

# NEWTON POPPLEFORD AND HARPFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Ordinary Meeting which took place at The Pavilion, Back Lane, Newton Popleford at 7pm on Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2022

Present: Cllrs. Burhop (Chair), Carpenter (Vice Chair), Dalton, Lipczynski, Morgan and Walker  
Ted Swan, Honorary Footpath Warden  
3 members of the public

The Chair welcomed all Councillors and members of the public to the Council's August Ordinary meeting and outlined the fire evacuation procedure. Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Chair paid tribute to Cllr. Val Ranger, who sadly passed away on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, and sent sincere condolences to her sons, Richard and Chris. Val's huge contribution to the community will be acknowledged at a memorial event to take place at The Pavilion on 17<sup>th</sup> September at 12.30pm. A formal process of electing a new District Councillor will now take place but, in the interim, to ensure that the parish is represented at District level, Cllr. Paul Hayward will provide support for which the parish is most grateful. The Chair opened the Public Forum at 7.15pm.

## Public Forum

Some reports may have been circulated beforehand and published on-line

- a) Neighbourhood Policing report  
None received.
- b) County Councillor report: Cllr. Jessica Bailey  
Cllr. Bailey sent her apologies for being unable to attend. Cllr. Bailey's report for August had been circulated prior to the meeting and published on-line. It was noted from her report that a meeting with DCC Highways officers has been convened for 10.00am on 29<sup>th</sup> September to which the Parish Council will be invited. The suspension of Councillors Locality Budgets may affect funding applications made by the Parish Council for First Aid training, Community Speed Watch signage and refurbishment of the Venn Ottery parish noticeboard.
- c) Report from Ted Swan, Parish Footpath Warden  
Mr Swan noted that it will be approximately 4 months before the newly approved footpath at Moor Lane is officially confirmed as the landowner has 6 months to appeal DCC's decision. Work to divert Footpath 1 around a large oak tree, which DCC commenced on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, has been carried out very successfully. There are further improvements to be made to the footpath but this is a good start. Plans by Wales & West Utilities to close Footpath 3 for three weeks through October and November are of concern as this is a heavily used path and the closure also coincides with bonfire night. Mr Swan was asked to put pressure on the utility company to shorten the timeframe of the closure or provide an alternative diversion route. The Clerk noted that Wales & West had confirmed that vehicular and pedestrian access would be provided on 4<sup>th</sup> November to allow the Firework event to take place. Mr Swan reported that Himalayan Balsam extraction had continued with Back Brook cleared from Venn Ottery Road up to Woodleys yard. The September pull has been cancelled as the balsam is already seeding. Mr Swan advised Council that he wished to step down as lead on balsam pulling from the end of this year as it was becoming too difficult to recruit volunteers. Chair thanked Mr Swan for all the work he had done for the community, particularly with regard to balsam eradication.
- d) Report from the Climate Change Group, Mrs. Gill Cameron-Webb  
Mrs Cameron-Webb referred to the tree planting proposals circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting. Plans to plant a community orchard of apples and crab apples and other native trees and willows as part of the AONB Nature Recovery Project were approved by Council. It was noted that the purchase of the trees would be paid for out of project funding and volunteers would be asked to assist with planting. Proposals to plant additional trees

on Burrow Green, the playing field and in both cemeteries as part of the DCC's annual tree planting project were approved in principle. DCC will appoint a sub-contractor to advise on and manage this project to ensure that the right trees are planted in the most appropriate places and Mrs. Cameron-Webb will work with the contractor through September to finalise the proposals. All purchase and planting costs will be covered by DCC and they will also maintain the trees for 5 years. Cllr. Walker volunteered to participate in this process as the Parish Council representative with authority to make decisions on behalf of Council. NPPFF to be involved in any discussions relating to planting on the playing field. DCC wish the community to be involved with the tree planting and Mrs. Cameron-Webb will liaise with the school and other groups to arrange this.

Mrs Cameron-Webb also provided a brief report on the Community Speed Watch project and requested an invitation to the forthcoming meeting with Highways. Chair agreed to this request and thanked Gill and her CSW team for their hard work.

