

**Minutes of the Meeting Held at 7pm on Thursday 3rd March 2022**

All meetings are held at 7.00pm in the Village Hall unless stated otherwise - Phil Neve, our NSC Ward Cllr, attends when possible  
**There are vacancies for further Councillors - please contact a Councillor or the Clerk if you are interested in becoming involved**

*Due to traffic problems the meeting started a few minutes late: the Clerk arrived a few minutes after the start of the meeting.*

**Present:** Cllrs Lynda Redding (*Chair*), Peter Penfold, Clayton Penfold

**In Attendance:** Cllr Phil Neve (NSC), Don Hill (Clerk)

**Public Attendance:** 3 (*1 left during public session*)

**022/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllrs Hellen Riddell and Jim Corbett

**023/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS:** none

**024/22 PUBLIC SESSION** 15 minutes - *Contributions are limited to 3 minutes: they should be concise and to the point*

- i. **Complaints against the Council:** A member of the public was present who, due to what is described in local government governance terms as persistent 'Vexatious Behaviour' and whose conduct over recent years led to the formal development by the Council of a Vexatious Behaviour Policy, wished to re-present a range of historical, and already resolved issues that he has been re-presenting to the Council over several years. He has reported the entire Membership of the Council to the North Somerset Council Monitoring Officer over the substance of these issues and all Members were vindicated of the complaints lodged. Notwithstanding several years of increasingly widespread attempts to pursue his grievances, they have not been pursued by those complained to as the complainant expected. He has, however, continued to pursue his grievances within this Council. Under the Vexatious Behaviour Policy this person has been barred from involvement in Council meetings on any issues that do not accord with those stated in the Council's nationally drawn Standing Orders. To circumvent this ruling this person re-introduced his concerns in an open statement addressed to the Councillors and Clerk, from which the third party started to read out the headline issues - none of which appeared to be new. The Chair ruled against this method of circumventing the bar on the complainant's participation. As the presentation continued, despite the Chair's rulings, the Clerk, having quietly endured some five years of this process, much of which has been directed at him personally, exercised somewhat more vociferous protestations against the process continuing - these protestations would certainly be deemed 'un-clerkly' in formal bureaucratic circles, a circumstance which Members, who had also suffered to a greater or lesser degree, understood, but for which the Clerk nevertheless later apologised. The third party presentation ended summarily with the presenter passing the document he was reading from to the Chair. The complainant left the meeting.
- ii. **St Annes School Tree Planting experience:** Minute 029/22ii below refers to the development of this project as part of the Queen's Jubilee celebrations.
- iii. **Potholes on Puxton Lane:** Increased traffic along Puxton Lane because of Banwell road closures has caused several potholes in need of repair. **Clerk will report to NSC Area Officer.**

iv.

**025/22 LAST MEETING MINUTES + MATTERS ARISING** February 3rd minutes were agreed and signed.

**026/22 PLANNING** Details at <https://planning.n-somerset.gov.uk/online-applications/>

- i. **New:** none
- ii. **Decisions \Due 19/P/0815/FUL** Puxton Park car park. **22/P/0015/FUH Villa Farm:** rear extension.
- iii. **Refused: 21/P/3525/CQA Villa Farm** - conversion of 2 barns to 2 dwellings: the reasons for refusal appear to be surmountable and the meeting anticipated that the application will be re-made at some near-future date.
- iv. **Enforcement Case Summary** Circulated to members with meeting papers, reviewed and noted.

**027/22 FINANCE**

- i. **2021-22 Accounts:** These were re-circulated with meeting papers, together with a supporting bank statement. They reviewed and noted.
- ii. **Payments Due: HMRC** re PAYE Jan/Feb/Mar £198.00. This was unanimously agreed to.
- iii. **Bank Standing Order Variation:** A bank letter changing the Clerk's monthly standing order as from April was signed by Cllrs Redding and P Penfold. Adjustment will be made via internet banking.

**028/22 HIGHWAY MATTERS**

*The Chair placed discussion of this item at the start of the meeting, immediately following Minute 025/22, as Cllr Neve wanted to talk to it but was not able to stay for the whole meeting.*

**i. A Highway Strategy**

Cllr Neve reported on discussions on highway matters that he has been holding with key NSC decision makers. In the context of Puxton these discussions included specific concerns about the A370 around St Annes School and possible 20mph speed restrictions and/or other traffic calming measures along our lanes - earlier minuted concerns about Maysgreen Lane being the prompt for this. More generally, some more user-friendly strategy for rural lanes throughout the District were brought forward. These discussions are ongoing.

