

PUXTON PARISH COUNCIL

Puxton & Hewish

Clerk: Donald Hill

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Minutes of the Meeting Held on 6th July 2017 at 7pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Sue Popperwell (Chair), Jim Corbett, Jim Howard, Clayton Penfold

In Attendance: Cllr Tom Leimdorfer (NSC), Don Hill (Clerk)

Public Attendance: 6

It was with obvious shock that members reflected on the recent tragic death of Derek Mead. As a North Somerset Councillor, as a hugely successful farmer and businessman, and, simply, as a 'local lad', Derek contributed profoundly to the fabric of community in the surrounding parishes: he will be sorely missed. Heartfelt sympathy to Derek's family has already been communicated, but members wanted, also, to register their thoughts and thanks to him here.

91/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs Peter Penfold, Katy Wilson and Amanda Edwards.

92/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr C Penfold re Public Session discussion about Heathfield Park.

93/17 PUBLIC SESSION

Policing - New Motorbike Officer: Lindsay & Roy Fell reported that PC Shane Dick spent over an hour outside St Anne's School recently, doing speed checks. A diligent and likeable officer.

Cllr Clayton Penfold's Field on Heathfield Park: adjacent to the A370: There is a lot of activity in this field, apparently clearing the rhynes and re-enforcing the driveway through the site, but also including large fires in the evening. *Clerk to liaise with Cllr C Penfold to arrange a site meeting with himself and Mr & Mrs Cleese to see exactly what works are in hand.*

Pilhay Farm: The farmhouse is tenanted. The drive is understood to be both a private road and a public footpath. Lorry loads of gravel and building materials are apparently being ferried down the drive. *Clerk to check who owns the property and what recent planning permissions might explain the current lorry movements and to clarify the public footpath situation.*

Stonebridge Farm: Cllr Leimdorfer brought this element of his Cllr's Report into the Public Session as the subject was under discussion anyway. The essence of the concerns which are the substance of the complaint made by Mr and Mrs Cleese and also raised to NSC by both Cllr Leimdorfer and the Clerk as under:

Stonebridge Farm (Enforcement):

The residents of Heathgate Paddock have suffered appallingly from, sometimes up to 10 lorries per 20 minutes, churning up dust and muck immediately outside their property, which sits opposite the entrance to Stonebridge Farm. The bringing in of landfill continues and we have been given no firm indication as to when it will stop.

The key Stonebridge Farm issues are:

A complaint - Whilst wheel washers are apparently on the premises they are not being used - and such is the wording of the planning condition that their use cannot be enforced (as advised by the NSC legal section). So users of the busy A370 - and adjacent residents - have been subjected to a fog of dust on dry days and a sea of mud on wet ones.

A concern - that what is going on at the site may be significantly in contravention of the permission as originally granted.

These representations led to a site visit by NSC's Chris Nolan that provided the response: he witnessed no lorry movements, ergo no wheel washer use; no firm date was established for the completion of the landfill works; 'the end of summer' was mooted: the amount of landfill going onto the site seems to indicate a volume significantly in excess of the amount needed to fulfil the approved planning application requirements but there was no significant evidence of this. "The position will be monitored" The

Stonebridge Farm project bears all the hallmarks of a lucrative landfill operation and seems to bear little relation to the planning permission endeavour of creating a pony race-track facility. The Meeting formed the view that NCS were 'funking' the underlying issue that these problems arise from their own clear errors and inept enforcement processes. **The Clerk undertook to investigate possible links between Glenfill - the landfill contractors and the now defunct Churngold Waste company.**

Thanks to the Clerk: Kelvin Glimstead said Tom Dally asked that a minute be recorded to thank The Clerk for his work in ensuring the proper highway surface repairs to Wick Lane. Lindsay and Roy Fell also wanted to formally thank The Clerk for organising the site meeting at St Anne's Churchyard re the hedge management work; this has already resulted in a further meeting with residents. Somewhat modestly, The Clerk acceded to the meeting's instruction that this minute be included within the record of the meeting.

