

# NEWTON POPPLEFORD AND HARPFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of **Newton Poppleford and Harpford Parish Council** which took place at The Pavilion, Back Lane, Newton Poppleford at 7.00pm on Monday, 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023

In the absence of Cllr. Tribble the meeting was chaired by Vice Chair, Cllr. Carpenter.

**Present:** Cllrs. Bisseker, Carpenter, Dalton, Malawana, Tillotson and Walker  
Jacqui Baldwin, Parish Clerk  
Ward Councillor, Chris Burhop  
Parish Footpath Warden, Ted Swan  
Headmaster and 8 pupils from Newton Poppleford Primary School  
22 members of the public

Chair of the meeting outlined the Fire Regulations and Evacuation Procedure

## Public Forum

**a) Newton Poppleford Primary School:**

Mr Anthony Pope, Headmaster of the primary school spoke about the school priorities and plans for the future which include a sensory garden and an outdoor classroom. He underlined the importance of the PTFA in raising funds to support school trips, classroom resources and workshops. He thanked the Parish Council for enabling the PTFA to fundraise at parish events such as the Fireworks night. Pupils from the school council then spoke about school leadership priorities, the war on waste and the aspiration for the school to reduce its carbon footprint and become an Eco School. Chair thanked Mr Pope and the children for attending and speaking so passionately about their school. Chair added that the development of a stronger relationship between the Council and the School was very positive.

**b) Neighbourhood Policing report:**

None received. The new PCSO will attend the November meeting.

**c) County Councillor report: Cllr. Jessica Bailey**

Councillor Bailey sent her apologies to the meeting. A written report had been circulated in advance to members and had been posted on the Council website.

**d) District Councillor report: Cllr. Chris Burhop**

Cllr. Burhop presented a verbal report noting the retirement of the Chief Executive Officer of EDDC, Mark Williams, after 21 years in post. He reported that EDDC's winter parking scheme will be operating from 1<sup>st</sup> November to 31<sup>st</sup> March allowing all-day parking in EDDC car parks for just £2. The presentation by Lymptone flood resilience group at the recent Community Resilience Meeting had shown how much can be done by a group of willing volunteers to keep the community safe. Cllr. Burhop suggested that Newton Poppleford should use Lymptone as a model but this would need input from the community. There is no doubt that flood events will become more frequent, and the community must be prepared. Cllr. Burhop confirmed that he was communicating with the Environment Agency to try and establish how much silt clearance has taken place in Back Brook as residents are reporting that silt levels are still higher than they should be. A meeting of Councillors from County, District and Parish with residents and involved authorities will take place in Venn Ottery on 7<sup>th</sup> November to discuss the recommendations of an independent report into the flooding on 9<sup>th</sup> May. The state of the local roads remains poor and will probably worsen as winter progresses. Cllr. Burhop pointed out that EDDC is not responsible for highways and problems should be reported to the County Council via the "Report a Problem" link on the website. Finally, Cllr. Burhop said how disappointed he was that the Parish Council had taken the decision to terminate the lease on the public toilet in the village and close the facility at the end of the year. He stated that the Parish had taken on a 30-year lease from EDDC in 2006 to save this amenity from closure and it was the responsibility of the Council to maintain village

amenities for the public good. Cllr. Burhop stated that the agenda item under which this matter had been discussed at the September Parish Council meeting was not worded in such a way as to give the public sufficient notice of the debate. Chair acknowledged the point and confirmed that a public meeting would be held prior to the November Council Meeting to allow community engagement – this meeting to be widely publicised. The matter will also be placed on the agenda for the November Council Meeting to allow further discussion by Councillors. Chair thanked Cllr. Burhop for his attendance and input.

**e) Report from Ted Swan, Parish Footpath Warden:**

Mr Swan confirmed that his deputy had recently attended a brushcutter training course and is now fully licensed to use the parish equipment. The annual footpath survey will start shortly which requires all 23km of parish footpaths to be surveyed. The survey has to be completed by February 2024 to ensure that the parish receives funds from the County Council to support the upkeep of the paths. Ted confirmed that he was continuing to chase DCC with regard to signage for Footpath 39 and the designation of the footpath alongside the church. Chair thanked Ted for his continuing hard work on behalf of the parish.

**f) Report from the Climate Change Group:**

A report from the October meeting of the CCG had been circulated to members in advance on the meeting and is available to read on the Council website.

**g) Questions and representations from residents/parishioners**

**Multi-Use Games Area**

Chair reported on the open meeting that had taken place on 22<sup>nd</sup> October and the suggestions that had come from that which included setting up a Facebook page dedicated to the MUGA, improved signage and a noticeboard. It was suggested that, as there was significant community engagement and interest in the operation of the MUGA, a working party could be formed to take on some of the workload and responsibility. This would allow residents to input ideas and help with the management and maintenance of the facility going forward. Chair said that he would be happy to facilitate this and prepare the terms of reference if there was support from the community. It was felt that it would be sensible to have a working party in place before the repairs to the MUGA are complete so that issues such as opening hours, security and maintenance can be resolved in readiness for the re-opening. Cllr. Burhop suggested that this group should also look at flood defences for the facility. It was agreed that the first meeting of those interested in becoming involved with this group will take place at the Pavilion on Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> November at 7.00pm. Details of the meeting to be published on Facebook groups and WhatsApp groups to encourage as much participation as possible.