At 7.30pm the Chair welcomed Cllr. Paul Hayward to the meeting. Cllr. Hayward confirmed that the Democratic Services team at EDDC would be following the prescribed procedure to fill the vacancy left by the sad loss of Cllr. Ranger. In the meantime, Cllr. Hayward would offer whatever support he could. With regard to Planning matters, Cllr. Hayward advised that he had no legal power to act on behalf of the Parish Council but could submit consultee comments under emergency delegated powers. Chair thanked Cllr. Hayward for his support which is much appreciated.

e) Report from the Allotment Management Committee

A report from the Allotment Management Committee was circulated in advance of the meeting. The Chair remarked on how lovely the allotments gardens are at the moment and sent his compliments to all ploholders. The Chair reported that an urgent matter had arisen pertaining to the allotments which would be dealt with in Part B of this meeting.

f) Questions and representations from residents/parishioners

A resident asked whether Council would be represented at the forthcoming Strategic Planning Committee meeting where land in the village put forward for development under the HELAA process will be reviewed. Cllr. Hayward stated that the Parish Council is not a statutory consultee in this process – Council is notified but not consulted. However, comments could be sent to him as a member of that committee. Cllr. Hayward added that the HELAA process is transparent with nothing discussed in committee and all meetings open to public view on EDDC's youtube channel. The selection of development sites will take some time and there are likely to be several meetings the dates and agendas of which will be available on the EDDC website.

There being no further questions the Public Forum was closed at 7.45pm

		Action
22/039	<b>To consider apologies for absence and approve if accepted (LGA 1972 S.85(1))</b>	
	Apologies for absence from Cllrs. Bilenyk, Chapman, Hughes, Tillotson and Tribble were noted and approved.	
22/040	<b>Declarations of interest from members / Dispensations afforded</b>	
	(this does not preclude the duty to declare further interests during the meeting as applicable)	
	All members present are, by definition, members of the NPPFF Trustee Board and declare a personal interest in that capacity.  Cllr. Dalton was afforded a dispensation to discuss and vote upon matters pertaining to Parish allotments at the Ordinary Meeting held 29/3/2021. 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 an allotment tenant.	
22/041	<b>To consider any matters listed on this Agenda that Councillors consider should be dealt with as confidential business as per the provisions of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 – see Agenda item 22/051</b>	

22/042	<p><b>To consider and, if thought fit, approve the Minutes of the Council's Ordinary Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2022 as previously circulated to members.</b></p> <p><b>It was proposed by Cllr. Lipczynski that these Minutes be approved as a true record of the meeting. Seconded by Cllr. Morgan and resolved unanimously.</b></p> <p>To consider any Matters Arising from those Minutes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Webbers meadow footbridge repairs No progress to date.</li> <li>b) First Aid Training – 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022 Event has been publicised on the website and Facebook page and several bookings have been received. An advert will also appear in the September PCC magazine.</li> <li>c) Stagecoach bus service changes Chair confirmed that under the proposals reviewed at the July meeting there would be a significant reduction in local bus services from 8pm onwards. It was agreed that Council should write to Stagecoach to protest – perhaps in conjunction with other local parishes adjoining the A3052 which will be similarly affected. <b>Clerk to make contact with other local parishes</b></li> <li>d) Burrow bus stops An email to the Integrated Public Transport officer at DCC has resulted in signage being posted at both bus stops announcing “bus stops no longer in use”. Subsequently, one of these signs has been removed and it was noted that residents are continuing to use the stops.</li> <li>e) Picnic benches Webbers Meadow <b>Chair agreed to arrange the loan of a trailer to transport the benches from Bowhayes Farm to Webbers Meadow.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Clerk</b></p> <p><b>Chair</b></p>
22/043	<p><b>Correspondence received:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Climate Change Group – Winter Tree Planting Dealt with during the Public Forum.</li> <li>b) Request for memorial tree – Lower Way, Harpford It was agreed that this offer to purchase a memorial tree be accepted with thanks on the basis that the cost of the tree, stake, plaque and planting be paid for by the donor. Tree, possibly a crab apple, to be sited in Lower Way, Harpford. <b>Cllr. Walker to liaise with the donor.</b></li> <li>c) Road conditions/water leak – Burrow to Hunger Hill Noted that Cllr. Bailey is pursuing this matter with Highways and has requested that a site visit be arranged. Cllr. Carpenter offered to attend any site visit as a resident of Burrow. Bryan Woodley to be approached as he is familiar with the village water sources and may have some knowledge of this issue. <b>Clerk to action</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>RW</b></p> <p><b>Clerk</b></p>
22/044	<p><b>Chair's announcements</b></p> <p>Chair noted the current pressure on the NHS which does not bode well for the winter season.</p>	
22/045	<p><b>To consider matters pertaining to highways, speeding and road safety in the Parish:</b></p>	

