbal report to Council. He thanked all those helping during the crisis, all key workers, healthcare staff, and those in the emergency services and all those in the village who had stepped forward to volunteer to help and assist their neighbours and fellow residents. The village response to the weekly Thursday Applause was also noted and much welcomed as a show of community thanks for those working in the NHS and care sector. Chair thanked Clerk for organising the parish information leaflet and for those who volunteered to deliver to all parish dwellings.</p>	
20/049	<p>To consider a further Casual Vacancy for Harpford ward: (Sections 83 to 91 incl. of the Local Government Act 1972 apply)</p> <p>Clerk advised that, since the last Ordinary meeting, Cllr. Jeffries had tendered his resignation to the Chair.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Mr. Jeffries for his service to Council and asked whether Council was happy that Mr. Jeffries retain his place on the Climate Change Working Party. Agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Clerk reported that current guidance on Casual Vacancies remain unchanged due to CV-19 situation and it was felt by all that no co-options should be considered until some semblance of normality returned to the parish and candidates could attend meetings in person in support of their nominations.</p> <p>Clerk: Please note and notify EDDC Democratic Services Team accordingly. No further action required at this time.</p>	
20/050	<p>To consider Council's response to, and involvement with, Community Resilience measures relating to CV-19 situation:</p> <p>Most of this topic was covered in 20/048 above.</p> <p>RFO reported that £995 had been received, of which £500 had been donated by Lord Clinton's Charitable Trust for use on CV-19 resilience expenditure. Chair thanked the trustees of the fund for their kind donation and proposed that Clerk be directed to write a formal letter of thanks. Agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Clerk: Please note and action accordingly.</p> <p>RFO reported that, of the £995 received to date, £226.06 had been spent as resolved previously.</p> <p>It was proposed by Chair that Council donate a hand sanitiser unit and a supply of hand sanitiser to each of the following local venues:</p> <p>Harpford Hall NP Village Hall The Pavilion St. Luke's Church Hall</p> <p>Resolved unanimously.</p> <p>Clerk: Please arrange subject to guidance on social distancing and Infection control.</p>	

20/051	<p>Planning Matters to be considered:</p> <p>a) To ratify planning applications submitted under delegated authority; i) 20/0784/FUL – Highfield, Higher Way, Harpford Delegated decision was to NOT support on the basis of unacceptable form, height, effect of landscape and village character and materials proposed. Ratification proposed by Chair, seconded by Vice-Chair. Resolved unanimously.</p> <p>b) To consider planning applications received: i) 20/0927/FUL – Peeks House, Harpford. Installation of an air source heat pump. Cllr. Lipczynski declared a personal interest as a near neighbour. Chair proposed, seconded by Cllr. Hughes, that Council supports this application subject to a condition seeking adequate screening with suitable fencing to mitigate against potential noise nuisance from pump operation. Resolved 7/0/2 abstentions (RL, MC)</p> <p>c) To consider planning applications received after agenda publication but included within supplementary meeting agenda: None received to consider.</p> <p>d) Tree (Planning) Matters; None advised</p> <p>e) Planning Determinations/Decisions; As per published agenda and detailed on website.</p> <p>f) Appeal Matters; Clerk reported that an appeal had been lodged in respect of Barn South of Grange Farm (19/1999/FUL) – an application previously NOT supported by Council. <i>Chair proposed that Standing Orders be temporarily suspended to allow representations by ward Councillor, Val Ranger. Resolved.</i> It was proposed by Chair, seconded by Vice-Chair, that Council would submit an additional representation to the Appeal Hearing on the basis that no satisfactory evidence had been provided to sufficiently demonstrate that the agricultural barn was redundant and no longer required for agricultural use by applicant or others. Resolved unanimously. Chair offered to draft a suitable statement to be circulated to all members prior to submission. Chair: Please action accordingly.</p> <p><i>Chair proposed that Standing Orders be resumed. Resolved unan.</i></p> <p>g) Planning Correspondence: None received, not already circulated to members by Clerk.</p>	Chair
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20/052	<p>Financial Matters</p> <p>a) To consider and review Financial Reports for May 2020: Noted and reviewed.</p> <p>b) To receive update from RFO as to current audit and governance arrangements in light of CV-19 situation: Noted and reviewed. No questions from members of Council.</p> <p>c) To consider payments for May 2020 (as previously circulated to members of Council): Chair proposed. Seconded by Cllr. Walker. Resolved unanimously.</p> <p>d) Questions to RFO on these reports: None raised.</p> <p>e) To consider proposal to move Council’s primary bank account to alternative provider: Chair proposed that this matter be deferred to the next Finance Committee meeting scheduled for 26th May 2020. Resolved. RFO: Please note and add to that agenda accordingly.</p>	
	<p>Business to be considered:</p>	
20/053a)	<p>a) To consider further progress with tree works / planting in the parish including remedial / safety works where appropriate; Cllr. Hughes to report:</p> <p>Cllr. Hughes confirmed that any parish tree planting would need to be undertaken in the autumn/winter.</p> <p>Furthermore, “tree works” in the parish fell into 3 categories:</p> <p><i>i) Those classed as remedial or safety or maintenance works.</i></p> <p><i>ii) New planting schemes across parish on an ad-hoc basis.</i></p> <p><i>iii) Planned tree planting projects tied into Climate Change WP deliberations and recommendations.</i></p> <p>Cllr. Hughes agreed to circulate the updated tree report to all members and asked that this matter be considered again over summer months so that plans for the latter part of the year could be put in place. Clerk: Please note and diarise accordingly. The topic of bramble loss by the riverside was raised. Chair proposed to suspend Standing Orders to allow Hon. Footpath Warden, Mr. Swan, to speak to Councillors. Resolved Mr. Swan outlined his thoughts on this topic. Noted. Chair proposed to resume Standing Orders. Resolved</p> <p>It was also discussed that “trunk” ivy should be removed from trees in Council’s ownership to prevent the possibility of wind damage. Clerk was asked to liaise with Parish Handypersons accordingly.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
20/053b)	<p>b) To consider report from Climate Change Emergency Working Party; Cllr. Bilenkyj to report:</p> <p>Cllr. Bilenkyj provided a report to Council on recent activity within the working party and outlined the draft Terms of Reference that had been formulated. Chair thanked Cllr. Bilenkyj for the report & TOR.</p> <p>It was proposed that the WP membership remain at 5 persons; 3 elected Councillors and 2 others and that Council adopt the draft Terms of Reference. Mr. Mike Jeffries had indicated that he was happy to remain as a non-Council member of the WP, as had District Councillor Val Ranger. Chair proposed, seconded by Vice-Chair. Resolved 6/0/3 (abstentions from Cllrs. Bilenkyj, Hughes and Carpenter). Clerk was asked to add to agendas as a standing item. Clerk: Please note and action accordingly.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>