A possible 30mph speed limit for Puxton Road was mooted (not fanciful, given that there is one on Maygreen Lane). **Clerk to include as an agenda item for September meeting.**

SpeedWatch is needed. In the absence of a SpeedWatch team, Cllrs Corbett and Howard are prepared to operate unofficially in Puxton Road to assemble some basic information on traffic speeds there. Although, being outside the scheme, this will not be information the police can use, it will provide some useful information to this Council. **Cllr Popperwell will supply the Parish SpeedWatch kit and operating instructions to Cllr Corbett.**

94/17 **REPORTS - Ward Cllrs Report - Cllr Leimdorfer**

Stonebridge Park: This was dealt with at Minute 93/17 above.

NSC Future Planning: The NSC Core Strategy takes us to 2026. The Joint (West of England) Spatial Plan covers the planning period to 2036. Under the current core strategy, Central Government required commitment is for a build of some 21,000 homes, for which sites have been identified. Following the recent public inquiry the Government Inspector is indicating that sites should be identified for a further cushion of up to 2,500 homes to ensure cover for any failure of the planned 21,000 sites to materialise. The further few thousand homes demanded by 2036 are still under open consultation. To achieve the 2026 demands and to prepare for the 2036 demands, NSC will be conducting a review in preparation for new site allocations. NSC conduct a process called "Call for Sites" to bring in possible development opportunities; one is currently under way. Cllr Corbett asked if a realistically hard-nosed infrastructural assessment was being developed to support the current - central government imposed - growth plan. Cllr Leimdorfer noted that a possibility existed for some of the larger development proposals (e.g. Banwell) could be broken down into smaller development modules (eg. small-village infill such as two x 20 home developments in Puxton, to reduce the impact of such heavyweight proposals as that for the Banwell environs. The Cowslip Lane entrance to Puxton Park was exemplified as a possible build location, given the robust specifications of the originally granted development of that site. **Clerk to canvass this idea (to include an open meeting) via the Autumn Newsletter.**

Derek Mead: The Parish Council sent condolences to the family, expressing sympathy at Derek's tragic death. Cllr Leimdorfer attended Derek's funeral and related to us the warmth, gratitude and gentle humour that flowed spontaneously from the service. As the meeting wanted to formally recognise Derek's huge contribution to the community, Cllr leimdorfer undertook to prepare a minute for entry into our September record that will reflect the robust honesty of this truly 'local boy's' contribution to his community.

95/17 **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the 1st June 2017 - were agreed, and signed by the Chair.

96/17 **MATTERS ARISING NOT DEALT WITH ELSEWHERE**

Matters relating to parking in Puxton Road and to power/BT lines being overgrown in Puxton Road did not actually arise from the June minutes and have been recorded below under Councillor's Reports.

97/17 **POLICING AND TRAFFIC**

Crime: The Clerk was 'phoned by the PCC's office. It is acknowledged that police.uk (Home Office run) doesn't provide the currency or detail a particular Council is seeking. It provides basic national data about the police and policing. Our local beat do keep in touch, but there is no longer a provision for them to regularly attend Council meetings.

A370: A370 monitoring is done by Traffic Police - now a tri-force serving 3 forces... i.e., very stretched. The replacement motorcycle officer is now operational - see minute 93/17 above. Policing pressures mean those with an active SpeedWatch get priority support. We need volunteers to re-start SpeedWatch. The following questions need to be addressed at the September meeting: **When is speeding at its worst (i.e. day, evening or nights): on which day or days (eg Thursday evening bikers): and on which particular stretches of the A370?**

98/17

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL MATTERS

Blocked gully: outside The Firs in Puxton Road. Reported. NSC in direct negotiation with The Firs (recently sold stc) as their domestic drainage runs into the gully - an old and now rare arrangement.

St Anne's School Repair: Why did the lights remain on the last day, when no work done? Enquiry not pursued as the works were dismantled the following morning.

Maysgreen Lane: New 30mph signs and posts on order.

A370 Street Light: at the J21 side of the Wick Lane repaired.

St Annes Graveyard Hedges: Site meeting held. NSC in direct contact with residents and producing a programme of improvement and maintenance once all their similar sites have been assessed.

Palmer's Elm Farm Ditch: Clerk to follow-up based on further details received from complainant.

J21 traffic light syncing: When last reported, the traffic light operation and syncing seemed greatly improved, however when traffic was backing up from the West Wick roundabout and Queensway works this was causing the lights to go out of sync. These lights are maintained by Highways England and NSC will investigate further with them.

Wick Lane: NSC have completed jet-patching of the whole road.

A370 Highways Issues: There are three ongoing issues that have been increasingly rattling residents and the Parish Council in Puxton of late. They all relate to the A370 between Junction 21 of the M5 and Congresbury. Whatever thread we use in dealing with them 'through the usual channels', they end up hitting the budget wall. No money available, therefore nothing can be done. In the meantime they are set to become more and more intractable in the longer term:

Gullies

A370 Blocked Gullies towards J21: The gullies in the Banwell part of the A370 towards J21 need to be hand dug to clear. NSC claim that they to not create flooding issues as they are, so their clearing appears not to be a priority. The community says they do cause flooding onto the A370 which is clearly a traffic danger, particularly in the dark.

This matter is now in the hands of Banwell Parish Council.

A370 Blocked Gullies outside Spring Cottage, opposite SJH Machinery: These gullies are known to present flood problems, but according to the correspondence history, are not the subject of particular concern to Highways. Our Area Engineer, Nick Raymond, is investigating the current blockage with a view to their being jetted.

NSC report that the problem at Spring Cottage is not primarily due to blocked gullies. The problem persists, because the level of the water in the roadside ditches - into which the gullies drain - often covers the outfall from the gullies. This impacts on the rate that the water drains away. NSC have worked closely with the Internal Drainage Board (IDB) and attended the location last year and cleared all of the drains and culverts in the area, however if the water level is high in the ditches, which are the responsibility of the IDB then the effectiveness of the gullies is reduced. Unfortunately the presence of underground services makes it difficult to alter the level of the drainage outfall.

The meeting noted this response to their concerns, accepted the cost implications relating to engineering a solution around the utilities, but determined to press NSC for a long term solution to property flooding at this point. **Clerk to so respond to NSC's David Carter.**

The Pavement

A footpath runs between J21 of the M5 and Congresbury, on the 'to Bristol' side of the A370. It is the only means of safe communication along this stretch of road and in places has, over many years, become so overgrown that it appears NSC are loathe to start clearing it for fear of what costly re-construction horrors may lie hidden. Something has to be done to this vital community link, which, in some significant places, is fast degenerating to the point of un-usability - particularly by those with wheelchairs or prams etc. The Area Engineers for Puxton and Congresbury have voiced concerns about the problem - but it is one for Highways to resolve and they have stubbornly not done so.

NSC.s David Carter says "We will arrange for the vegetation to be cleared and this will enable our engineers to assess the footway. If damaged beyond minor patching and further work is required this will then be considered for future works and will be added to the highways works programme but the condition will depend on the overall priority of us putting this forward in next year's programme." The meeting resolved to hold NSC to the clearance and assessment of the path's condition and to further press NSC to ensure that its proper restoration is budgeted for. **Clerk to so inform David Carter.**

Highway Weight Limits: Having found old signage, re a lorry restriction, in a hedge at the start of Wick Lane, the Clerk sought clarity on exactly which roads in the Parish are subject to 7.5 ton limits. Puxton Lane is subject to a 7.5 ton limit re the Oldbridge River Bridge. Wick Lane is not subject to any weight restriction - ergo, the old, faded sign hidden in the hedge at the A370 should be removed. Cllr Leimdorfer observed that seeking the imposition / re-imposition of weight restrictions is even more unlikely to succeed than seeking a variation to speed limits. **Clerk to liaise with Nick Raymond / Liam Abercrombie re the sign removal.**

99/17

OTHER ISSUES

Broadband Speeds: CDS workshop due after appointment of a contractor: progress remains slow.

