

# 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, 24<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Present: Cllrs. Burhop (Chair), Bilenkyj, Carpenter (Vice Chair), Chapman (from 7.15pm), Dalton, Lipczynski, Tribble and Walker  
Ted Swan, Honorary Footpath Warden  
6 members of the public

The Chair welcomed all Councillors and members of the public to the Council's October Ordinary meeting and outlined the fire evacuation procedure prior to opening the Public Forum.

## Public Forum

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

- a) Neighbourhood Policing report  
Clerk read out an email received from the Neighbourhood Policing Team reporting two road traffic offences and the theft of a catalytic convertor from a vehicle in the local area during October. Residents were reminded to be vigilant and ensure properties are secure as there had been a recent spate of burglaries in the Sid valley.
- b) County Councillor report: Cllr. Jessica Bailey  
Report circulated and published on-line prior to the meeting. Cllr. Bailey was welcomed to the meeting at 7.05pm and gave a brief overview of a meeting with Highways Officers which took place on 29<sup>th</sup> September. Cllr. Bailey felt that the installation of two 'wig wags' on the A3052 could be a small step in the right direction, relatively simple to achieve and not terribly expensive at approximately £2,000. Assistance with funding their purchase may be available from Cllr. Bailey's Locality Fund. Cllr. Bailey stated that she would follow up with Mike Brown from DCC with regard to the water leak at Burrow as he had committed to having the matter investigated by SWW. Cllr. Bailey is also pursuing SWW with regard to sewage discharges into the River Otter. Chair thanked Cllr. Bailey for her attendance and hard work on behalf of the Parish.
- c) Report from Ted Swan, Parish Footpath Warden  
Mr Swan expressed concern at the state of Footpath 3 which is collapsing into Back Brook. Repairs carried out two years ago were not satisfactory and large stones are becoming dislodged which may block the stream flow. Chair agreed that this issue would be dealt with as a matter of urgency immediately following the completion of gas main works due to be carried out in that area by Wales & West in early December. Mr Swan advised that repairs to the steps and handrails on Footpaths 16 and 17 had been carried out and the 'new' Footpath 38 strimmed ready for its official opening on 2<sup>nd</sup> November. A recent emergency closure of Footpath 1 was not well signposted by the contractor which caused some complaints from residents. Clerk reported that Western Power had apologised for this but Mr Swan felt this was not really satisfactory as this is a very well-used footpath providing access to the school. Finally, Mr Swan flagged the serious riverbank erosion which had taken place over the past 4 weeks on Footpath 19 (Back Lane to Red Bridge). Clerk to contact Emma Hellier at DCC to make her aware although it was noted that there was very little that could be done.
- d) Report from the Allotment Management Committee  
No report available but Chair thanked Jackie Watson and the members of the management committee for their continuing hard work.
- e) Questions and representations from residents/parishioners  
None

Chair then brought forward agenda item **22/065A** and invited Gill Cameron-Webb from the Climate Change Group to provide an update on tree planting projects in the parish. Mrs Cameron-Webb advised that there were two separate projects ongoing

– one with East Devon AONB and the other with Devon County Council – which, in total, will result in 150 new trees being planted in the parish. The AONB project requires the Parish Council to fund the purchase of trees in advance and then reclaim a percentage of the expenditure through a grant funding process. The CCG had made the decision to limit the number of trees planted under this scheme in year 1 to ensure that volunteers could manage the planting and ongoing maintenance that will be required. Twenty apple trees (local varieties) and two black poplars will be purchased at a total cost of £634 - £514 of which will be refunded. With the approval of the Finance Committee a deposit of 50% has been paid to secure the apple trees required and the formal application for funding has been signed off by the Chair and submitted.

**Cllr. Bilenkyj proposed that the decision taken by the Finance Committee to approve this expenditure be ratified. Seconded by Cllr. Carpenter and resolved unanimously.**

Mrs Cameron-Webb advised that DDC's Emergency Tree Planting Project would see 100 trees being planted around the parish – specifically at the two cemeteries, Burrow Green and the playing fields. DCC have appointed a specialist contractor, Parklife, who will purchase the trees and carry out all planting and maintenance. A meeting with Parklife will take on 26<sup>th</sup> October after which Council will be updated on the project. Chair thanked Mrs. Cameron-Webb and members of the Climate Change Group for their hard work and congratulated them on their achievements to date.