20/053c)	<p>c) To consider matters pertaining to P3 Footpaths and recent requests for access from landowners: <i>Chair invited Mr. Swan (Hon. Footpath Warden to speak)</i> Mr. Swan reported that most of this issue had been covered in his earlier report but that he was constantly checking the paths and keeping foliage and weed growth at bay as far as as possible. The sunny weather (and intermittent showers) were accelerating plant growth everywhere! Clerk reported that DCC wish to allow access to a local contractor at the Back Brook to facilitate the replacement of the “bank stones” where they had shifted over the last winter due to flood waters. This was agreed (DCC were covering the costs) but Chair suggested that Clerk contact the cricket club groundsman to alert him to the imminent works and reassure him that the heavy plant needed for the works would only use the field perimeter. Clerk: Please note and action accordingly. Clerk was also asked to liaise with DCC PROW Officers once works completed to arrange subsequent remedial maintenance measures.</p> <p>Discussion then reverted to the issue of Red Bridge over the Otter at Harpford. Mr. Swan reported that the western bank is very precarious but that agreement had not been possible with the landowner to re-route the footpath. It was agreed that closure of the bridge would cause significant safety issues for users as they would be forced to cross the road bridge on the A3052 which had no pedestrian pathway.</p> <p>Clerk was asked to liaise with DCC Cllr. Wright and PROW officers to determine how this issue could be moved forward as a matter of urgency. Clerk: Please note and action accordingly.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
20/053d)	<p>d) To consider request from adjoining landowner for Parish Council to repair gateway at NE entrance to Venn Ottery Village Green: After discussion, Cllr. Hughes offered to discuss this matter further with the landowner in question and report back to Council with the outcome of those talks. Clerk: Please add to next ORD agenda for further consideration. Cllr. Hughes: Please note and action accordingly</p>	<p>Clerk HH</p>
20/053e)	<p>e) To consider quotation for repairs to footbridge between Webbers Meadow fields one, and two; works to be undertaken by parish handyperson: Clerk outlined basis for the repairs (see previous minutes) and the anticipated costs for materials and labour. Chair thanked Mr. Swan for completing the temporary repairs to the structure. It was proposed by Chair, seconded by Cllr. Walker, that Council proceed with the replacement of all bridge footboards on the grounds of public safety as a matter of urgency. Costs for materials approved at £250 net. Resolved unanimously. Clerk: please action accordingly and liaise with handyperson to make necessary arrangements. Please arrange for suitable notices to be displayed for a week beforehand (and published on social media) to alert users and then for additional notices to be placed with barriers during the actual works.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>

