

Newnham Parish Council & Burial Authority

Minutes of a Parish Council meeting held on Monday 29th November 2021 at 7.00 p.m. in the Armoury Hall, Dean Road, Newnham.

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Present: Chair. Cllr G. Moir, Cllrs F. Bihlmeier, C. Kenny, J. Larkham, L. Love, M. Penny & S. Tempest. County Cllr R. Hoyland, District Cllrs R. Boyles & N. Packer Plus, the Clerk and 4 members of the public were present.

1. **To allow public consultation.**

No comments were made at this stage

2. **To Receive Apologies for Absence**

Cllr S. O'Leary

3. **To Receive Declarations of Interest**

None

4. **To elect a new Chair for the remainder of the management year, following the resignation of Cllr Hughes.**

Cllr G Moir proposed by Cllr Bihlmeier, seconded Cllr Kenny. There being no further nominations, Cllr Moir was elected unopposed.

Cllr Moir thanked council for the nomination and expressed regret that Cllr Hughes had resigned. He had been an active member and chair and he would be greatly missed. The Clerk was requested to write to him thanking him for his service.

Due to the appointment to Chair of Cllr Moir, a vacancy for Vice Chair existed. Cllr Bihlmeier was proposed by Cllr Moir and seconded by Cllr Kenny. There being no further nominations, Cllr Bihlmeier was elected unopposed.

5. **To receive an update from the Clerk regarding the casual vacancy created by Cllr Hughes resignation.**

The Clerk advised that the Returning Officer had been notified and a notice publicising the vacancy have been posted on the website and notice board. If the position is to be filled by co-option it will form part of the January 22 agenda.

6. **Approval of Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on the 18th October 2021**

Minutes of the meeting were duly approved.

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

Risk assessments general – On hold due to other activities

Tennis court lining – Planned for November, yet to be completed.

Removal of dead tree at the Green – Work complete and invoice in payment file. To enable equipment access a concrete bollard was damaged and its replacement is now an agenda item.

Memorial misallocation complaint – Council investigations reported back to complainant, who has reconfirmed dissatisfaction at councils' action at time of memorial siting, although memorial siting is the responsibility of the family. No further action can be taken by council.

Bus shelter adoption – Adoption confirmed and install now WIP or complete. Supporting funds of £5K will be deposited by the 8th December on completion of Bus Shelter install.

Weed growth Clock Tower – Growth removed and invoice in monthly payments

Lime Trees at the Chains – No further information received from Mr Kerr.

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.

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Culverts at the Cliff – Modified work schedule resulted in much improved pathway at the Cliff which has been well received by many parishioners.

Trees at changing rooms. - Work outstanding.

Pollarding Limes Lower High Street – Order placed Contractor to complete by end of year.

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

Several questions were asked regarding **environmental targets** regarding road and housing development construction. Cllrs Boyles & Packer advised this had been a subject of great debate recently, and that there is a balance between heightened environmental requirements such as heat pumps and solar panels, and the affordability of housing in our area that attracts lower house values than some areas such as the Cotswolds. **The 20 is plenty campaign** was discussed and as it can be targeted to specific roads, council expressed an interest in further information.

9. **To receive the Clerk's report**
all matters on Agenda.

Financial

10. **Financial Statement**

The monthly financial statement for November was received and duly approved.

Monthly payments for November were received and duly approved.

11. **To consider further the 2022/23 budget and potential additional projects**

The Clerk presented a revised budget including amendments for the following projects:

Annual reserve for Cliff pathway works on a triannual bases - £1k added

Garden of Rest Desk Vase tablet area improvements - £1k added

Soft play surfaces contribution – see agenda item 19

MUGA Lighting – Held over for further consideration in January

It was further agreed to set aside an additional £2k from available reserves to increase the sum allocated to the new burial ground procurement and that additional reserve should be added year on year as the purchase of additional ground is becoming more urgent.

Outlooked spend for the financial year 2022/23 is £64.5k with an income of £53k although the deficit appears large the project expense is the Soft Play surface a one off project.