	<p>Chair asked Cllr. Hayward whether he could make himself available for the meeting with Highways scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> September.</p> <p><b>Clerk to provide Cllr. Hayward with relevant information</b></p>	<b>Clerk</b>
22/046	<b>Planning Matters:</b>	
	<p><b>a) To consider planning applications received prior to publication:</b>  22/1762/FUL – 13 School Lane, Newton Poppleford  Cllrs. expressed frustration that architects are either not taking any notice of the contents of the Neighbourhood Plan or are deliberately ignoring it. Cllr. Carpenter noted that Councillors must continue to defend the Neighbourhood Plan and be seen to be doing so.  <b>Chair proposed that Council object to this application for a single storey flat-roofed extension as it conflicts with Neighbourhood Plan policy HQD1(k) and the flat roof is unacceptable as per the Housing Style Consultation. Seconded by Cllr. Morgan and carried by 5 votes to 1.</b>  <b>Clerk to note and upload decision to planning portal</b></p>	<b>Clerk</b>
	<p><b>b) To consider planning applications received after agenda publication (subject to circulation prior to the Ordinary meeting on separate agenda)</b>  None received</p>	
	<p><b>c) Planning determinations/decisions advised</b>  None received</p>	
	<p><b>d) Planning correspondence received</b>  i) Notification of Strategic Planning Committee meeting 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022  Noted that this meeting will be available to view live on the EDDC youtube channel. Cllr. Hayward stated that the Parish Council could apply to Democratic Services for an opportunity to speak at this meeting to reinforce the policies contained in the Neighbourhood Plan.  <b>Chair to make an application to speak at the meeting</b></p>	<b>Chair</b>
	<p><b>e) To note and respond to planning consultations received</b>  None received</p>	
	<p><b>f) To consider Council's Neighbourhood Plan 'Monitoring Report'</b>  Report update circulated to members of Council prior to the meeting</p>	
	<p><b>g) To note applications which will be considered at a forthcoming meeting of the EDDC Planning Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> August and to decide whether the Parish Council wishes to make further representation.</b>  Agenda for this meeting contains nothing pertinent to the parish. Chair made Cllr. Hayward aware that the Parish Council will wish to be represented if the Waterleat development comes before the DMC.</p>	
22/047	<b>Financial Matters:</b>	
	<p><b>a) To consider and review Financial Reports for August 2022 as per documents previously circulated to members and published on-line</b>  Chair noted that the Council's financial position is deteriorating with maintenance, utility and event costs higher than anticipated and the</p>	

	<p>vast majority of reserves allocated to specific projects. It is likely that the Precept will have to increase significantly next year.</p> <p>b) To note August payments approved by the Finance Committee as per documents circulated to members and published on-line.  <b>Cllr. Walker proposed that invoices totalling a sum of £8924.10 be approved for payment. Seconded by Cllr. Lipczynski and resolved unanimously.</b>  <b>Clerk to note and action payments</b></p> <p>c) Questions to RFO from members of Council relating to the financial reports.  None raised</p>	Clerk
22/048	<b>BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED:</b>	
A	<b>To consider matters pertaining to EDDC representation</b> Dealt with as part of the Public Forum	
B	<p><b>To consider matters pertaining to the Public WC in Newton Poppleford</b></p> <p>The Public Consultation scheduled for 30<sup>th</sup> September in the Village Hall will be publicised in the parish magazine, on the website and Facebook page. It was agreed that the meeting should take the form of an ‘open house’ with residents free to come and go throughout the evening. Information, options for the future and the potential impact on the precept will be presented visually and Councillors will be on hand to answer questions.</p> <p>Chair stated that the facilities are clearly being utilised as evidenced by the water usage. He had also spoken to users who were very grateful that the facility was there. Cllr. Dalton pointed out that evidence would indicate that most users are not residents and therefore not rate payers in the parish. Any increase in the precept could therefore be contentious. Cllr. Morgan suggested that charging to use the facility would help towards its upkeep but it was pointed out that it is expensive to retro-fit payment facilities. Cllr. Hayward reported that EDDC is in the process of divesting itself of many of its public toilets as it cannot afford to maintain the quantity of facilities it currently owns. Those that EDDC wishes to keep will be replaced with new, prefabricated facilities which are easier to maintain and keep clean; of the remainder, some will be offered to Parish Councils and others will be offered to commercial enterprises on the basis that the building can be utilised for another purpose provided a WC facility is maintained. A successful example of this is the Hideaway Café in Seaton which was leased to a local entrepreneur for a peppercorn rent and is a thriving business with WC attached.</p> <p>Cllr. Hayward suggested that, as EDDC goes through this process, it may be receptive to a request from the Council to transfer the freehold of the building to the parish. The facility would then become a parish asset and could be developed and potentially leased out to provide an income.  <b>Clerk to extend cleaning contractor contract to the end of October</b></p>	Clerk
C	<p><b>To receive an update on Venn Ottery stream clearance and footbridge installation</b></p> <p>Contractors have confirmed that flailing of the stream will be carried out during the first week of September. As agreed, VOSRA to be given notice of the date in order to organise a working party to remove vegetation from the</p>	