- a. **St Annes School:** A number of parents have concerns over the lack of safe crossing points anywhere on the A370, especially between the 2 bus stops to the East (The Full Quart) and West (Palmer's Elm) of the School. The footpath on the 'to-Bristol' side of the this very busy road is narrow but gets busy as the School car park is relatively small and the Full Quart car park tends to get used too. The Full Quart bus stop on the South ('to-Weston') side of the road is just a lay-by with no footway in either direction. Ideally there need to be controlled crossings adjacent to each of these bus stops. Cllr Neve noted that a central-refuge type crossing is due to be put in place adjacent to the Palmer's Elm bus stop, probably during this financial year: not ideal, but better than nothing.
- b. **Puxton 20mph and traffic calming:** This is about roads being used as rat runs and local people being unable to walk or ride safely due to excessive vehicle speeds and inconsiderate behaviour. Some form of calming and or change to the nature of the roads around the settlements is really needed to reduce this problem, most particularly Puxton Lane, Puxton Road and Maysgreen Lane, all of which which will become worse as the developments in Banwell take shape. It was suggested that the Council might wish to revisit the proposed 30mph speed restriction for Puxton Road (November 2017 Minute 137/17 refers).
- c. **Rural Roads in General:** National speed limits are quite obviously inappropriate on lanes that are narrow; often only 1 car wide; bendy often with blind corners and also heavily degraded by increased traffic and heavy vehicles. This makes them very unfriendly for active travel options such as walking cycling and riding. People are put off due to real and perceived risk and also by the sheer volume and speed traffic: yet, either

for leisure or out on necessity, active travel options are often the only way people can use these lanes where, as is so often the case, there are no public transport options.

This discussion suggested the development of a highways strategy that can be worked through and kept up-to-date over time, with projects within the strategy being prioritised for development. The strategy would include existing aims such as:

- A 40mph speed restriction along the whole of the A370 through the parish
- Maysgreen Lane 20mph & Cheese Factory passing space / Warning signs re blind bends
- Improvements to the Puxton Lane/Puxton Road Junction per December 2021 Meeting Minute 097/21.
- The A370 Central Refuge at Palmers Elm Bus Stop

Clerk will shape a document for Members to work on.

## ii. Other Highway Matters

- Oldbridge River Bridge:** New bridge planned for 22-23 financial year, but dependant on recruitment of additional engineer to manage project.
- A370 Village Entry Planters:** Sponsorship plans are not moving ahead to plan: Cllr C Penfold, in the meantime, will plant and maintain the planters himself.
- Puxton Lane/Puxton Road Finger Post:** Re the stolen finial, a cast aluminium replacement will cost £275 + VAT unpainted or £295 + VAT painted. Cllr C Penfold wasn't able to source a replacement, so the Clerk will progress the quote.

## 029/22 OTHER MATTERS

- NSC Footpath initiative:** NSC Officer has contacted Cllr Redding re walking the paths to assess the proposed works.
- Queen's Platinum Jubilee 2022: Tree planting:** the resident involved in hosting children from St Anne's School in the planting experience confirmed that, given cooperation with Cllr Redding over some logistical needs, the project is on track. **Party:** The Hall management company have expressed an interested in contributing to this event and the event will be discussed at their next meeting. Cllr Redding suggested that the broad plan for the event should ideally be in place by April.
- Maysgreen Lane public footpath:** (Oct 21 Minute 079/21 & Nov Minute 087/21 refer). Work confirmed as completed by NSC Footpaths.
- Governance Documents 2022: (i)The Documents** - 2021 documents and intervening updates were scrutinised by the Clerk as being fit for purpose and circulated to members for their consideration as an effective governance basis for the 2022-2023 financial year. This body of documents, having been considered, were approved as presented. **(ii) Dispensations:** The meeting agreed that, as previously, these should be handled and authorised by the Clerk. Dispensations relating to the Precept and the Village Hall were renewed to May 2023, when, as documents can have up to four years longevity, they will be synchronised with the four year election cycle.

## 030/22 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

**Cllr Redding: Path to Holy Saviour Church:** The path beyond Church Cottage in not tarmacked. It has deteriorated to the extent of needing some 2 tons of stone to level the surface and make it safe. Although ownership of the land is uncertain, the work needs doing to resolve a health and safety issue. Cllr Redding and another resident undertook to do the work, but Cllr C Penfold said he should be to do it next week. He will liaise with Cllr Redding to organise the project.

**031/22 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** Thursday April 7th 2022 in the Village Hall at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm