

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 7.30pm on Monday, 24th April 2023.

Present: Cllrs. Burhop (Chair), Carpenter (Vice Chair), Dalton, Hughes, Lipczynski, Morgan, Tillotson, Tribble and Walker
Jacqui Baldwin (Clerk and RFO)
Ted Swan, Honorary Footpath Warden
8 members of the public

Public Forum

Questions and representations from residents/parishioners

Issues raised:

- a) Webbers Meadow footbridge – Chair stated that the appointed contractor had recently advised that he was unwilling to carry out the remedial work as promised. The parish maintenance contractor has carried out some temporary repairs but any further work will have to wait until a period of settled dry weather.
- b) Bonfire remains – Cllr. Tillotson confirmed that the bonfire debris will be taken to the allotments for disposal.
- c) MUGA spoil – Chair advised that the parish would have to remove the lumps of concrete that had been found in the MUGA topsoil. Cllr. Tillotson offered to organise a working party within the next two weeks to transport the concrete by trailer to the skip at the allotments with free refreshments offered as an inducement. Mr. Swan volunteered to take the lead and dig out the concrete.
- d) Venn Ottery noticeboard – with the noticeboard undergoing refurbishment, as a courtesy to Venn Ottery residents, Cllr. Hughes offered to erect a temporary noticeboard for display of statutory notices etc. Cllr. Hughes advised that the noticeboard had been removed because it was in a dangerous condition with both supports having rotted. However, it was noted that the refurbishment had taken longer than anticipated. Clerk to contact the joinery for an update.

There being no further representations Chair closed the Public Forum at 7.40pm.

		Action
22/166	To consider apologies for absence and approve if accepted (LGA 1972 S.85(1)) Apologies received from Cllrs. Bilenkyj and Chapman were acknowledged and accepted.	
22/167	Declarations of interest from members / Dispensations afforded (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. Hughes was afforded a dispensation to discuss and vote upon matters pertaining to trees at the Ordinary Meeting held 18/05/2020. This dispensation applies until May 2023 (unless rescinded prior to that date) and is afforded in respect of his personal and disclosable pecuniary interest as owner of Bowhayes Trees Limited, Bowhayes Farm, Venn Ottery.	

	<p>Cllr. Tillotson 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.</p>	
22/168	<p>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: None so considered.</p>	
22/169	<p>To consider and, if thought fit, approve the Minutes of the Council's Ordinary Meeting held on 27th March 2023 as previously circulated to members. It was proposed by Cllr. Lipczynski that the Minutes be approved as a true reflection of the business of the meeting. Seconded by Cllr. Walker and resolved unanimously. To consider any Matters Arising from those Minutes: Clerk confirmed that a representative of Airband will make a presentation to the June meeting.</p>	
22/170	<p>To consider and review the Minutes of the Council's Finance Committee meeting held on 18th April 2023 as previously circulated to members: Contents noted. To consider any matters arising from those Minutes not dealt with elsewhere on this Agenda: Clerk confirmed that a skip had been ordered and would be delivered to the allotment gardens on Wednesday, 26th April.</p>	
22/171	<p>Correspondence received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Email from Harpford Fly Fishing Syndicate Chair suggested that contents of this email relating to fishing rights on the Otter at Webbers Meadow be investigated and a meeting arranged with the sender. b) Email from Sidmouth Netball Club Chair was pleased to note that the MUGA is now being used for netball with positive feedback received from Sidmouth Netball Club. Sidmouth Junior Vikings organisers have also indicated that they wish to use the MUGA on a regular basis and may be able to assist with fundraising for floodlights. c) Email from a resident re Burrow bench Chair thanked the resident who donated funds to enable Council to purchase the new bench and also thanked the parish maintenance contractor who had installed the bench and planters at no cost to the parish. This email was one of a number of appreciative comments received since the bench was installed. d) Email from resident re Quiet Lanes Resident had expressed concern about speeding on Hunger Hill and suggested that Council should consider applying for 'Quiet Lane' status for this route. Chair said that, sadly, this is not the only lane in the parish where speeding and poor driver behaviour is a problem and it may be that a number of routes could qualify for Quiet Lane status. It was agreed that Council needed to further understand the concept of Quiet Lanes. Matter to be placed on the agenda for a future meeting. Clerk to note accordingly. 	