There being no further questions or representations the Chair closed the Public Forum at 8.05pm.

**To consider the following business:**

		<b>Actions:</b>
23/041	<b>To consider apologies for absence and approve if accepted (LGA 1972 S.85(1))</b>	
	Clerk reported that apologies had been received from Cllrs. Compton, Lipczynski, Harrison, Hughes and Tribble. Cllr. Dalton proposed that these apologies be accepted. Seconded by Cllr. Biseker and resolved unanimously.	
23/042	<b>Declarations of interest from members / Dispensations afforded</b>	
	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 Annual Meeting of Council held on 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2023. This dispensation applies until May 2027 (unless rescinded prior to that date) and is afforded in respect of her personal and disclosable pecuniary interests as an allotment tenant.	
23/043	<b>To consider any matters listed on this Agenda that Councillors believe should be dealt with as confidential business as per the provisions of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.</b> None so considered – proposal not made.	
23/044	<b>To consider and, if thought fit, approve the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023 as previously circulated to members:</b>	

	<p>To consider any Matters Arising from those Minutes not dealt with elsewhere on this Agenda:</p> <p><b>Public WC:</b> Chair confirmed that EDDC had acknowledged receipt of the Notice of Termination of Lease.</p>	
23/045	<p><b>To consider and review the draft Minutes and recommendations of Council's Finance Committee meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023:</b></p> <p>a) Climate Change Group – Val Ranger memorial tree fundraising request:  <b>Cllr. Walker proposed that the decision of the Finance Committee to allow Council's bank account to be used to receive donations via GoFundMe for this purpose be ratified. Seconded by Cllr. Dalton and resolved unanimously.</b></p> <p>a) That Council introduce a policy to replace any trees felled or removed from its land:  <b>Cllr. Walker proposed that Council should undertake to replace any trees that are felled or removed from its land in the future. Seconded by Cllr. Dalton and resolved unanimously.</b></p>	
23/046	<p><b>Correspondence received:</b></p> <p>a) EDDC - invitation to attend Strategic Plan workshops:  Two workshops have been arranged to provide an opportunity for Parish and Town Councils to influence the strategic direction of EDDC over the next 4 years. Events will be attended by the Cllr. Tribble.</p> <p>b) Correspondence from residents concerning access to the MUGA:  Chair thanked residents for their contributions to the debate.</p>	
23/047	<p><b>To consider matters pertaining to highways and road safety in the parish:</b></p> <p>i) Installation of Wig Wag signage – Cllr. Bailey is chasing the missing signs as stated in her report.</p> <p>ii) Road repairs – Venn Ottery – to be discussed during the on-site meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> November.</p>	
23/048	<p><b>Planning Matters:</b></p> <p>a) <b>To consider planning applications received prior to publication:</b>  <b>23/1779/FUL – Pemarita, High Street, Newton Popleford:</b>  Chair reported that this application for an extension and addition of a single storey to the existing bungalow was circulated to members on 3<sup>rd</sup> October and Council was required to respond by 23<sup>rd</sup> October. Three Councillors responded to say that they had no objection to the application. However, following representations from members of the public relating to the proximity of this development to two Listed Buildings, advice was sought from the Senior Planning Officer at EDDC. He recommended that Council request that the matter be referred to the Conservation Officer for advice. Council did so and has neither supported nor objected to the application as there was no clear majority either way. <b>To enable the owner of the property to make representations to the meeting Chair proposed that Standing Orders be suspended. Seconded by Cllr. Dalton and resolved unanimously.</b>  The applicant made a statement in support of his application and gave details of proposed mitigation measures intended to allay the concerns of nearby residents. It was agreed that the Clerk would send this statement to the Conservation Officer on behalf of the homeowner. Applicant to forward his statement to the Clerk.</p>	

