

# 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 7.15pm on Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> July 2023.**

**Present:** Cllrs. Bisseker, Carpenter (Vice Chair), Compton, Dalton, Lipczynski, Tillotson, Tribble (Chair) and Walker  
Jacqui Baldwin, Clerk and RFO  
Ted Swan, Honorary Footpath Warden  
PC Tom Driver and PC Kelly Titherington, Neighbourhood Policing Team  
7 members of the public

**Chair welcomed Councillors and members of the public to the meeting and outlined the Fire Regulations and Evacuation procedure.**

## Public Forum

- a) Neighbourhood Policing report  
PC Titherington introduced PC Tom Driver as replacement for PC Spears who is currently recovering from injury. PC Driver advised that residents will see an increased police presence as the A3052 had been designated a “high harm route” based on collision statistics. This allows additional resources and manpower to be deployed to carry out speed detection, roadside drug swipes and breathalyser tests. PC Titherington confirmed that evidence is being gathered about the recent incident of criminal damage to the gazebo in the playground. This is an ongoing investigation being dealt with by Exeter police.
- b) County Councillor report: Cllr. Jessica Bailey  
Apologies received from Cllr. Bailey who is on holiday.
- c) District Councillor report: Cllr. Chris Burhop  
Cllr. Burhop sent his apologies for absence but his July report had been circulated prior to the meeting and posted on the Council website.
- d) Report from Ted Swan, Parish Footpath Warden  
Mr Swan stated that, due to having to relocate to Sidmouth following the flooding of his home, he was not able to give as much time as usual to footpath clearance. However, his deputy is being a great help and, hopefully, things will soon be back to normal. Mr Swan noted that an unclassified road from Northmostown up Four Elms Hill had been closed for a period of 6 months due to surface erosion and exposure of service pipes. The DCC Rights of Way Committee has reviewed Mr Swan’s request to make the path from the public car park to Church Green a designated right of way. After discussion DCC approved this application in principle although there was some concern about defining a route across EDDC’s car park to School Lane without encroaching on parking spaces. Having visited the site Mr Swan feels that it would be possible to define such a route quite easily and will write to DCC accordingly. Chair thanked Mr Swan for his report.
- e) Questions and representations from residents/parishioners:

A member of the public asked whether Council was making any progress in its discussions with local GP practices regarding the use of the surgery building. Additionally, it was suggested that the building was falling into a state of disrepair and Council was asked what plans and funds were in place to maintain the building. Chair stated that a response to both questions would be provided direct in due course.

		Action
	Prior to start of the business of the meeting Cllr. Compton gave notice that he would be recording the meeting from this point. Clerk confirmed that when meetings are recorded by the Parish Council this is stated on the published Agenda.	
23/018	<b>To consider apologies for absence and approve if accepted (LGA 1972 S.85(1))</b>	
	Clerk reported apologies received from Cllr Harrison who is recovering from surgery, Cllr. Malawana who is overseas on business and Cllr. Hughes who has tested positive for covid. <b>Cllr. Tillotson proposed that these apologies be accepted. Seconded by Cllr. Compton and resolved unanimously.</b>	
23/019	<b>Declarations of interest from members / Dispensations afforded</b>	
	All members present are, by definition, members of the NPPFF Trustee Board and declare a personal interest in that capacity.  Cllr. Tillotson was afforded a dispensation to discuss and vote upon matters pertaining to Parish allotments at the Annual Meeting of Council held on 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2023. This dispensation applies until May 2027 (unless rescinded prior to that date) and is afforded in respect of her personal and disclosable pecuniary interests as an allotment tenant.  Cllr. Hughes was afforded a dispensation to discuss and vote upon matters pertaining to trees at the Ordinary Meeting held on 27 <sup>th</sup> June 2023. This dispensation applies until May 2027 (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.  Cllr. Compton requested that it be noted that, following the May Council meeting, he had requested clarification from the Monitoring Officer about Declarations of Interest. The Monitoring Officer had confirmed that the obligation to declare an interest in any item on an Agenda rested with the member and not the Chair or the Clerk. Chair thanked Cllr. Compton for the information.	
23/020	<b>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:</b> None so considered.	
23/021	<b>To consider and, if thought fit, approve the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023 as previously circulated to members:</b> Cllr Compton reiterated an objection, previously expressed and circulated to members, to the minutes of the Council meeting held in May. The Chair, in	