Clerk

22/172	Chair's announcements: None made.	
22/173	Planning Matters:	
	a) To consider planning applications received prior to publication: None received	
	b) To consider planning applications received after agenda publication: None received	
	c) Planning determinations/decisions advised: 22/2793/FUL – Woodlands, Higher Way, Harpford – APPROVED 23/0565/FUL – 2 Brook Meadow, NP - APPROVED	
	d) Planning correspondence received: None received	
	e) To note and respond to planning consultations received: None received	
	f) To consider Council's Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring Report: Update circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting and contents noted. Chair advised that application 23/0063/FUL had been discussed at EDDC's planning sub-committee. Applicant had agreed to revise materials to be used to comply with Neighbourhood Plan policies and this application would therefore receive approval. Chair to chase planning department for a decision on 22/2243/FUL.	Chair
22/174	Financial Matters:	
	a) To consider and review Financial Reports for April as per documents previously circulated to members and published on-line: Noted.	
	b) To note April payments approved by the Finance Committee as per documents circulated to members and published on-line: Cllr. Walker proposed that invoices in the sum of £6879.50 be approved for payment. Seconded by Cllr. Dalton and resolved unanimously. Clerk to note and action. Chair explained that the payment to the Public Works Loan Board related to a long-term fixed rate loan that was taken out to fund the purchase of Webbers Meadow.	Clerk
	c) To consider and review Financial Year 2022/23 Reports as previously circulated to members and published on-line: Chair noted that there had been a significant overspend for the financial year as a result of necessary expenditure that was not foreseen when the budget was approved in December 2021.	
	d) To deal with matters pertaining to the End of Year Audit and Governance Return:	
	i) To review and approve the Fixed Asset Register as at 31 st March 2023 as recommended by the Finance Committee: Chair noted a significant increase to the value of fixed assets due to the installation of the MUGA. Cllr. Carpenter proposed that the revised Fixed Assets Register be approved. Seconded by Cllr. Walker and resolved unanimously.	
	ii) To review and approve Internal Financial Controls as recommended by the Finance Committee:	

		<p>Chair advised that there had been no changes to this document apart from a revision of dates. Cllr. Tribble proposed that this document be approved. Seconded by Cllr. Lipczynski and resolved unanimously.</p> <p>iii) To ratify the appointment of an Internal Auditor as recommended by the Finance Committee. Cllr. Dalton proposed that Christopher Noake be appointed internal auditor for the 2022/23 financial year. Seconded by Cllr. Morgan and resolved unanimously.</p> <p>e) To note Reserve Funds and virements for the Financial Year 2023/24: Chair advised that the Finance Committee had reviewed earmarked reserves for the coming financial year and had made some adjustments – moving reserves between funds but not increasing the overall reserves. Cllr. Tillotson proposed that Council approve total earmarked reserves of £47,292 for the forthcoming financial year. Seconded by Cllr. Lipczynski and resolved unanimously.</p> <p>f) Questions to RFO from members of Council relating to these financial reports: None raised.</p>	
22/175		BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED:	
	A	<p>To consider arrangements for possible co-options resulting from the recent Declaration of Uncontested Elections in the Parish: Chair announced that 9 nominations had been received for the 11 places on the Council. There are therefore two vacancies into which eligible candidates may be co-opted. Clerk confirmed that a notice advertising those places would appear in the May PCC magazine. Further notices will be posted after the 4th May election date to avoid confusion. Co-options must take place within 35 days of the date of the election. Chair advised that co-opting into the vacant places should be the first action of the new Council.</p>	
	B	<p>To note the contents of the Annual RoSPA Play Safety Inspection Report: Chair noted that this is a much more positive report than that received in 2022 and the recommended repairs do not appear to be major. Clerk to obtain quotations for submission to the next Finance Committee meeting.</p>	Clerk
	C	<p>To receive an update on the installation of the Venn Ottery Village Green footbridge. Chair advised that the contractor had sited one of the concrete plinths incorrectly and had been asked to re-visit and correct the work. In the meantime, the bridge will be painted with wood preservative when the weather improves.</p>	
	D	<p>To consider matters pertaining to the Multi-Use Games Area: Chair confirmed that an additional CCTV camera had now been ordered to cover the MUGA area. CCTV installation should deter any further acts of vandalism such as the one experienced recently. Clerk requested that Council give consideration to appointing someone to be responsible for sweeping the MUGA on a regular basis. Cllr. Tribble suggested that the grounds maintenance contractors be asked to quote to add this to their contract.</p>	

		Cllr. Hughes, Cllr. Tribble and the clerk to meet to finalise the set-up of the MUGA booking system.	HH/SPT/ Clerk
	F	<p>To consider the introduction of a policy relating to the use of Parish Council emails:</p> <p>Chair recommended that Council approve the introduction of an Email policy, as drafted by the Clerk and circulated prior to the meeting, to ensure compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, Data Protection Act and GDPR regulations. Adherence to the policy will protect both Councillors and the Council.</p> <p>Cllr. Hughes proposed that the policy be approved as drafted. Seconded by Cllr. Lipczynski and carried with 7 votes in favour and 2 abstentions.</p> <p>Clerk to note and deal with the necessary administration.</p> <p>Policy & Personnel to review the policy at its June meeting.</p>	Clerk PPC
22/176		<p>To consider matters viewed as urgent by presiding Chair for discussion only:</p> <p>Statement from the Chair:</p> <p>Cllr. Burhop announced that he would not be standing for election to the Parish Council at the forthcoming election as he considered that it was inappropriate to be both Chair of the Parish Council and Ward Councillor. He noted he had joined the Council during a period of transition which had seen several Councillors stand down and new Councillors elected. Over the past 4 years Council had done excellent work due to the commitment of those around the table and it had been a pleasure and an honour to be Chair. Cllr. Burhop thanked everyone for their support and wished the Council well for the coming year.</p>	
22/177		<p>Date of next Ordinary Meeting</p> <p>Monday, 22nd May 2023 at The Pavilion, Back Lane, Newton Poppleford immediately following the Annual Meeting of Council.</p>	
22/178		<p>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.</p> <p>Proposal not made as there was no confidential business to discuss.</p>	

With no further business to consider, Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.30pm.