Chair closed the Public Forum at 7.25pm.

#### Action:

22/052 **To consider apologies for absence and approve if accepted** (LGA 1972 S.85(1))  
Apologies for absence received from Cllrs. Hughes, Morgan and Tillotson were accepted and approved.

22/053 **Declarations of interest from members / Dispensations afforded:**  
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.

No other declarations of interest were received.

22/054 **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 22/069**

22/055 **To consider and, if thought fit, approve the Minutes of the Council's Ordinary Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2022 as previously circulated to members.**

**It was proposed by Cllr. Walker that these Minutes be approved as a true record of the meeting. Seconded by Cllr. Dalton and resolved unanimously.**

To consider any Matters Arising from those Minutes:

- a) Webbers meadow footbridge repairs  
Parish Maintenance Contractor to shutter the south side of the bridge in preparation for infilling with concrete.
- b) Stagecoach bus service changes  
The new timetable, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting, was noted. Chair reported that the service was being badly affected by the lack of drivers and was increasingly unreliable.
- c) Water leak – Burrow

	<p>Awaiting feedback from Mike Brown at DCC and South West Water. Chair noted that residents were very grateful for efforts on their behalf by the Council and Cllr. Bailey.</p> <p>d) Venn Ottery stream clearance and footbridge installation Stream clearance is now complete. <b>Chair to arrange contractor to collect vegetation.</b> An update on the footbridge installation will be provided when available.</p>	Chair
22/056	<p><b>To consider and, if thought fit, approve the Minutes of the Council's Extraordinary Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2022 as previously circulated to members.</b></p> <p><b>It was proposed by Cllr. Chapman that these Minutes be approved as a true record of the meeting. Seconded by Cllr. Lipczynski and resolved unanimously.</b></p>	
22/057	<p><b>To review the Minutes of the Council's Finance Committee meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022 as circulated to members and if thought fit:</b></p> <p>a) To ratify the decision to authorise the execution of the Grant Funding Agreement for the MUGA project. Chair advised that this was the formal agreement between Council and EDDC setting out the terms under which EDDC will release the S106 funding for this project. <b>Cllr Walker proposed that the decision to authorise the execution of this Deed be ratified. Seconded by Cllr. Chapman and resolved unanimously.</b></p> <p>b) To confirm the co-option of Cllr. Carpenter to the Finance Committee. <b>Chair proposed that, with his agreement, Cllr. Carpenter be co-opted to the Finance Committee. Seconded by Cllr. Walker and resolved unanimously.</b></p>	
22/058	<p><b>To review the Minutes of the Policy and Personnel Committee meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022 and to note and ratify revisions to Council policies:</b></p> <p>a) Allotment Tenancy Agreement b) Awards, Gifts and Honours Policy c) Complaints Procedure d) Statement of intent as to Community Engagement <b>Cllr. Lipczynski proposed that the above revised policies be adopted by Council. Seconded by Cllr. Chapman and resolved unanimously. Clerk to upload revised policies to the website.</b></p> <p>e) Emergency Plan Noted that is an evolving plan which Cllr. Carpenter is currently revising.</p>	Clerk
22/059	<p><b>Correspondence received:</b></p> <p>a) EDDC notification of recently adopted Community Assets Transfer Procedure To be carried forward to the November ORD meeting for detailed discussion. <b>Clerk to note and action.</b></p>	Clerk
22/060	<p><b>Chair's announcements</b></p> <p>Chair noted that, with the onset of winter, the number of people already in hospital suffering from Covid was worrying and would place huge pressure on the NHS. Cases of Covid in the local community are high.</p>	



22/061

**To consider matters pertaining to highways, speeding and road safety in the Parish:**

a) Highways Meeting – 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Chair referred to the minutes of this meeting which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Many of the requested road safety improvements were deemed by DCC to be too expensive. Others cannot be carried out until the A3052 is re-surfaced. It is hoped that the results of the pedestrian crossing survey will be available for the November HATOC meeting and that additional and/or improved refuge crossings will be approved.