	<p>turn, reiterated that as Cllr. Compton had failed to provide an amendment for consideration, the original Minutes had been voted on, unanimously approved as drafted, and stood.</p> <p><b>Cllr. Carpenter proposed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> June be approved as drafted. Seconded by Cllr. Dalton and carried 7 votes in favour, one abstention.</b></p> <p><b>To consider any Matters Arising from those Minutes not dealt with elsewhere on this Agenda:</b></p> <p>None not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.</p>	
23/022	<p><b>Correspondence received:</b></p> <p>None to report not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.</p>	
23/023	<p><b>To consider matters pertaining to highways and road safety in the parish:</b></p> <p>i) Installation of Wig Wag signage Chair noted that Cllr. Bailey has confirmed that the wig wag signage has been ordered and should be delivered within 6 weeks. It is hoped that it will be installed prior to the start of the new school year.</p> <p>ii) Cllr. Compton reiterated his concern at the state of the road between Venn Ottery and West Hill which is collapsing and becoming extremely dangerous. He suggested that a temporary weight restriction be imposed until repair works have taken place.</p> <p><b>Chair to communicate with DCC Highways.</b></p>	<b>Chair</b>
23/024	<p><b>Planning Matters:</b></p> <p>Chair asked whether there were any members of the public present who wished to address Council in relation to the applications to be discussed. The applicant for 23/1427/CPE stated he was there to respond to any questions from members. The applicants for 23/1503/FUL also indicated their presence to answer questions or clarify any issues raised.</p> <p><b>Cllr. Tillotson therefore proposed that Standing Orders be suspended to allow public representations. Seconded by Cllr. Dalton and resolved unanimously.</b></p>	
	<p><b>a) To consider planning applications received prior to publication:</b></p> <p><b>23/1427/CPE – Court Place Farm, Harpford</b></p> <p>Chair stated that this application for a Certificate of Lawful Development relates to land forming part of the garden of this property. The land was used for agricultural purposes until the mid 1960's. The applicant is seeking this Certificate to document the use of the land as "amenity land" ancillary to the garden of Court Place. Supporting evidence for this has been provided by long-standing residents of Harpford. Cllr. Carpenter stated that, as evidence had been supplied covering over 50 years use of this land as amenity, the application was unexceptional. Cllr. Compton noted that Council had previously objected to applications for Change of Use as contrary to the Neighbourhood Plan and Council should be consistent in its response. Chair stated that all applications are considered individually and on their own merits. <b>Cllr. Lipczynski proposed that Council support this application. Seconded by Cllr. Carpenter and carried with 6 votes in favour, 2 abstentions.</b></p> <p><b>Clerk to note and add Council's decision to the planning portal.</b></p>	<b>Clerk</b>

	<p><b>23/1503/FUL – Minors, Venn Ottery</b>  Chair noted that this is an application for alterations to the entrance and driveway of this property. An identical application for Listed Building Consent has also been submitted by the applicant but Council does not comment on Listed Building Consent applications preferring to leave these to the expertise of the Listed Building Officer.</p> <p><b>Cllr. Dalton proposed that Council support this application. Seconded by Cllr. Lipczynski and resolved unanimously.</b></p> <p><b>Clerk to note and upload Council’s decision to the planning portal.</b></p> <p><b>There being no further requirement for public participation Chair proposed that Standing Orders be reintroduced. Seconded by Cllr. Lipczynski and unanimously resolved.</b></p> <p>Chair thanked applicants for taking the trouble to attend the meeting.</p>	Clerk
	<p><b>b) To consider planning applications received after agenda publication:</b>  None received</p>	
	<p><b>c) Planning determinations/decisions advised:</b>  23/0943/FUL – 2 Brook Meadow, NP – Approved no conditions</p>	
	<p><b>d) To note applications which will be considered at a forthcoming meeting the EDDC Planning Committee:</b>  <b>23/0624/FUL – Luscombes, Back Lane, NP</b>  Chair advised members that this application will come before the EDDC Planning Committee on 28<sup>th</sup> July. The Planning Officer has recommended that the application be approved in opposition to the stance of the Parish Council and the Ward Councillor and contrary to the Neighbourhood Plan. Chair will make representations at the meeting together with Cllr. Burhop and a resident.</p>	
	<p><b>e) To note and respond to planning consultations received:</b>  <b>EDDC Local Plan 2020-2040 - Consultation Feedback report</b>  Chair noted that members were sent a link to the Local Plan Feedback Report which was reviewed by the Strategic Planning Committee on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July. Nothing in the report is contrary to the response to the Local Plan consultation submitted by Council in January 2023.  Cllr. Compton noted that the report contained a comment “surprised that Newton Poppleford has no allocations given it is well-served by buses and a new and thriving primary school”. Cllr. Carpenter suggested that the lack of approved development sites reflects the deficits in the village infrastructure and is understandable to a point.  Cllr. Compton suggested that the Neighbourhood Plan was out of date.  Clerk advised that Council had previously agreed that the Neighbourhood Plan would be reviewed once the new EDDC Local Plan had been adopted.</p>	
	<p><b>f) To consider Council’s Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring Report:</b>  Update circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting.</p>	
23/025	<p><b>Financial Matters:</b></p>	
	<p><b>a) To consider and review Financial Reports for June as per documents previously circulated to members and published on-line:</b>  Report noted.</p> <p><b>b) To note July payments approved by the Finance Committee as per documents circulated to members and published on-line:</b></p>	