20/053f)	<p>f) To approve repairs to railings / handrail outside Kirby's Furnishings (adjacent to area now held under licence from DCC as HMPE * land): It was proposed by Chair, seconded by Vice-Chair, that Council commission parish handyperson to complete the repairs as per the terms of the grant funding previously provided by DCC (Cllr. Wright's Locality Fund), circa £550 incl. all materials and labour. Resolved unanimously. Clerk: Please note and commence project as resolved.</p> <p><i>* Highway Maintainable at Public Expense</i></p>	Clerk
20/053g)	<p>g) To receive matter of Cemetery Fees charged by the Parish Council in relation to CV-19 situation and burials of non-parishioners: Clerk had asked Councillors to consider this matter in anticipation of possible legislative changes from central government relating to CV-19 and after correspondence from a party representing a non-parishioner. After discussion, which affirmed the view that Council's fees were reasonable and lower than the EDDC Burial Authority, and after advice from Cllrs. that external funding was available for families experiencing financial hardship due to burial costs, it was proposed by Cllr. Walker, seconded by Cllr. Hughes, that Council's burial fees and charges remain unaltered, especially in relation to interment of non-residents in parish burial grounds. Resolved unanimously. Clerk was asked to add details of the Hardship Fund for Burials (HMG) to the Council's relevant webpage. Clerk: please note and action accordingly.</p>	Clerk
20/053h)	<p>h) To consider update on replacement play equipment at Turner Close to be funded through s.106 contributions: Clerk outlined the recent revised quotation from Contractor K which members felt was excessive given the slight variance in the design proposed and the deviation from the initial "special price" offered to Council. Clerk reported the explanation from K that the site access, existing safety surface and the topography was the key reason for the excess costs. It was agreed that further clarification be sought on a number of points and that the matter be considered at the next Finance Committee. Clerk: Please note and contact K as directed. Add to next FC agenda accordingly.</p>	Clerk
20/053i)	<p>i) To consider proposal that Clerk be directed to begin collation of specification for re-tendering of the Parish Grounds Maintenance Contract for 2021-24: Chair suggested that this matter be considered by the Finance Committee due to the complexity of the subject matter and the need for a wider debate on locations, frequency and scope of works. Agreed unanimously. Clerk: Please note and add to FC agenda accordingly, providing a briefing paper to all members of that committee.</p>	Clerk

20/053j)	<p>j) To consider suggestion that Council seek the transfer of the green space at Hillside (by way of an asset transfer from EDDC) to create a possible recreation area:</p> <p>Several suggestions were put forward for an alternate use of this green open space at Hillside, Burrow incl. adult gym equipment, play facilities, benches and flower planting. Some concerns were broached regarding access to the site across Burrow Lane but it was felt that an approach to the landowner (believed to be EDDC) would be sensible to determine “in principle” whether transfer of ownership would be feasible and at what cost?</p> <p>Clerk was asked to make contact with the officer concerned at EDDC and also the Portfolio Holder too, and report back when developments warrant.</p> <p>It was proposed by Chair, seconded by Vice-Chair, that Council seek the information requested as soon as possible.</p> <p>Resolved unanimously.</p> <p>Clerk: Please note and action accordingly.</p>	Clerk
	Chair proposed to resume Standing Orders. Resolved unan.	
20/054	<p>Correspondence received, not already circulated to members:</p> <p>None other than that already circulated.</p>	
20/055	<p>Date and time of next meeting:</p> <p>The next meeting of council will be held in remote session on Monday 29th June 2020, at 7.00pm via the Zoom Platform, this being an Ordinary Meeting of the Council; the Annual Meeting formerly scheduled for this date having been cancelled in accordance with section 78 legislation.</p>	
20/056	<p>It was proposed that, under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Local Government Act 1972, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed. Proposed by Chair, seconded by Vice-Chair. Resolved unanimously.</p> <p>Facebook Livestream was terminated and members of the public left the Zoom meeting. Clerk confirmed that only Councillors remained in the meeting as per the requirements of the above legislation. Meeting moved into Committee.</p>	
20/057	<p>Matters to be considered in committee:</p> <p>a) Matters pertaining to materials under ownership of the Parish Council at Back Lane; Council to consider replacement of materials thereat:</p> <p>Clerk provided a brief report to Councillors.</p> <p>It was proposed by Chair, seconded by Cllr. Walker, that the person who inadvertently removed them, be asked to replace them at their earliest convenience with an equivalent volume and weight of similar aggregate. The Council would then consider this matter closed. Resolved unanimously</p> <p>Clerk: Please contact the party concerned to convey this decision</p>	

	<i>With no further business to discuss, Chair closed council meeting at 9.30pm.</i>	
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Minutes of the remotely held Parish Council Monthly Ordinary meeting on Monday 18th May 2020 at 7pm via Zoom Webinar Platform as per legislation contained within section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 (meet also “livestreamed” to Council’s Facebook Page)

Signed as a true record of the meeting above:

Chair: _____ Date: _____