

Northlew Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Sue Main
Email: clerk@northlewparishcouncil.org.uk
Mobile: 07956 312047

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in the Victory Hall, Northlew at 7:30 pm on Monday 17th February 2020

Present:

Councillors: Joanna Wilson (JW) - Chair
Celia Rundle (CR) – Vice Chair
Bryan Dufty (BD)
Judy Jones (JJ)
Mark Rundle (MR)
Steve Smith (SSm)
Holly Dancer (HD)
Sue Main (SM) - Clerk

County Councillor: James McInnes (JMcl) - Devon County Council

Borough Councillors: Clare Kemp (CK) – West Devon Borough Council

Apologies: Steve Smith (SSm)
Terry Hatt (TH)
Patrick Kimber (PK) – West Devon Borough Council

Public Question Time

No parishioners attended.

- 1. Apologies for Absence** were received from Steve Smith, Terry Hatt and Patrick Kimber.
- 2. Declarations of Interest** – none.
- 3. Minutes of the meeting held on 20th January 2020** were approved and signed by JW.
- 4. Action Points Arising** – in order of action points in Appendix A:-

SeaMoor Lotto – presentation by JJ deferred until next month.

Mapping Service – CK had followed this up with Charles Dumpleton who was hoping to organise an overview of this service at the next North Link meeting scheduled for 26th March – venue to be confirmed.

Finance – Internal Auditor. JW reported she had met with previous internal auditor who did not wish to continue. **Action:** JW to approach alternative contacts to fill this role in time for the forthcoming audit.

Website and Privacy Statement – see Item 6 below.

Playground – see Item 9 below.

5. Planning Applications

Planning Application Ref: 0145/20/HHO Retrospective application for conversion of garage/workshop at Birchen, Birchen Lane. No objections by the Council.

Planning Application Ref: 0061/20/FUL Change of use from agricultural to equestrian at Woodmans Field, East Kimber Lane. **Action:** Councillors were requested to review the online application and feedback to the Clerk before the end of the month.

Enforcement Case Listing Report sent to Clerks on a monthly basis - **Action:** CK to liaise with Planning Dept to clarify what (if any) action is expected of Council and the reason for confidentiality.

6. Parish Council Website

Monthly figures – SM provided an overview on this month's number of visitors which had reached its highest number since launch. There is still work to be done to encourage the community to use this site more widely.

Member Code of Conduct documentation – this had been ratified and now appears on the website.

Privacy Statement – **Action:** SM had prepared draft wording and will circulate for everyone's comments in time for the next meeting.

New Councillor Vacancy – see Item 8 below.

7. Finance

Payments – SM referred Council to Appendix C tabled showing expense items paid since last meeting and all items were approved for payment.

Bank Mandates – SM provided an update on the current status with regard to changing with bank mandates with Nat West. Nat West has only just informed the clerk that several former councillors still need to be removed from the list of signatories before the requested amendments can be actioned. Now this is known it is being actioned. The Chair and Councillors thanked the clerk for her perseverance with the bank to sort this out since she took over from the previous clerk.

Budget Update – JW presented the budget for 2020/2021 to the Council and summarised the headline figures as follows:- projected expenditure for forthcoming year is £13,770. Based on a total projected income of £11,207 (comprising primarily of precept and income from newsletter advertising) and the wish to maintain a reserve of no less than £7,500, this leaves a potential shortfall of c.£1,300. There was a general discussion on the various costs included in the budget and ways the Council might make some savings or raise more income if we are to maintain a reserve of no less than £7,500. Suggestions for consideration included the possibility of reducing the number of issues of the Northlew News. JW advised that she had made a few enquiries in the Parish about the level of frequency of the Northlew News and the general consensus (of the limited sample of parishioners to date) was that monthly publication should be continued. HD suggested that the publication could be reduced to 10 per year by having July/August edition in the summer and a December/January edition over Christmas and the New Year. Councillors were asked to consider the proposed budget, to reconsider the level of reserve required (is £7,500 too much?), if cost savings could be made and where and whether there are ways to increase our income. **Action:** All Councillors to feedback any adjustments that could be made at the next meeting. The issue of the state of the public lavatories was raised (which are currently in poor repair as the roof is leaking) and it was noted that we are currently spending approximately £2,000 per annum without any maintenance contingency. It was agreed that the

maintenance or refurbishment of the public lavatories is a project that needs to be reviewed, an action plan agreed (which will have to include some fund raising) and implemented. **Action:** All Councillors to review current spending on the public lavatories and present their ideas at the next Parish Council Meeting on how to take this project forward. It was agreed that the budget should be on the agenda for the Parish Assembly (see point 13 below) and that any parishioners who attend be asked for their ideas with respect to future plans for the public lavatories. On a general point, the Councillors were also asked whether they felt reducing the number of meetings held each year should be a consideration. It was unanimously agreed that no change should be made to the current monthly frequency. JW thanked the FWP for their work in getting the budget prepared.

Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations – Action: JW asked that all Councillors review these two documents (downloadable on the website) and provide their comments back to SM before the next meeting.

8. Correspondence

New Councillor Vacancy – see 12. Below.

9. Playground update

TH was not at the meeting. **Action:** JW would get in touch with him for latest update. One quote for replacing the fencing has been obtained by SSm but this will be followed up at the next meeting.