		<p>Noted</p> <p><b>c) To note the increase to Council’s Insurance Premium following the revaluation of the Pavilion:</b>  Chair advised that the insurance premium had increased by £387.38. This does not impact Council’s budget as the Newton Poppleford Playing Field Foundation reimburses Council for the element of the premium attributable to the Pavilion and Playing Fields.</p> <p><b>d) Questions to RFO from members of Council relating to these financial reports:</b>  There were no questions raised.</p>	
23/026		<b>BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED:</b>	
	A	<p><b>To review response to flooding event in the parish:</b></p> <p><b>i) Recovery Coordination Group actions and reports:</b>  Latest draft Minutes and Action List had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. Chair reported that a further meeting of the RCG had taken place today at which DCC advised that the S19 Report would not be published until September.  <b>As a member of the public present requested permission to address members Cllr. Lipczynski proposed that Standing Orders be suspended. Seconded by Cllr. Tillotson and resolved unanimously.</b>  A resident of Burrow asked Council to maintain pressure on all relevant agencies to ensure that properties in Burrow are safe from further flooding. Properties had been badly damaged and lives ruined and residents did not want to hear excuses for delays in publishing reports or carrying out works. Cllr. Tillotson pointed out that land management was an issue in other areas of the parish besides Burrow. Chair confirmed that the Environment Agency would be carrying out further visits to the parish during this week. Cllr. Carpenter advised that both he and Cllr. Walker lived in Burrow and were available to support residents if needed.  <b>As there were no further representations Chair proposed that Standing Orders be reinstated. Seconded by Cllr. Dalton and resolved unanimously.</b></p> <p><b>ii)</b> Emergency Plan review – Emergency Flood resilience grants.  Email from Cllr Carpenter circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p><b>iii)</b> Environment Agency – proposed improvements to Back Brook channel flow.  Chair reported that the Environment Agency will be commencing de-silting work along the Back Brook on 14<sup>th</sup> August. Excess silt will be transported to the river. Council will provide field access as requested. Cllr. Lipczynski questioned whether the EA were merely moving the problem from one place to another.</p>	
	B	<p><b>To receive an update on repairs to the Multi-Use Games Area:</b>  Chair advised that two quotations were provided to the Loss Adjuster who has now instructed Council to accept a quotation in the sum of £33,026 which will be covered by Council’s insurance. The contractor has been notified and work will commence in early September.</p>	