	<p>stream ready for disposal. Chair confirmed that volunteers would be covered under the Council's public liability insurance.</p> <p><b>Chair to organise contractor to remove vegetation from site.</b></p> <p>The new footbridge has been delivered to site.</p> <p><b>Cllr. Hughes to obtain a quotation for the construction of concrete support piers.</b></p>	<p><b>Chair</b></p> <p><b>HH</b></p>
	<p><b>D To receive an update on the MUGA project</b></p> <p>Chair expressed frustration that this project was being held up by EDDC. Despite frequent chasing, the CIL officer has still not confirmed that the project has EDDC approval. After such a delay it is likely that the preferred contractor will have to increase prices which may push the project costs above the available funding.</p> <p>Cllr. Hayward offered to take this matter up with the Head of Planning.</p> <p><b>Clerk to provide Cllr. Hayward with relevant information</b></p>	<p><b>Clerk</b></p>
22/049	<p><b>Date of next Ordinary Meeting</b></p> <p>Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at The Pavilion, Back Lane, Newton Poppleford</p> <p>As there is no September meeting there was a brief discussion about whether the Council would hold an annual fireworks event this year. Chair reported that he had been in touch with the contractor who had confirmed that the cost of fireworks had increased which would result in a slightly shorter display for a similar budget to last year. Use of low volume fireworks would be financially prohibitive as they are 40% more expensive. Funds are available in the Community Events reserve to meet the costs.</p> <p><b>Chair agreed to approach the PTA to ask for their assistance and then organise a meeting of the Fireworks Committee.</b></p>	<p><b>Chair</b></p>
22/050	<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>	
22/051	<p><b>Matters to be considered in committee session:</b></p> <p>a) Matters pertaining to the Surgery Building, Robert Way, Newton Poppleford</p> <p>Councillors considered three quotations for hedge cutting and approved expenditure of £120 on the basis that the contractor could carry out the work in early September and would remove all cuttings from site.</p> <p><b>Clerk to contact contractor</b></p> <p>Councillors approved costs of £200 plus VAT for legal advice already received. <b>Cllr. Walker proposed that a further £400 + VAT be expended for additional advice pertaining to the restrictive covenant on the building as suggested in a letter received from legal advisors. Seconded by Cllr. Morgan and resolved unanimously.</b></p> <p><b>Clerk to liaise with legal advisors accordingly</b></p> <p>Chair noted that an unsolicited enquiry about renting the property had been received from a local therapist.</p> <p>b) Matters pertaining to the Allotment Gardens</p> <p>As agreed at the July meeting Notice to Quit had been served on a tenant requiring him to vacate the allotment garden by 25<sup>th</sup> August.</p>	<p><b>Clerk</b></p> <p><b>Clerk</b></p>

	<p>The plot holder now appeared to be cultivating and building new structures on the site. It was agreed that, despite this renewed activity, the decision to rescind the tenancy should be upheld.</p>	
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**Chair to contact the plotholder**

**Chair**

With no further business to consider, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

DRAFT