

Newnham Parish Council & Burial Authority

Minutes of a Parish Council meeting held on Monday 27th September 2021 at 7.00 p.m. in the Armoury Hall, Dean Road.

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Present: Chair. Cllr N Hughes Cllrs F Bihlmeier, C Kenny, L. Love, G Moir S. O'Leary & S. Tempest. Plus, the Clerk, County Cllr R Hoyland & District Cllr N Packer. 2 members of the public were present.

1. **To allow public consultation.**

Road names new development – A suggestion was made that if any further phases of development at Unlawater take place the name of Bob Stephens, (who gave long and committed service to the village) is considered when naming roads.

2. **To Receive Apologies for Absence**

District Cllrs R Boyles & Cllrs, J Larkham & M Penny

3. **To Receive Declarations of Interest**

None

4. **Approval of Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on the 23rd August 2021**

Minutes of the meeting were duly approved

5. **To receive a report from the clerk on outstanding actions for items not on the current agenda.**

Adoption of the Green – The solicitor has committed to helping the council achieve ownership status for the Green at minimal cost. Process may take some time to complete.

Fencing Play Park – Greenfields's quote received and circulated further quote awaited.

Fence at Changing rooms – quote awaited.

Unlawater Bus Stop – An approach has been made by a representative of Highways regarding adoption if a financial payment is made to council to cover maintenance costs. Any offer would generate further consideration at the October meeting.

6. **To question District & County Councillors on the content of their reports to council, pre issued to all Councillors.**

County Cllr Hoyland advised that significant **resurfacing road works on the A48** were ending. The volume of works conducted this year has increased in part because of the Gigaclear broadband installation program being rolled out across the district, which will continue for some time.

District Cllr Packer – Expressed concern that the **consultation on strategic planning for the district** had been closed too early and planned to request an extension to consultation time. Cllr Bihlmeier advised that the consultation appeared still to be open following discussion within the cross-parish communications group.

7. **To consider the current progress in the Victoria Hotel legal action by Glos CC against the current owner.**

Cllr Hoyland advised that no update was available. It was agreed that this item should be removed from the agenda and any update included in Cllr Hoyland's monthly report.

8. **To receive the Clerk's report**

all matters by agenda item.

Financial

9. **Financial Statement**

The monthly financial statement for August was received and noted

The monthly financial statement for September was received and approved.

Monthly payments for August were received and noted.

Monthly payments for September were received and approved.

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10. To receive the income & expense report YTD

Cllr Bihlmeier advised that the report along with general financial checks were reviewed by the finance committee at the September meeting and found to be in good order.

11. To receive the performance tracker 5 + 7

The Clerk advised that spend V plan was in good order. Additional projects had been added but an increase in income indicates year end reserves will remain similar to April 21.

12. To consider the 2022/23 budget and approvals process

The Clerk presented a draft budget that showed income and expense outlooks to be of a similar value. Opportunities to include projects (Such as the soft play surface improvements) could be considered at the October meeting as reserve levels are strong enough to allow additional spend. Ideally a final budget would be agreed at the November meeting.

13. To approve the insurance renewal with Came & Co (year 2 of 3-year contract & including the addition of the changing rooms)

It was **resolved** to approve the contract.

Procedural

14. To receive an update from the Clerk on the external Audit (PKF Littlejohn)

The Clerk confirmed the external auditor had approved the annual return. Conclusion of audit notices have also been posted.

15. To receive an update from the Clerk re the risk assessments required for, Burial ground, Tree maintenance and Open spaces as required by insurance provider.

Burial ground next assessment, on hold until changing room assessment is complete.

16. To consider adoption of a bench procurement process developed by the Clerk

The proposed process was not supplied to all councillors, the clerk committed to re circulating and plan an adoption review in October.

Community

17. To consider a requote from SDG for works to replace wooden culvert covers with permanent piping and aggregate and suspend financial regulation 11 h requiring multiple quotes on H & S grounds.

The Clerk advised that a request had been sent to both contractors who had previously quoted for a refresh (initial quote 18mths ago). .

After discussion it was **resolved** to suspend Fin Reg 11h and award the contract to SDG at a quotes price of £3570.75 on the following grounds:

- Only SDG responded to refresh request
- Culvert covers are in a poor state of repair and require urgent replacement on H & S grounds
- SDG supplied a comprehensive methods statement in area of high sensitivity due to riverbank protection status
- Works need to be completed before winter sets in

18. To consider the draft 3-year grass tender contact and agree the tender process.

After discussion it was **resolved** to approve the changes proposed. Cllr Penny to attach map references to the contract ready for tender requests.

19. To receive an update from Cllrs Hughes, Moir & Tempest re Telephone box group meeting.

Progress has been slow due to a lack of volunteers. Completion expected by the end of November

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20. **To receive a quote from Abbey trees to remove the overhanging branches behind the changing rooms.**
After discussion it was resolved to approve quotation for £385 to cut back the trees. The Clerk was requested to notify the Masons of the planned works as the trees sit on their land.
21. **To Consider further the council's legal right of way across land owned by the Masonic Hall.**
(to be taken in committee at the end of normal business)
No further progress has been made since the previous meeting.
22. **To Consider Planning applications received**
- **P1446/21/FUL Claremont, High Street** – Loft conversion & dormer window installation **Resolved** “No objection”
 - **P1386/21/FUL 1 Artillery Place, High Street** - Erection of replacement porch **Resolved** “No objection”
 - **P1603/21/TCA Mansion House.** – Crown reduction to trees **Resolved** “No objection”
 - **P1528/21/LBC Severnside Press High Street** – internal and external alterations and repairs **Resolved** “No objection”
 - **P1317/21/FUL (P1733/18/FUL) Unlawater Lane development** – relocation of SUDS pond **Resolved** “No objection”
23. **Changing room**
- **To receive an update from Cllr Hughes & the Clerk regarding current upgrade activity**
All exterior works are now complete, and invoices cleared
 - **To consider further works to the inside of the building**
After discussion it was agreed to request a quotation form P S Jaynes for internal repairs and repainting
 - **To consider risk assessment & security requirements.**
The Clerk & Cllr Hughes committed to producing a risk assessment and security policy. Security is a concern to the insurance company due to low occupation levels and a variety of users.
 - **To consider potential charges for use and management for all parish users.**
To be considered at a future meeting.
24. **To consider the potential renovation of the water trough using a modern water recycling installation & provide a water point in the centre of the village for the WI.**
After discussion it was agreed that Cllr Kenny would pursue this investigation.
25. **To consider receive an update from the Clerk on soft surfacing the barked areas in the Play Park and grant opportunities including the County Cllr grant & GPFA processes.**
The Clerk advised that draft applications have been generated for County council and the Monmouthshire Building Society. A further proposal for Glos playing Field Assoc is WIP. Success of these applications will generate support of approx. £5K. Further applications to other organisations will be made. Parish reserves can also provide some support, and any shortfall may be viable through a PWLB loan. Current expenditure on bark could be transferred to loan repayments having a nil net effect on annual spend.
26. **To receive an update from Cllrs Bihlmeier & Hughes re the Riverside pathway and discussions with Freeman Homes.**
Given little progress having been made on this proposal it was agreed to remove it from the agenda

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27. **To receive and update on successful funding of the sculpture project at the Play Park.**
The community group confirmed that with funding available an independent design brief will be issued for artists to submit proposals. It was also confirmed that the artist would be expected to engage with the school during the project. It was agreed that council would have final design approval and that order placement would be made via the council.
28. **To receive an update from the group investigating registration (via Cllr Love) of the riverside pathway prior to cut off on 2026.**
Cllr Love advised that evidence was being sought to support registration. Concerns were raised about property owners' views on land ownership (that may differ from those of the group investigating registration) and the lack of consultation with them by the group. It was re-affirmed although the PC support the 2026 County PROW registration initiative it is not a PC project
29. **To consider further vandalism (Graffiti) at the Skate Park and Station Road.**
The Clerk confirmed the issue has been reported to the police and no further vandalism has taken place.
30. **To receive an update from Cllr Penny on options for CCTV equipment at the Play Park.**
Due to the absence of Cllr Penny no report was available.
31. **To consider recent correspondence from the owner of the Chains (Mr Kerr) and agree next steps.**
Due to the significant cost of maintaining the Chains and a need for regular pollarding of the trees, it was agreed that council needed full maintenance responsibility before any public money could be spent. The Clerk was requested to write to the owner with a proposal agreed at the meeting and reconfirming that council have no obligation to maintain the area on the owner's behalf irrespective of previous practice, unless ownership was transferred to council which council recognises the owner does not support.
32. **To receive an update from Cllr Penny re the creation of additional parking in the Village (Beeches & Playing Field) and land ownership at the Beeches**
Due to the absence of Cllr Penny no report was available.
33. **To consider quotations to re line the tennis courts in the MUGA**
No further quotations have been presented to council
34. **To receive an update on the removal of the dead tree on the Green**
The Clerk advised that discussions with the contractor had not identified a start date due to the availability of a working platform. The contractor is fully aware of the urgency, with winter approaching. The Clerk updates the nearby property owner on a regular basis.
35. **To receive an update from a parishioner to add an additional memorial bench in the playing Field near the football pitch.**
The Clerk advised that discussions with the parishioner after the meeting approving the purchase resulted in agreement to use one of the benches manufactured using recycled materials. However, no further discussions have taken place and the Clerk committed to making contact prior to the October meeting.
36. **To receive an update from Cllr Bihlmeier re the cross-parish communications group and to consider adoption of their core principles.**
Cllr Bihlmeier advised that the meeting he attended appeared to be well organised and was optimistic that the group would be effective and deliver real benefits. After discussion it was **resolved** to adopt the core principles of the project group.

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37. **To receive an update from Environmental Agency and Freeman Homes actions relating to brook contamination (Hawkins Lane).**

The Clerk advised that he had contacted the EA for an update but had received no response to date. He committed to contacting them again prior to the October meeting.

38. **To Consider complaints of noise disturbance and nuisance (early mornings) from a riverbank resident at the start of the duck shooting season .**

Reports have been made to council regarding noise disturbance at the riverbank early in the morning. After discussions with local police, it appears to be related to bird scaring at the start of the duck shooting season. Fortunately, there appears to have been no repetition of the action

Other Matters

39. **Matters for the Next Agenda**

Heavy Plant equipment parked in Hyde Lane – Clerk to contact community police

40. **To Confirm date & time of next meeting**

- Parish Council Monday 18th October 2021

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.55 pm

Signed.....

Date.....