	<p>Chair asked members to consider whether the contractor should be asked to quote to secure the MUGA by closing the fencing at both goal ends and installing a gate at the pedestrian access. In the short time since the MUGA opened there have been several incidents of vandalism. Members must decide whether it is more important for the community to have free access to the amenity or to protect Council's asset. Chair confirmed that additional CCTV will be installed before the MUGA is re-opened. <b>Cllr. Tillotson proposed that Council obtain a quotation for additional fencing and a gate. Seconded by Cllr. Carpenter and resolved with 7 votes in favour and one abstention. Clerk to note and obtain a quotation for consideration.</b></p>	Clerk
C	<p><b>To discuss matters relating to the repair of the playground and playing field fencing and associated costs:</b></p> <p>A quotation comparison document had been circulated prior to the meeting. <b>Cllr. Dalton proposed that quotation C in the sum of £2796.22 be accepted. Seconded by Cllr. Walker and resolved unanimously. Clerk to note and communicate with the preferred contractor.</b></p>	Clerk
D	<p><b>To consider quotations for the installation of the Venn Ottery Village Green footbridge:</b></p> <p>Chair stated that at a meeting of the Finance Committee which took place on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> July members considered three quotes received for the assembly and installation of the footbridge. One of the quotations (A) had expired prior to the meeting and, when contacted, the contractor confirmed that, as steps would now be required, his quotation would increase significantly. The two other quotations were for (B) £3,275 and (C) £3,250. Having discussed the relative merits of each quote the Finance Committee resolved to appoint contractor C to carry out the work.</p> <p>At the same meeting the Finance Committee also considered a letter received from the Community Café offering to donate the sum of £1,500 towards the cost of installing the footbridge. This generous offer was gratefully accepted by the Finance Committee. Council has also received offers of additional donations amounting to £300 from residents of Venn Ottery. These donations will go some way towards mitigating the overspend on this project. Chair stated that, as the cost of the work exceeds the amount originally budgeted for the project, Council is requested to ratify the decision of the Finance Committee to proceed with the appointment of contractor C.</p> <p><b>Cllr. Walker proposed that the decision of the Finance Committee to accept quotation C be ratified. Seconded by Cllr. Dalton and resolved with 7 votes in favour and one abstention.</b></p> <p>Chair also advised that the contractor who installed the bridge plinths has been paid. Council had no grounds to refuse payment and a decision was taken by the Chair in consultation with the Vice Chair and the Chair of the Finance Committee to settle this invoice.</p>	
E	<p><b>To consider arrangements for the Annual Firework Event in November 2023:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Date – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2023</li> <li>ii) Firework Event Working Party – Chair asked for volunteers to help with the organisation of this event. Cllr. Burhop to be invited to participate in view of his experience in planning previous events.</li> </ul>	
F	<p><b>To note arrangements made for the repairs to the village War Memorial:</b></p>	

	<p>Chair thanked Cllr. Harrison for obtaining a quotation for the required repairs. The quotation in the sum of £184.50 was approved by the Finance Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> July. An offer to donate a sum to cover the cost of the repairs had been received from the Community Café and this donation was accepted with thanks by the Finance Committee. Chair confirmed that the repairs would be carried out within the next 6 weeks.</p>	
G	<p><b>To consider the development of a Council Action Plan for the period 2023-2027:</b>  Chair suggested that, as there is no formal Council meeting in August, Councillors should meet informally to draft an Action Plan for the period of this Council.  It was agreed that this meeting would take place on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> August at 7.00pm in the Pavilion.  <b>Clerk to note, inform those members not present and book the Pavilion.</b></p>	Clerk
H	<p><b>To consider an invitation from Clinton Devon Estates to be part of the stakeholder group for their proposed Landscape Recovery Project:</b>  An email and briefing document from Clinton Devon Estates had been circulated prior to this meeting. Clerk confirmed that Sam Bridgewater was invited to address members this evening but, unfortunately, had a prior engagement. It was generally agreed that Council should have an involvement in this project if it goes ahead.  Cllr. Walker volunteered to represent the Parish Council on the stakeholder group.  <b>Clerk to advise CDE accordingly and invite Sam Bridgewater to the September Council meeting.</b></p>	Clerk
I	<p><b>To consider delegating authority to the Clerk to carry out any regulated or lawful activity on behalf of Council that may be necessary in the absence of a formally convened meeting of Council in August. Any such activity to be reported to the Chair and Vice Chair beforehand and then notified to all members by email with all such activity to be ratified by Council at the meeting scheduled for September:</b>  Chair advised that this is a formality to allow the Clerk to respond to time-limited planning applications, sign documents and incur expenditure during a period where there is no formal Council meeting. It was confirmed that delegated powers do not give the Clerk authority to make unilateral decisions.  <b>Cllr. Walker proposed that members approve delegating authority to the Clerk. Seconded by Cllr. Lipczynski and resolved with 7 votes in favour and one objection.</b></p>	
23/027	<p><b>To consider matters viewed as urgent by presiding Chair for discussion only:</b>  Chair requested that members of the WC refurbishment working party arrange a date to meet to move this project forward. Meeting arranged for 7.00pm on 14<sup>th</sup> August.</p>	
23/028	<p><b>Date of next Ordinary Meeting</b>  7.15pm on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at The Pavilion, Back Lane, Newton Poppleford.</p>	
23/029	<p><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.</b></p>	

	Proposal not made as there was no confidential business to discuss.	
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There being no further business to discuss, Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and declared the meeting closed at 8.35pm.

**Signed as a true reflection of the meeting that took place on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

..... **Chair**

..... **Date**