		<p><b>23/1985/FUL - Land south of Knapps Lane, Harpford:</b>  An application for the erection of an agricultural storage building. Planning Officers have granted an extension to allow members to discuss this application this evening. Chair noted that comments in support of this application had been posted on the planning portal by Harpford residents and the application was supported by the Ward Councillor. <b>Cllr. Malawana proposed that, as this application complies with Neighbourhood Plan policies, Council should support the application. Seconded by Cllr. Walker and resolved unanimously. Clerk to note and upload this decision to the planning portal. Chair proposed that Standing Orders be reinstated to preclude any further public representations. Resolved unanimously.</b></p>	Clerk
		<p><b>To consider planning applications received after agenda publication:</b>  None received.</p>	
		<p><b>b) Planning determinations/decisions advised:</b>  None advised since the last Council meeting.</p>	
		<p><b>c) To note applications which will be considered at a forthcoming meeting of the EDDC Planning Committee:</b>  A meeting of the Planning Committee took place on 24<sup>th</sup> October at which there was nothing on the agenda relating to this parish..</p>	
		<p><b>d) To note planning correspondence received:</b>  None received.</p>	
		<p><b>e) To consider Council's Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring Report:</b>  Update circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting.</p>	
23/049		<p><b>Financial Matters:</b></p>	
		<p>a) To consider and review Financial Reports for September as per documents previously circulated to members and published on-line;  b) To note October payments approved by the Finance Committee as per documents circulated to members and published on-line;  c) To note contents of the 2023-24 Budget Monitor to the end of September 2023;  The contents of the above reports were noted. There were no questions to the RFO from members of Council relating to these financial reports.</p>	
23/050		<p><b>BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED:</b></p>	
	A	<p><b>To review response to flooding event in the parish:</b>  a) DCC Section 19 Flood Investigation Report - Otter Valley Floods:  Chair confirmed that DCC had now published their Section 19 Report into the 9<sup>th</sup> May floods. There is a link to the report on the Council website.  b) Venn Ottery Flood Investigation Report and Recommendations:  Site meeting to be held on 7<sup>th</sup> November as previously noted. Cllr. Hughes has confirmed that he will represent Council.  c) Burrow – Hydraulic Modelling Exercise:  Noted that this exercise, to be carried out independent consultants WSP, will be limited to Burrow. Chair suggested that pressure should be applied to DCC to extend this to the whole of the Newton Poppleford and Harpford catchment. To be discussed with Cllr. Bailey.  d) Community Resilience Network event – 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2023:</p>	

		<p>Chair reported that there were 62 attendees at this event where some very useful information had been shared, not least by the Lymptone flood defence volunteers as referenced in Cllr. Burhop's report. The Parish Emergency Plan will be discussed at a meeting of the Policies and Personnel Committee on 6<sup>th</sup> November and a public meeting will take place after that. Chair reiterated Cllr. Burhop's comment that, for the Emergency Plan to be effective, volunteers from the community will be needed.</p>	
	B	<p><b>To consider future access and security of the Multi-Use Games Area:</b>  This matter had been discussed at length during the Public Forum. Chair confirmed that CCTV covering the site is now operational and new signage has been ordered.  <b>Clerk to follow up with contractor regarding a start date for the repairs.</b></p>	Clerk
	C	<p><b>To consider matters pertaining to the DAA Night Landing Site:</b>  Clerk advised that the lighting pole is not currently functioning as there is no power supply. DAA can still operate at this site but, for the time being, it will be classified as a "dark site" and the helicopter pilot will land using night vision goggles. The DAA have assured Council that no-one will be placed at risk because the light is not working. Council must decide whether it wishes engineers to investigate further - which will involve excavation along the route of the cable – and then carry out necessary repairs. Alternatively, the site could be retained as a permanent dark site and the lighting pole removed. This issue to be placed on the agenda for a future meeting once the potential costs are known.  <b>Clerk to note and action.</b></p>	Clerk
	D	<p><b>To note arrangements for Remembrance Sunday commemorations in the Parish – 12<sup>th</sup> November 2023</b>  Chair confirmed that Council has ordered two wreaths from the Royal British Legion. Cllr. Tribble will attend the service and lay the wreath in Newton Poppleford and Cllr. Lipczynski will represent the Council and lay a wreath at the Harpford commemoration.</p>	
	E	<p><b>To receive an update on plans for the Annual Firework Event to be held on 3rd November 2023:</b>  <b>To enable Cllr. Burhop to address the meeting Chair proposed that Standing Orders be suspended. Seconded by Cllr. Walker and resolved unanimously.</b>  Cllr. Burhop confirmed that tickets for the event are selling well. A Fire Act has been booked and a bar and barbeque will be available at the Pavilion. In addition, Harpford Hall will be running a stall selling hot drinks and cakes. The PTFA are organising the barbeque and providing stewards for the event. Chair thanked Cllr. Burhop for the update.  <b>Chair then proposed that Standing Orders be reinstated. Seconded by Cllr. Dalton and resolved unanimously.</b></p>	
	G	<p><b>To note updates to the Action Plan for the period 2023-2027:</b>  Noted.</p>	
23/051		<p><b>To consider matters viewed as urgent by presiding Chair for discussion only:</b>  No such matters to discuss.</p>	
23/052		<p><b>Date of next Ordinary Meeting</b>  7.15pm on Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at The Pavilion, Back Lane, Newton Poppleford.</p>	

23/053	<p><b>It is proposed that, under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) 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.</b></p> <p>Proposal not made as there were no matters that required discussion in committee session.</p>	
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With no further business to consider, the Chair thanked everyone for their interest and attendance and declared the meeting closed at 8.50pm.

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