Evidence gained from filming an elderly resident using the puffin crossing indicate that the crossing time of 16 seconds is insufficient and needs to be extended. Chair noted that this experiment proved that residents – particularly the elderly and infirm – were being put at unnecessary risk. It is possible that the death of Mr Ken Cooper was caused by insufficient crossing time.

Council to debate meeting the costs of 'wigwag' signage and the implementation of a 20mph scheme, including the impact of this on the 2023-34 precept, at the November ORD meeting.

Clerk to note accordingly.

Clerk

b) Community Speed Watch update

Report provided and circulated prior to the meeting. Chair noted that the CSW team now comprises 10 people who are carrying out around 10 sessions per month. In the first six months of the scheme 330 letters had been issued to offending drivers. Chair congratulated members of the team for their success in improving road safety in the village and thanked them for their hard work.

22/062

**To consider matters pertaining to footpaths and public rights of way in the Parish:**

a) DCC Definitive Map Review Consultation (response required by 6<sup>th</sup> January 2023)

Clerk to respond to the consultation on behalf of Council supporting proposals for three new designated public rights of way in the parish.

Clerk to note and action.

Clerk

22/063

**Planning Matters:**

a) **To consider planning applications received prior to publication:**

22/1167/RES – Land at King Alfred Way, NP – construction of 2 bungalows. Ratification of Council's determination to support.

Chair commended the applicants for materially amending their plans to take account of the provisions of the Neighbourhood Plan and for agreeing to add wildlife-enhancing features to the design.

Cllr. Lipczynski proposed that Council ratify the consensus decision to support the revised application. Seconded by Cllr. Bilenkyj and resolved unanimously.

22/2243/FUL – Woodentop, Littledown Lane – retrospective application for erection of buildings and Change of Use from Agricultural to Amenity Land.

Chair reported that the applicant was unable to facilitate a site visit within the time frame for submission of responses. The application was being made as the result of intervention by the late Cllr. Ranger

who was concerned about the increasing domestication of the property and a subsequent site visit by EDDC's Enforcement Officer who had advised the owners that retrospective planning permission was required for some of the buildings on site. In addition, the applicants were requesting Change of Use from agricultural to amenity land for part of the site. Cllr. Bilenkyj expressed concern about soil compaction and the loss of wildlife corridors and habitat resulting from the removal of hedges and trees in an environmentally important area of the village and in contravention of the Neighbourhood Plan. After further discussion it was proposed that Councillors should meet at the site at 9.00am on Monday, 31<sup>st</sup> October to debate further before agreeing and submitting a response to this application.

**b) To consider planning applications received after agenda publication (subject to circulation prior to the Ordinary meeting on separate agenda)**

None received

**c) Planning determinations/decisions advised**

22/0642/LBC – Rose Cottage, High Street, NP - approved

**d) Planning correspondence received**

None received

**e) To note and respond to planning consultations received**

**f) To consider Council's Neighbourhood Plan 'Monitoring Report'**

Report update circulated to members of Council prior to the meeting. Chair advised that he and the Clerk had recently attended a webinar consultation on the Emerging Local Plan. East Devon has a minimum target of 18,920 homes to be built by 2040 (946 per annum) but in the current draft plan there is no significant housing development planned in the parish. Chair believes that this is a direct consequence of having a Neighbourhood Plan in place. The EDDC decision to discount all parcels of land put forward by local landowners for potential development proves that the Neighbourhood Plan is doing what the people who voted for it wanted it to do.

**g) To note applications which will be considered at a meeting of the EDDC Planning Committee to be held on 25<sup>th</sup> October and to decide whether the Parish Council wishes to make further representation.**

Chair noted that application 22/1167/RES – Land at King Alfred Way, NP is on the agenda for this meeting and Cllr. Hayward has been tasked with ensuring that the agreed wildlife-enhancing conditions are made binding on the applicants.

In response to a question from Cllr. Walker, Chair stated that the Waterleat development has yet to come up before the Planning Committee.

22/064

**Financial Matters:**

**a) To consider and review Financial Reports to end September 2022 as per documents previously circulated to members and published on-line.**

Chair noted that with the completion of playground repairs and repairs to the cemetery wall currently taking place reserves will be significantly depleted by the end of November. It is likely that a significant increase

to the precept will be required to enable Council to operate effectively next year.

