

THE CIVIL PARISH OF PUXTON
Comprising the villages of Puxton and Hewish
In the North Somerset Council Ward of Congresbury and Puxton

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL
Thursday 9th MAY 2024 AT 8.00 pm

Present: Lynda Redding - Chair; Don Hill - Minute Taker; 13 Other Attendees

APM24/01 APOLOGIES

NSC Cllr Dan Thomas, PPC Cllrs P Penfold, Victoria Butterfield and Mel Ellis

APM24/02 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF LAST YEAR'S MEETING

The Chair highlighted some key topics and action points from the minutes. There being no objections from anyone who attended the meeting, the minutes were signed by the Chair as a true record.

APM24/03 REPORTS FROM INTEREST GROUPS

PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Meetings

The Parish Council held meetings on the first Thursday of each month except August, as usual, and February as we were not quorate due to illness. It is unfortunate that yet again we were unable to hold our May meeting on the first Thursday as the Hall was requisitioned as a Polling Station.

Agendas

We have had a steady stream of planning applications, mostly fairly routine. We were disappointed that North Somerset Council maintained their resistance to allow permission for any house to be built that is not on the footprint of an existing barn. We feel that young families of residents are being forced to move away from the parish because of a lack of suitable accommodation.

The speed of vehicles along our lanes are always a concern and we continue to urge North Somerset Council to consider reducing the speed limits. Damage to the roads caused by heavy traffic continues to be reported. Our concern about increased traffic through Puxton when the Banwell bypass is being constructed and after it is completed fell on deaf ears.

Safety along the A370, especially in front of the school, is of concern. There have been several minor accidents and near misses at school drop off and pick up times. We have been in communication with the Principal Engineer responsible for neighbourhood traffic and road safety voicing our concerns and asking that the speed limit be reduced. The response was to explain why this is not possible for reasons that do not seem logical. We are seeking a grant to purchase a Vehicle Activated illuminated sign to alert drivers to their speed and the speed limit. This will also collect data on the speed and volume of traffic.

The central refuge has been installed to aid crossing the ever busy A370 at Hewish. The Parish Council has paid the agreed £4,300 towards the cost of the refuge. The new bridge across the Oldbridge river was scheduled to be built this year but has been delayed. We have not been informed when this will be re-scheduled. The bridge has to be strengthened, NSC assure us there will be a width restriction on the new bridge.

Finance

Another uneventful year, the precept was £10,082. The online banking continues to facilitate payments. We are grateful to our Clerk for managing our finances, accounts and audits efficiently.

Lynda Redding - Chair of Puxton Parish Council

Hewish & Puxton Village Hall Ltd

The facilities at Hewish and Puxton Village Hall have continued to improve in the last year. With the help of a grant from North Somerset Council an impressive screen and projector has been installed to add to the hearing loop and sound system. The front door and exit door at the rear have been replaced, the side door is to be replaced tomorrow. Some of this has been funded from hire income. We are a not-for-profit charitable organisation and have not raised the hire charge for more than ten years but are pleased to report income has matched expenditure.

We had hoped to reinstate the New Year's Eve Party but it didn't work out this year, hopefully it will at the end of the year. I would be glad to hear of your opinion of a summer celebration.

I would like to thank our regular users and the committee for their support. Pauline has continued to do a great job juggling the bookings and Dave has kept on top of the maintenance.

Lynda Redding - Chair Hewish and Puxton Village Hall

APM24/04 OPEN DISCUSSION

Potholes

A complaint was made about the pothole repairs on Puxton Lane towards Sandford. This matched a complaint to the Parish Council immediately after the work was completed. Three specific points were raised: 1. Several large potholes were not repaired. 2. The contractor's lorries did damage to the sides of the highway by the way they parked: and staff were abusive when this was pointed out to them. 3. Some of the new work will end up being pushed into the rhyes by the weight of traffic using this narrow road.

Planning Issue

Concern was raised about a possible infringement of planning regulations on a site within the parish that has been the subject of several planning applications over recent years. The Parish Council can research the planning background. If a reasonable case is evidenced for submission of a complaint to North Somerset Council planning enforcement, this can be done.

Palmers Elm

The garden and car park areas of Flavours continue to be a dumping ground for rubbish in a way that is unsightly and un-neighbourly. The lack of facilities for the upper floor bedsits remains a mystery. The existing garage is to become a bins and re-cycling area: it is feared that the bins will end up being left in an unsightly mess outside the garage rather than inside. In all, the standards of upkeep at Flavours is, and seems likely to continue as, a serious blight on the community cohesiveness of Palmers Elm. Despite having 18 parking spaces, residents of Flavours persistently park on the highway outside other residents' properties. It is understood that they are within their rights to park on the highway, but given their dedicated car parking facilities this is, at best un-neighbourly and and at worst leaves nowhere for visitors to other Palmers Elm properties to park. The Parish Council had noted this in their review of the planning application and the comment they will submit to North Somerset Council planners will urge that a condition be placed on the passing of the application that the property be kept up to a proper level of cleanliness and order. They also plan to check, via North Somerset Council's Community Response Officer, to see if it is possible to arrange some monitoring or intervention to ensure that community standards are upheld.

Parish communications

Various attempts have been made over the years, both by enterprising residents and by the Parish Council, to produce a regular parish newsletter. These attempts have foundered, in part due to a lack of contributors, a lack of feedback and a lack of volunteer distributors. The building of specific email contact lists, as attempted by the Parish Council, have been inhibited by a lack of response and, over recent years, by the imposition of tight restrictions laid down by the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Communication on parish issues therefore tends to rely on occasional flyers being produced and on spreading the word via personal communication networks.