NSC Free Flowers: Cllr Popperwell has collected the plants and they are being planted out.

Hewish & Puxton Village Hall: Cllr C Penfold updated the meeting on the work of the funding-raising sub-committee. The Clerk undertook to place the already circulated fund-raising draft minute of the Hall Committee's 29th June meeting on record here (see below) and, notwithstanding the receipt of the anticipated asking price resulting from David Plaister's work, to include an agenda item relating to this so that the Parish Council can develop a view as to how it wishes to proceed in the disposition of the Hewish & Puxton Community Fund in relation to this project. The Parish Council's stance on this point will prove crucial to the effectiveness of the S106 funding application the fund-raising committee are preparing for submission to NSC.

FUNDRAISING

*As an outcome of the May 9th Public Meeting, a sub-committee has been established, to be called the **Fund-raising Sub-Committee (FSC)**. Members are - Lynda Redding (Chair), Jane Woolmington, Charlotte Veryard, Peter Penfold, Clayton Penfold, Lindsay Fell, Roy Fell, Mandy Dewer, Christine Richardson.*

Based on information from FSC to date, The Hall Committee has posited a need for some £125,000 based on a freehold purchase price of £100,000 and a sum for roof repairs of £25,000.

An initial 'blue sky' funds chart looks like:

Parish Council Community Fund:	£40,000
Harvest Home:	£20,000
S106 Money via NSC	£10,000
Private Donations	£10,000
To be raised by Funding Committee	£45,000

The possibility of loans via a bank or the Parish Council loan scheme were mooted. (The legal status of the above funds - as donations, shares, or loans etc. will need the support of the contributors and a solicitor to formulate).

The FSC proposed approaching the landlord's agent with a freehold offer price of £75,000. This relates to an initial asking price of £150,000 and an 'understood' acceptable offer in the region of £100,000.

Valuation and initial offer negotiations have so far been handled by estate agent David Plaister at no-cost. After discussion, this meeting agreed the FSC recommendation to ask David to approach the Landlord's agents - Greenslade Hunt - with an opening bid of £75,000 and to invite the possibility of an extended lease period -

against a pre-agreed purchase price - to facilitate the fund-raising process. CR to progress via FSC and David Plaister.

Village Map: Clerk to deliver 'missing section' and Map to Cllr Corbett for safe-keeping. No response from Cat Lodge.

100/17 FINANCE

2017-18 Accounts: were pre-circulated with meeting papers, were reviewed and noted.

2016-17 Audit: The external audit is nearing completion. It has been bedevilled by constant and simplistic cross-checking by the auditor of a nature not experienced by the Clerk before. As the audit is done at no charge, and passed the rigours of the internal auditor without problems, members will need to be watchful that no additional charges are imposed upon the Parish as a result of all this 'busyness' by the external auditor. (It may simply be that PPC is one of those randomly picked for additional scrutiny in any year).

Parish Council Computer: Cllr Popperwell raised this topic. The parish computer is old - very! - and was planned for re-placement via the transparency funding acquired from NALC/ALCA in 2016. As the Parish computer was not 'fit-for-purpose' The Clerk has been using his own computer (recently deceased). A replacement computer had to be purchased as an emergency. The meeting felt the Council should purchase this computer, in line with its original plan (if an Audit by ALCA indicted that the allocated fund had not been used as applied for it could call for its return). **The meeting unanimously agreed that the Clerk bring the matter forward for conclusion at the September meeting.**

Cheques for Signature: 10012 HMRC re PAYE £147.80 **10013** D Hill re purchase of Parish Map 'missing section' X14 £25.20

101/17 PLANNING (*Latest enforcement Case Report - May 2017*)

New: No new applications.