Reserves will remain within local authority guidelines

It was further agreed not to include pollarding of the Limes in the Chains as no agreement has been reached with the owner.

Cllr Larkham pointed out that every budget contains a training allowance not taken up by all new Cllrs. Good Cllr training should be undertaken by all Cllrs on appointment. The Clerk committed to advising Cllrs Penny & Tempest of future dates.

To consider the precept requirement for 2022/23

A decision on the precept will be made at the January meeting when the result of the grass tender is known and the final budget agreed.

Community

12. **To receive an update on the 3-year grass tender contract.**

The Clerk confirmed that the tender was on Contract Finder and advertised locally on Facebook. Cllr Tempest suggested that a refresh of the advert was placed on Facebook as the closing date is approaching (10/12) which was agreed.

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13. **To receive an update from Cllrs Hughes, Moir & Tempest re Telephone box group meeting.**
Cllr Moir advised that the group are looking for volunteers to continue with the stripping of old paint from the box with public support being less than hoped. New volunteers are always welcome. Regarding paint there may be some available from West Dean PC free of charge
14. **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 communication has been received on this subject.
15. **To Consider Planning applications received**
P1798/21/FUL & P1799/21/FUL Victoria House High Street. Erection of garden shed (retrospective) Council **resolved** to support this application as it was felt that the Conservation Officer's requirements were excessive in the circumstances and inaccurate in relation to the use of Lime mortar. It was further agreed to request District Cllr Packer to call this application into committee for a decision
P1869/21/TCA Ferry Bank House, Brightlands. Reduction in height and crown raising of various trees - **resolved** no objection to this application.
16. **Changing room activities**
To consider further works to the inside of the building – Quote awaited from S Jaynes
To consider risk assessment & security requirements. – held over to January meeting
To consider potential charges & bonds for use and management for all parish users.
Held over to next meeting
17. **To receive an update from Cllr Kenny re 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.**
Cllr Kenny advised a site meeting has been arranged for next week with a contractor interested in the project
18. **To 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 confirmed the Monmouthshire building society grant of £1k would be decided on the 6th December, the outlook after speaking to the organisation was good. The Glos Playing Fields application (£2k) also looked promising, and he committed to chasing a commitment prior to the budget being set in January. The Glos County Cllr grant of £2K has already been approved. The budget includes a £15K allowance comprised of the three grants (£5k) plus a £10K reduction in reserves. Any other requirements could be funded from a PWLB loan, which would have a "0" effect on expenditure as it would be funded from the budget allocation currently for replacement bark. If the project can be completed there will be environmental benefits, safer surfaces and improved visual appearance at the park.
19. **To receive an update from the group investigating registration (via Cllr Love) of the riverside pathway prior to cut off in 2026.**
Cllr Love advised that progress was still being made and that property owners on the Riverbank are fully aware of the PROW activity, although they have no ownership of the path.
20. **To receive an update from Cllr Penny on options for CCTV equipment at the Play Park.**
It was agreed at the October meeting, CCTV was only viable if lighting of the MUGA was funded. No further action can be taken at this time.