It was proposed that a Facebook page be set up that could provide a good communications link between residents. To avoid such a page falling into the pitfalls of so many social media sites it was suggested that this Facebook page should be a private - membership only - site. This idea was enthusiastically received by the meeting and the proposer offered to set such a Facebook page up (*which they did at the Hall after the meeting closed*). As such schemes are known to work well in several other parishes, the success of this venture is to be looked forward to.

Hall Parties

These have proved a success among those who have attended them (as evidenced at his meeting!). The meeting hoped that, with good early publicity, another New Year party can be held at the end of this year. There was also good support for the idea of another mid-year party - in September rather than earlier to avoid it taking place during a time when many families will be away on holiday. These reactions will be taken on board by the Village Hall management team.

There being no further topics raised, the Chair thanked everyone for coming, offered them tea and cakes before their departure, and closed the meeting at 8.45pm.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

May 9th 2024 - 8pm - The Village Hall

This is an open forum for electors in the Parish to express their views, their concerns and their aspirations in relation to the betterment of our community.

Topics that may come up are transport, policing, highways, planning, relations with neighbouring parishes, parish facilities, volunteering... you name it and you can add it to the list. For example North Somerset Council have been consulting on the introduction of car parking charges in the districts towns and three weekly black bin collections... what do you think of these proposals?

The format of the meeting will be as set out below in the Agenda.

AGENDA

Tea and cakes will be available to attendees!

1. Apologies

2. Matters arising from minutes of last year's meeting

The 2023 agenda and minutes can be found on the minutes and agendas page of our website at puxtonparishcouncil.org.uk, under 'Additional Documents' for May 2023.

The Chair will read key points from the minutes and confirm that any actions called for were passed to the Parish Council, followed up, and reported via their minutes. After any matters arising have been discussed, and if there are no objections from anyone who attended the meeting, the minutes will be signed as a true record.

3. Reports from Interest Groups if Available

Parish Council Chairman's report / Financial report
North Somerset Council
Hewish & Puxton Village Hall Ltd
Any other reports

4. Discussion

An open forum on issues of concern to the parish and its elector

PUXTON PARISH COUNCIL

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

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MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL - WEDNESDAY 17th MAY 2023 AT 8.00 pm

Present: Lynda Redding - Chair. Don Hill - Minute Taker. 17 Other Attendees

APM23/01 APOLOGIES

Victoria Butterfield, Mel Ellis, Cllr Dan Thomas, Paul Skone

APM23/02 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF LAST YEAR'S MEETING

The Chair read out key points from the minutes and confirmed that any actions called for were passed to the Parish Council, followed up, and reported via their minutes. With no objections from anyone who attended the meeting, the minutes were signed as a true record.

APM23/03 REPORTS FROM INTEREST GROUPS

The Parish Council Chair's report to their Annual Meeting was read out and is appended to form a part of these minutes

A report from Hewish & Puxton Village Hall Ltd was read out and is appended to form a part of these minutes.

APM23/04 BUSES AND SOCIAL MOBILITY TRANSPORT

This service has not been well advertised. Cllr Redding suggested posters could be put up (*post meeting research showed that none were available*). She also, upon enquiring about getting to Wedmore (in Somerset, therefore outside the service area), discovered that the service does not operate in the Puxton area (see attached map): she was advised to cycle. The lack of information, together with the exclusion of Puxton from the service, did not inspire the meeting to further discussion.

APM23/05 DISCUSSION

Palmers Elm

There were two worries discussed, neither of which invited an 'easy fix':

- i. **Flavours:** With the business apparently now closed, the site is becoming increasingly unsightly. Cooking oil drums, and much other rubbish as well, is accumulating on the grounds, which themselves are fast deteriorating into a horrendous and unsafe eye sore. There are also an unaccountably large number of residents now seemingly in occupation - all entirely pleasant, but the set up seems 'odd'. The Person apparently running the place is not proving cooperative. All this is, of course, happening on private property, so scope to get the situation improved is limited. To the extent that the Parish Council

might be able to mediate, discussions with the Freeholder, North Somerset Council Environmental Health and the local policing team may offer a way forward. However slim a contribution this might be, **it can be passed to the Parish Council to review and take forward as possible.**

- ii. **Neighbours:** A graphic scenario emerged that led to the question ‘What is to be done when an area has a nightmarishly anti-social household in its midst?’ It appears that the landlord is Alliance Housing. If this is so it sounds as though the tenants will be in clear breach of their tenancy agreement, and involving the Landlord *should* do much to sort out the issue. A call to the police on 101 would also establish a case number against which, if a diary of antisocial activity is kept, a police evidence file could be built up. There is little that other agencies can do to help in this far-too-common problem area. *(Post meeting note: Cll Riddell, a former police officer with wide experience, will contact those concerned about a way forward along the police route in cases of anti-social behaviour).*

St Annes Burial Ground

Maintenance of this area is the responsibility of North Somerset Council. Some years ago Don Hill, in his role as Clerk to the Parish Council, met with them and a maintenance scheme that worked was put in place. This seems to have lapsed so the matter will be passed to the Parish Council for it to be re-instituted. **Don Hill to pass to Parish Council to be progressed.**

Wick Lane Traffic and Pedestrian Safety over the Rail Bridge

Concern was expressed about the way Wick lane is becoming a rat-run again. A particular worry is pedestrian safety over the railway bridge. Three things could help ease things; more regular weeding and cutting back of overgrowth, clear and well maintained pedestrian-way markings, and ‘Beware, Pedestrians’ notices at either end of the bridge. The Parish Council paid for the the ‘Cyclists Obey Red Lights’ notices, so there is a precedent for them paying for pedestrian notices. **Don Hill to pass to Parish Council to be progressed.**

There being no further points to be raised, the Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm