

PUXTON PARISH COUNCIL

Puxton & Hewish: in the North Somerset Council Ward of Congresbury & Puxton

Clerk: Donald Hill - 18 Mitford Slade Court, Mendip Road, Yatton, North Somerset BS49 4JG

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Minutes of the Meeting Held at 7.30pm on Thursday February 5th 2026

The meeting started at 7.40pm

All meetings are held at 7.30pm in the Village Hall unless stated otherwise

Although under no obligation to, Dan Thomas, our NSC Ward Cllr, attends when possible

Chris Redding: Puxton Parish Meeting was established in 1894, recording the names of those who took office for the Annual and interim meetings during each year. By 1922 it had started to record the names of meeting attendees, and the name 'Redding' appeared. Puxton Parish Council held its first meeting of elected councillors in May 1976. The name Redding continued to appear in Council minutes over the years, with Chris serving two spells a Councillor, from May 1999 to April 2003 and from May 2011 to November 2013. Chris was far more than a Councillor however; he was a kind, thoughtful, ever helpful friend to a huge circle of people. A modest man, who wanted a modest funeral and who ended up by his life being celebrated by over two hundred souls. Thank you Chris, for your part in our lives.

Present: Cllrs Lynda Redding (Chair), Jim Corbett, Mel Ellis, Christine MacFie, Clayton Penfold, Peter Penfold, Helen Riddell.

In Attendance: NSC Ward Cllr Dan Thomas, NSC Cabinet Member Mike Solomon, Don Hill (Clerk)

Public Attendance: 5

011/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None. The Chair welcomed Cllr Solomon to the meeting.

012/26 DECLARATIONS: *(Dispensations apply to Cllrs re precept setting, and Village Hall matters)*

Cllr Redding re Minute 015/26i as family property is part of the application. Cllr Peter Penfold re Minute 015/26i as he has an interest in another locally based solar farm outside the parish.

013/26 PUBLIC SESSION *(15 minutes - contributions limited to 3 minutes: they should be concise and to the point)*

- I. **Proposed Solar Farm :** Planning application 25/P/2609/FULL, by GSC Manor Farm Ltd, Wick Lane, West Hewish for a solar farm. A resident raised concerns about drainage re this project, the substance of which are recorded at Minute 015.26i below.
- II. **The Full Quart College for Adults with Learning Difficulties:** This college for students from 16-25 will open at the end of March. The Principal introduced himself and outlined its educational and social goals. It plans to hold various open events to introduce the local community and the wider public to its work and students. There will also be an updated website. In this connection a query was raised as to why the bus shelter was being removed from the bus stop by the Full Quart. Cllr Thomas made a note to see if that policy might be changed in view of the stop's probable increased use.

III. Boundary Dispute: A resident registered worry about a boundary dispute on the left of Maysgreen Lane going down to Puxton Road. This is involving a neighbouring land owner removing a significant portion of the residents hedge against their wishes. This has been reported to the police. Although this is a domestic dispute between landowners the resident was keen to bring it more widely to public notice.

014/26 LAST MEETING MINUTES

December 4th minutes were agreed and signed.

015/26 PLANNING Details at <https://planning.n-somerset.gov.uk/online-applications/>

- i. **New: 25/P/2609/FUL** Manor Farm Solar Farm, Wick Lane, West Hewish. *Cllr Corbett chaired this item.* Members had had an opportunity to scrutinise the large amount of paperwork attaching to this application and noted that it appeared well prepared. Concern was raised - per the public session at Minute 013/26i above - about a possible flood risk arising from the installation of so many solar panels, and because the measurement criteria used in the application report appeared to be higher - ie more lenient - than the standard measurement. "There was also a worry expressed by one Member, that the visual impact of the solar panels would only be mitigated in the long term (10+ years) and that, unless quite mature (large) trees and hedgerows were planted to disguise them, there may well be a visual impact to nearby residents in the immediate and shorter term. It would therefore be necessary to mandate an effective planting management scheme. Whilst there may have been consultations with NSC Planning over the period during which the application was being put together, these will have resulted in the reports that make up the Applicant's case. However, as Cllr Thomas pointed out, planners will study the application on its merits as presented, and commission reports from their own specialist and statutory consultees on the various aspects of the application. These will be based on NSC policy criteria and planning regulations. These NSC reports may, or may not support the application in the context of the particular report and, where they support the application in principle they may require re-working by the applicant. If the application is granted, it is likely to have conditions applied to - for example, drainage and hedging management - the performance of which will have to be evidenced by the applicant as the project develops. Members accepted that draining and hedging worries will have to be addressed by NSC Planners and, with that caveat, registered unanimous support for the application. This draft was adjusted from the original to bring forward planting and plant management as an immediate issue. *The deadline for NSC's receipt of comments meant the Clerk had to report the original draft to NSC planning, rather than the one above.*

Cllr Redding re-took the Chair.

ii. Decisions Due:

- a. **22/P/3067/OUT:** Haybow Village (*Banwell PC*).
- b. **25/P/1418/FUL:** (*Kingston Seymour PC*) Solar Farm at Yew Tree Farm.
- c. **25/P/1098/FUL: Dolemoor L Solar Farm** (*Congresbury PC*).
- d. **25/P/1932/FUL:** Flavours North - Change of use to display of retail goods.
Revised to remove container and change Palmers Elm fencing from metal to wood has been.

- iii. **Approved:** 25/P/1709/FUL: Stable View change of buildings to Class E (commercial).
- iv. **Appeal:** 24/P/0143/FUL - gypsy/traveller site adjacent to Heathfield Park.

016/26 FINANCE

- i. **2025-26 Accounts:** Accounts were reviewed and reconciled against the bank statement.
- ii. **2026-27 Budget:** The precept has been confirmed by NSC.
- iii. **Payments approved: Helen Riddle** - Reimbursement for funeral flowers for Chris Redding with message: *From everyone at Puxton & Hewish Parish Council. Chris was a tireless supporter of his local community and his advice, thoughtfulness and straight talking will be greatly missed.* **£70.00.** **ALCA** - for part 2 of Clerk's AGAR Assertion 10 training course (*part 1 paid for by Walton-in-Gordano PC*) **£35.00** **Zurich Insurance** annual premium - **£300.00.**
- iv. **Bank Mandate:** **to be processed by Clerk.**
- v. **Bank Deposit Account:** An account is now available to run with the Council's charity current a/c. However the interest was so low - hovering around 1% - that the meeting decided not to take up that option.

017/26 PARISH MATTERS

- i. **SpeedWatch:** More volunteers are needed. Dates for training awaited. Three Members expressed interest in becoming volunteers. Cllr Redding will liaise with them and follow this up with the SeedWatch lead.
- ii. **Matters re the NSC Highways Portal. (* = awaiting response or no NSC action):**
 - a. *** Highway Verge Erosion on Puxton Lane:** Cllr Corbett was concerned about delays with this problem and also about the pothole situation. Cllr Redding mentioned that a large pothole she had reported in Wick Lane and one Cllr Corbett had reported in Maysgreen Lane had been filled quickly and that we should recognise NSC performance when it happens.
 - b. **Fly-tipping:** Cllrs Redding and Riddle pointed to increasing and major fly-tipping along Puxton Lane and Puxton Road. The quantities are huge and the tipping is persistent: some is so bad that roads have to be closed for it to be cleared. These incidents are being reported as they are found.
 - c. *** Wick Lane Request for 30mph Limit:**
 - d. *** A370 Central Refuges:** at The Full Quart, Moorland Park, Puxton Lane.
 - e. **NSC's 20mph strategy for vulnerable roads:** This revives the plan for Maysgreen Lane and Puxton Village to be 20mph zones. NSC advice, suggests we apply via the Highways Portal. **Clerk will revise original paperwork.**
 - f. **Old Post Office Lay-by:** Central Refuge has been damaged. Cllr Redding will provide photographs so the **Clerk can report to NSC.**
- iii. **Wick St Lawrence SID Hire:** Still to be discussed by Wick.

018/26 GOVERNANCE

- i. **Assertion 10 and email addresses for Councillors:** After the Clerks sessions per iii below, Council email addresses for all Councillors appear to be a future requirement.

The cost - including that already agreed for Cllr Redding - will be £140 per year and will demand that all Council communications take place within these Council owned addresses. Communication that are not between these addresses will not be answered and will not be the responsibility of the Council within the context of GDPR, Freedom of Information or Subject Access. Each Councillor will need to confirm that they have cleared their devices of all Council related matter that is not via their Council email address (copying items to the clerk for filing if needed). This will absolve the Council from responsibility for GDPR, SAC or FOC enquiry outside the ring-fence of its own email address profile. When a Councillor ceases to be a Councillor they will have 30 days to supply written confirmation that they have deleted all Council related business from their devices (again, copying items to the clerk for filing if needed). For its own security, best practice advice suggests that PC's would be advised to mandate these rules. Members asked the **Clerk to arrange the for new addresses via VisionICT.**

- ii. **ALCA Training Course on Data Protection Principles:** All Members attended except Cllr Corbett who was suddenly unable to. **Clerk to book him onto a future course if available.**
- iii. **Clerk's 2 Courses re Assertion 10:** These courses have been completed and resulted, among other things, in the fuller information on Council email addresses at i above.
- iv. **ALCA's Essential Councillor Course:** Cllr MacFie reported that the course was interesting, useful, and delivered with great clarity.
- v. **Updated Accessibility Statement:** The need for an updated statement via our internet provider, VisionITC was agreed at the January meeting. **Clerk to progress.**
- vi. **Annual Governance Policy Documents Review:** Updated/corrected documents are now with Members for scrutiny, prior to agreement at the March meeting. An IT policy is included as a requirement of the AGAR 10 assertion. A noticeboard policy was also agreed to ensure long term noticeboard management. **Clerk to add new policy to March meeting file.**

019/26 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Cllr Ellis

Dolemoor Lane: Fly-tipping on this lane appears to be an insoluble problem at the moment. However, it has been cleared recently.

A370 Gullies: They all need regular emptying - not just odd ones here and there - if highway and domestic flooding is to be avoided. Where highway flooding does occur it can be extremely dangerous at night when motorists don't always see it before they hit it.

Cllr Riddle

Footpaths: NSC Footpaths have asked for help from local groups to keep footpaths clear and to report needed maintenance work. Cllr Riddle has undertaken to include this in her Parish Maintenance work and will liaise with NSC Footpaths.

Cllr Redding

I attended a Planning meeting on Zoom on Dec 8th, a point of interest for us was concerning enforcement. It is not a statutory requirement for NSC to do enforcement, they need twice as many enforcements officers as they have, so although every case is investigated they have to decide if it is expedient to follow it up.

I reported a pothole in Wick Lane in December that has been filled in. There are more to be reported at the Palmers Elm end of Maysgreen Lane.

We have been offered free annual flowers to be picked up at the beginning of June. Cllr Riddle agreed to do that.

A parishioner requested we investigate the possibility of dog bins in the parish. As we decided to remove the waste bin by the notice board so we didn't have to pay to have it emptied I haven't put this on the agenda.

We have received a decision on an Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) case resulting from a Freedom Of Information (FOI) request from June last year concerning the 2016-17 accounts and treatment of the Community Fund. The Commissioner believes that we were entitled to refuse the request because it was vexatious. The parishioner is appealing against the ICO decision on another FOI request for more information on the 2023-24 accounts. The decision was that we probably had no more information. The tribunal will be in the summer. A parishioner has objected to the 2024-25 AGAR to external auditors, the auditors have decided no action is required. We haven't yet received the bill.

020/26 PPC COUNCILLOR/NSC ISSUES: Cllr Solomon had to leave before the end of the meeting. A range of concerns were raised with him from potholes to flooding to 20mph speed limits, and from bus lanes to NSC joining the West of England Authority - this latter from which he saw significant potential benefits. He attends 3 parish council meetings in his own ward and remarked on the similarity of concerns shared by parishes generally. He will liaise with Cllr Thomas on various matters that were raised during the meeting. The Chair thanked him for attending.

021/26 NEXT MEETING

Thursday 5th March 2026 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

The meeting closed at 9.20pm