10. **Northlew Stores** – JW reported she had spoken to the outgoing director who had confirmed that the Northlew Stores would close on 21 February. The outgoing director also confirmed to JW that the loan of £500, which the Parish Council had made to Northlew Stores Community Interest Company to support the provision of newspapers to the village, would be repaid during March. After a short period of closure for renovation, the new Directors of the new community interest company, The Square Shop, are planning to open the new shop 'The Square Shop' on 28 February and would be stocking local produce and hoped with a larger team of volunteers to offer extended opening hours and continue the newspaper delivery service. The new shop arrangements would feature in the next Northlew News and on the website.

11. **Public Lavatory** - update on repairs to roof to be deferred until next meeting in light of the budget discussion .

12. Matters brought forward by Chair and Councillors

Parking in the Square – The issue of the types and number of vehicles and for how long they are parked in the square has been raised by several parishioners. There was a general discussion acknowledging the problem but the consensus was that this issue is likely to fall under the jurisdiction of the West Devon Highways rather than the Parish Council. **Action:** JMCI agreed to seek definitive guidance from West Devon Highways for the Parish Council and revert in time for the next meeting.

New Councillor Vacancy - an email enquiry had been received from a parishioner and the Clerk and JW have followed up but there has been no further correspondence from the parishioner. It was agreed that the closing date be extended until 13th March 2020 to give more time for others to come forward. **Action:** All councillors to actively seek candidates for the post.

Village Fun Day on 25 April– this was now being held in a parishioner's field.

PTFA Car Boot Sale Fundraiser 6th June 2020 – JW reported she had been approached by the PTFA for permission to hold a car boot sale on the playing fields in June. The Council saw no issue with holding this event with the caveat that the field was not too wet for cars to drive on it.

Action: JW to advise the PTFA of the council's decision and the clerk to check there were no issues which might affect the DAAT night landing guidelines.

Stagecoach Route Consultation 2020 – HD reported that Stagecoach had asked for feedback on their route consultation survey which could potentially impact on the bus routes (specifically 6/6a in Okehampton whose service may well be curtailed). Everyone was encouraged to give their feedback to this (link appears on the home page of NPC's website). Post the meeting, JMCI had forwarded information on Stagecoach's Stakeholder event at SW Depot in Matford on Tuesday 25 February at 18.00 for an 18.30 start which will provide a full briefing on the thinking behind the 2020 Route Development Plan.

DALC Courses – it was agreed that attendees would report back at the next meeting.

Devon Climate Emergency – CK confirmed a new communication was due out and citizens' juries were being set up to roll out in the summer. **Action:** CK to provide information when available for insertion in the Northlew News.

VE Day celebrations 8 May – BD enquired whether the Council would be doing anything regarding this event. It was confirmed that there are no current plans in the budget for the Parish Council to organise an event to mark this anniversary. The consensus was that if the Victory Hall Committee were planning an event then the Council would support in any way they could.

Highways Issue – CR highlighted a potential environmental issue on the right side of the bridge when exiting the village where due to the heavy rainfall, a tree had eroded the riverbank to the point that tree branches were likely to break away and cause damage to nearby overhead power cables. **Action:** All to review and notify <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/>.

Date of Next Meeting (including Annual Parish Assembly) is on Monday 16 March at 19.30 at Victory Hall. The agenda for the Annual Parish Assembly is under development and will include the chairman's report from the Parish Council for 19/20, the proposed budget for 20/21, the Northlew News, future plans for the public lavatories and any other topics brought forward by councillors and parishioners

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 21.00.

Actions Points arising from the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 17 February 2020

Item	Description	Responsibility
4.	Action Points Arising Internal Auditor Action: JW to approach alternative contacts to fill this role in time for the forthcoming audit.	JW
5.	Planning Applications Planning Application Ref: 0061/20/FUL Change of use from agricultural to equestrian at Woodmans Field, East Kimber Lane. Action: Councillors were requested to review the online application and feedback to the Clerk before the end of the month. Enforcement Case Listing Report sent to Clerks on a monthly basis - Action: CK to liaise with Planning Dept to clarify what (if any) action is expected of Council and the reason for confidentiality.	All CK
6.	Parish Council Website Privacy Statement – Action: SM had prepared draft wording and would circulate for everyone’s comments in time for the next meeting.	All
7.	Finance Budget - Action: All Councillors to feedback any adjustments that could be made to the budget and review current spending on the public lavatories and present their ideas at the next Parish Council Meeting. Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations – Action: JW asked that all Councillors review these two documents (downloadable on the website) and provide their comments back to SM before the next meeting.	All All
9.	Playground General update. Action: JW would get in touch with TH for latest update.	JW/TH
12.	Matters brought forward by Chair and Councillors Parking in the Square – Action: JMcl agreed to seek definitive guidance from West Devon Highways and revert in time for the next meeting. New Councillor Vacancy - Action: All councillors to actively seek candidates for the post. PTFA Car Boot Sale Fundraiser 6th June 2020 –Action: JW to feedback agreement to hold event check there were no issues which might affect the DAAT night landing guidelines. Stagecoach Route Consultation 2020. Action: Everyone was encouraged to give their feedback to this (link appears on the home page of NPC’s website). Devon Climate Emergency –Action: CK to provide further information when available for insertion in the Northlew News. Highways Issue on Bridge. Action: All to review and notify Highways of any potential risk to overhead power cables. https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/ .	JMcl All JW All CK All