- b) To note October payments approved by the Finance Committee as per documents circulated to members and published on-line.

Noted.

- c) To review 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Budget Monitor.

Noted.

- d) To note timetable for 2023-24 Budget and Precept discussions. Chair confirmed that the Budget will be discussed at the November Finance meeting and a first draft brought before Council on 28<sup>th</sup> November for review. The second draft will be reviewed by Council on 16<sup>th</sup> December with the intention that the final version will be approved before 31<sup>st</sup> December.

- e) Questions to RFO from members of Council relating to the financial reports.

None raised.

22/065

**BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED:**

**A To consider update from the Climate Change Group regarding tree planting projects in the Parish:**

This item was dealt with during the Public Forum.

Cllr. Bilenkyj advised that, due to work commitments, she was unable to continue as chair of the CCG and Gill Cameron-Webb had agreed to take on this role. Chair thanked Cllr. Bilenkyj for her input and commitment which had contributed so much to the success of this group.

**B To note the date of the EDDC Ward Councillor Election:**

Councillors noted that polling will take place on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022 with three candidates seeking election.

**C To consider matters pertaining to the Public WC in Newton Poppleford:**

- a) Outcome of Public Consultation held on 30<sup>th</sup> September

Chair reported on the debate which had taken place at this event and the decisions reached at that time:

- To source a cheaper cleaning contractor. Chair confirmed that a resident had offered to carry out cleaning duties for 1.5 hours per day at the same hourly rate as that paid to the Pavilion cleaner which would bring costs back to pre-pandemic levels.
- To create a single unisex facility from the current disabled cubicle.
- To spend some of the refurbishment reserve fund on adding a lockable door incorporating a card payment system. The requirement to pay would recoup costs and deter vandalism.

Cllr. Walker stated that she had recently come to the view that the facility should be closed over the winter months as a cost-saving exercise and serious consideration should be given to closing completely to minimise the precept increase for residents in the present economic circumstances.

Cllr. Lipczynski proposed that the amenity should remain open on the basis outlined by the Chair. Seconded by Cllr. Tribble and carried by 6 votes in favour, 2 against.

	<b>Clerk to inform the current contractor of this decision and extend the contract to 30<sup>th</sup> November.</b>	Clerk
D	<b>To receive an update on the parish Firework event</b> Chair confirmed that leaflets have been delivered to all households and tickets are now on sale.	
E	<b>To receive an update on the MUGA project</b> Chair noted the commencement of the installation of the new MUGA which should take approximately 7 weeks to complete. During this time there will be no parking available at the Pavilion. Pedestrian access will be signed from the tennis court car park.	
F	<b>To consider the Parish Council's response to EDDC's Public Consultation regarding East Devon Public Spaces Protection Orders</b> (response required by 20 <sup>th</sup> November 2022) Council made the decision not to respond to this consultation as it does not directly affect the parish.	
22/066	<b>To consider matters viewed as urgent by presiding Chair for discussion only.</b> None raised.	
22/067	<b>Date of next Ordinary Meeting</b> 7.00pm on Monday, 28 <sup>th</sup> November, 2022 at The Pavilion, Back Lane, Newton Poppleford.	
22/068	<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. The Chair concluded the public meeting at 8.50pm and thanked members of the public for their attendance.</b>	
22/069	<b>Matters to be considered in committee session:</b> a) Matters pertaining to the Surgery Building, Robert Way, NP Chair advised that the interested party referred to at the August meeting had now viewed the building and was keen to continue discussions about taking a commercial lease of the premises. The potential lessee is a medical professional who would not require significant modification to the building. Letting the property would provide much-needed income and reduce Council's liability for insurance and utilities. In the meantime, further legal advice is awaited pertaining to the removal or modification of the restrictive covenant either through the Lands Tribunal or by Deed of Variation. <b>Chair proposed that the letting opportunity be pursued, in the first instance by obtaining a commercial rental valuation of the property. Seconded by Cllr. Lipczynki and resolved unanimously.</b> <b>Chair to make arrangements to obtain commercial valuation</b>	Chair

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

**Signed as a true record of the meeting above**



----- Chair

28/11/2022  
----- Date