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21. **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.**
Cllr Penny confirmed that the land considered for development of additional spaces is owned by the PC, after discussions with Glos County Council. It was agreed that a working party of Cllrs Moir, Penny & Tempest would develop a strategy for funding and space allocations ready for consideration by full council.
22. **To receive an update from the Clerk re a parishioner's request to add an additional memorial bench in the playing Field near the football pitch.**
The Clerk confirmed the bench procurement process had been supplied for consideration along with bench design and costings. Cllr Moir pointed out that the Bench procurement process was yet to be added to the website. Clerk committed to doing so prior to the next meeting.
23. **To consider a parishioner's request to add an additional memorial bench at the Cliff.**
The Clerk confirmed the bench procurement process had been supplied for consideration along with bench design and costings.
24. **To receive an update from Cllr Bihlmeier re the cross-parish communications group.**
Cllr Bihlmeier advised that a further meeting would take place on the 30th, with an interesting report expected from Cllr Burford. The Clerk was asked that a meeting invite would be sent to Cllr Tim Gwilliam for a future meeting.
25. **To consider the condition of the Highway outside the garage adjoining the Victoria Hotel Cllr Love expressed concern at the state of the roadway outside of the Victoria Garage.**
Discussions with Highways show it unlikely to be their land. It was agreed the area would be reviewed during the Highway tour planned for the 20th December.
26. **To discuss ownership and maintenance of the footpath through the Churchyard to Bullo**
It was agreed that the pathway is not a PROW but could be proposed for adoption. Further discussions on ownership took place, whereby the Clerk advised that although the majority of the path almost certainly belongs to the Church, the lower portion towards Bullo could belong to the PC as they do own a parcel of land at the bottom end of the Churchyard.
27. **To consider and feedback comments on the Camp Hill Village Woodland management plan**
Cllr Bihlmeier advised that having reviewed it in detail it appeared to be a well prepared and effective plan and proposed that Council support it. It was **resolved** to support the Plan.
28. **To consider the replacement of a bollard removed by the tree surgeon to gain equipment access for the removal of the dead tree.**
After discussion it was agreed to replace the fixed bollard with a removable bollard to increase access availability, also minor damage to the path caused by the felling needs some repair work. The Clerk was requested to obtain a quote from S Jaynes. Concerns were raised that the tree trunk left as is would encourage people with chain saws to remove sections, leading to health & safety issue. The Clerk was requested to instruct the contractor to remove the tree remains ASAP.
29. **To consider charges for exclusive rights reserved in the 1990's but not paid for.**
The Clerk advised that a parishioner had reserved a number of plots in the Churchyard without paying the exclusive rights, as agreed with the then Chair Barbara Allsop. Reservation without payment is and never was an approved practice. After discussion it was agreed that the family should only pay the fees due at the time of reservation as they were not responsible.

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30. **To consider further the contract & design sign off & artist selection for the sculpture project at the Play Park.**

After in depth discussion of the Artists identified and the timing of the detailed design, it was **resolved** to select Michael for the project who will discuss the potential design with primary school and prepare formal designs for council to consider. The selection was subject to proof of all required certifications being in place and Public Liability insurance being valid.

31. **To review the preparation and production of the newsletter and agree the focus for the future and appropriate contributors.**

Significant debate on the subject regarding the initial preparation and final editing of the September Newsletter took place, with a number of Cllrs expressing significantly opposing views. It was finally agreed that content should only relate to parish council inputs and that a recommended word count would be agreed to ease editing activities. It was further agreed that the next Newsletter would be issued in January and that final input would be in Mid-January to allow timely critique and amendment of content if required.

32. **To consider damage at the cliff pathway caused by a horse rider and related Facebook activity.**

After **resolution** by council, standing orders were suspended to allow a horse-riding parishioner to provide information regarding recent activities.

Significant debate took place regarding the accuracy of some of the information circulated on social media and adherence to the PC communications policy regarding Facebook postings. Once again conflicting views were expressed by Cllrs on both subjects and Facebook. It was agreed that the existing Facebook posts should be removed and the Clerk would generate a suitable sign for display along the pathway. During this debate Cllr Tempest advised that with immediate effect she resigned from council and withdrew from further discussions. In the absence of Cllr Tempest who had undertaken the role of Facebook administrator the Clerk was requested to take on the responsibility to ensure Facebook communications are maintained in compliance with the PC communications policy.

33. **To receive an update from Cllr Tempest regarding a complaint related to parking of heavy plant vehicles in Hyde Lane/ Station Road.**

There being no update this item was withdrawn from the meeting

Other Matters

34. **Matters for the Next Agenda**

Info board at the Cliff out of date – add to next agenda

Pound condition Dean Road – Add to next agenda. Clerk to contact Mr Kerr about plans to clear.

Litter Picking and equipment – add to next agenda. Clerk to contact FoDDC re available equipment.

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

- Parish Council Monday 31st January 2022
(No meeting held in December)

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.40 pm

Signed:

Date:.....