Decisions Due: 17/P/1028/F New field entrance. **17/P/1230/LDE** Oakacre - use of dwelling without the agricultural occupancy condition.

Refused: 17/P/1170/CUPA Trotters dwelling; effectively a re-build rather than a change of use. This was a second change-of-use application; Cllr Leimdorfer pointed out that the project can still come forward as a full planning application in the future.

Appeal: No 17/3167087: Re planning application 16/P/2634/F. Puxton Park - Change of use of first floor offices to children's day nursery. Appeal Dismissed: Appellants costs application refused. This information was checked by Cllr Leimdorfer from the "Planning And Regulatory Committee – 12 July 2017 Report Of The Director Of Development And Environment". The main concerns of the Inspector revolved around "Whether the proposal would be suitably located, having regard to the accessibility of the appeal site by a range of transport modes and any identified local shortfall in childcare provision"

Public Rights of Way: In the 1990's Woodspring Bridleways Association applied to get a range of public access routes designated as 'Byways open to all traffic that can be used by pedestrians, horse riders, cyclists and mechanically propelled vehicles.'. They based their arguments for these designations on mapping going back to 1809. These applications (Definitive Map Modification Orders) have lain on the file for years and the Planning Inspectorate has instructed that they be dealt with and as part of that process, they have to be sent out for consultation. The Clerk has received 5 relating to the local area over the past day or so - 2 specific to Puxton Parish. More may come through during the remainder of this year; they have tight deadlines for response. The 2 before us are Mod 29a relating to Puxton Moor Lane, and Mod 29b, relating to May's Lane. (Maps are attached to form a part of these minutes). **The meeting asked the Clerk to respond to these consultations, as they come through, on the basis that the Council objects to the 'mechanically propelled vehicle' element of the designation as being entirely inappropriate** (Mod 29a, for example, relates to Avon Wildlife's Puxton Moor, which would be devastated by motor vehicles, which would enter with no clear exit route except that by which they entered. Obviously, if the

Clerk feels a particular consultation needs to come before the Council for particular scrutiny he will put it down as an agenda item for the next-following meeting.

102/17 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Cllr Howard

Telephone / Power lines: those opposite Howard Cottage in Puxton Road are overgrown. Clerk to check post details and inform the appropriate utility company.

Parish E-Mail Register: They developed one in Newport, Glos, Where Cllr Howard was previously a Councillor. It proved very effective as a communication channel and community-builder. Cllr Howard undertook to start assembling a list from among his contacts and neighbours Clerk to put a piece in the Autumn Newsletter seeking e-mail addresses to start a Puxton register.

Fly-tipping: this eternal concern prompted Cllr Howard to ask what the Parish did to discourage fly-tipping and to ask if, for example, cameras might help. The Clerk explained how CPSO Broomfield and NSC's local Community Response Officer worked closely in monitoring and clearing fly-tipping and searching it for clues as to the perpetrators. The very deviousness of the fly-tipper's operations makes them difficult to catch in the act, and apparently cameras - even if they could be placed to catch particular tipping areas, are prone to vandalism and theft. The Council will continue to be alert to the problem and the Clerk will maintain his sound contacts with the police and NSC over the issue.

Cllr Corbett

Parking in Puxton Road: Parking is haphazardly done on either or both sides of the road, sometimes turning it into a single track highway. This is also a problem in Maygreen Lane at its junction with Palmer's Elm. Cllr Corbett's suggestion that parking restrictions might help was not deemed possible of achievement because, as in many areas of the district, such parking is presently legal and acts as an enforcer of more careful negotiation of the highway by motorists.

Myrtle Farm, Puxton Lane: An extension is going up - it appears robust enough to covert to a house - what planning application does it relate to? Clerk to investigate.

103/17 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** In the Village Hall on the 7th September 2017 at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm