

MINUTES of the MEETING of NETTLECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL
held on MONDAY 11th November 2019 at THE EMN HALL – 8.00 pm

Correspondence and other documents were available from 7.45 pm for Councillors to read prior to the meeting.

PRESENT: Cllrs Marilyn Crothers (Chair), Oliver Reynolds, Iain Mackie, Martin Dewdney, Somerset West & Taunton Councillor Marcus Kravis, and Carol Juffs (Clerk). From 8.15 pm PSCO Sue Thompson.

IN ATTENDANCE: No residents present

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Somerset Councillor Christine Lawrence
SW&T Councillor Peter Pilkington (attending Dunster PC)
Cllrs Ben Lintott, Liz Scott, Robin Wichard

2. MINUTES of the Meeting on 12th August 2019

These were signed as a true record of the meeting.

3. POLICE REPORT

The Chairman began reading a report submitted earlier by PSCO Sue Thompson from Avon and Somerset Police, and then she was able to join the meeting.

There has been a spate of rural break-ins to outbuildings and tradesmen's vehicles. Owners of work vans are encouraged to park with the access into vans made more difficult, and to remove all tools if possible.

The team had been working with communities in the run-up to Halloween speaking to young people about 'trick and treating' and speaking to shop owners to discourage the sale of eggs and flour to children. On the night PSCOs Sue Thompson and Sue Marks were out on bikes, supported by three Special Constables, patrolling the Williton and Watchet areas, which was clearly beneficial, with no reports of anti-social behaviour.

Paul Johnson is newly appointed to Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, and Sarah Mackie remains the local person responsible for Beggearn Huish.

PSCO Thompson asked everyone to remain vigilant for vulnerable people in our communities during the colder, winter months, and for the risk of ever-increasing telephone scams and cold callers.

Nettlecombe as a Parish benefits from small clusters of communities that look out for each other, and therefore there is a low level of incidence.

4. SOMERSET AND SOMERSET WEST & TAUNTON COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS

Councillor Kravis reported that the Planning Department is now up to full quota, due to a recent recruitment drive and as a result, planning applications are on a much swifter response time.

The business development strategy is on-going with such different and diverse areas across West Somerset and Taunton as a whole to take in to consideration. Local Plan consultation has been put on hold during the run-up to the General Election in December.

Asset transfers have been reviewed and West Somerset asset registers were probably more complete as compared to the original Taunton Deane. Work is on-going, with a huge task ahead relating to such matters as grass verge ownership, toilet blocks etc.

West Somerset is getting its fair share of focus as compared to Taunton - East Quay development has begun at Watchet. Parking disparities across the area have cropped up, eg Wiveliscombe has free parking to attract trade. Hoping to get uniformity across the area in time.

Cllr Reynolds noted Coastal erosion needs to be addressed at Blue Anchor because of the vital coastal road which connects the Minehead area through to Williton, as an alternative to the main road.

Firm Step software used by the Council for contacting them, has been closing matters of enquiry prematurely. Any questions can be addressed directly via email to cllr.m.kravis@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk.

Cllr Dewdney raised residents' concerns that Planning Applications were often delegated decisions. Logistics mean that West Somerset House cannot readily be used for full Council meetings with the size of the premises, and travelling of about a dozen local Councillors across to Taunton was more economical as opposed to some 40 Councillors driving across from Taunton.

5. OPEN FORUM – for all residents

There were no residents attending the meeting for discussion.

6. MATTERS OF REPORT – from 13th August meeting

Exmoor National Park meeting in September was attended by the Chairman. In particular the health of the red deer was discussed and TB concerns were raised

It was noted that the Consultation on the closure of Porlock Fire Station closed at the end of September. There was an update on the Two Valleys Natural Flood Management project. The main aims to reduce the impact of floods and to create and restore wildlife habitats. Young Voices and Young Farmers spoke on farming issues.

The Chairman also attended a well supported Flood Group meeting at Williton Pavilion on October 16th. In Nettlecombe Parish work has commenced at Huish Barton Farm to retain more water. It was noted that the stubble fields certainly hold the rainwater better at the moment. The same topic was also covered at the ENP recent meeting.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

An email was received from Emma Gifford – Somerset Rivers Authority Community Engagement Officer, hoping to attend a meeting with Councillors. Along with her colleague Dawn James. She will be invited to the next Parish Council meeting in 2020 to meet local residents.

Thank you letters for the Parish Council's recent donations were received from the Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance, and Exmoor Search and Rescue groups.

8. HIGHWAYS WINTER SERVICE 19/20

The winter service map was circulated via email. The Chairman was concerned that individuals could no longer go and collect salt to use on our roads not on the routes.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY OF EMAILS

It was noted to remain careful when emailing confidential and sensitive information in relation to GDPR between Councillors – take extreme care.

10. REPORTS

Chairman's Report

Dunster Panel meeting was held on October 1st, with discussion on hedge trimming and varied points of view between parish councils, supporting less tidy hedges with providing better wild life environment.

The Arts Society has begun work on a Church Trail for 8-12 year olds who visit Nettlecombe Church. There may have to be amendments to accommodate those visiting the church from other Faiths.

There was a very successful concert at Nettlecombe Church organised by the NSPCC.

Highways

No report

Planning

Application 3/24/19/002 The Blade Mill has been refused. Interestingly the building is not Listed but a 'Heritage Asset' building. It is included in the Somerset Historic Environmental record of 2016, and therefore considered to be a non-designated Heritage Asset. The applicant may appeal the decision in due course. Applications for Traphole Lodge were withdrawn and new applications have not yet been considered by Old Cleeve.

Footpaths

No report

EMN Hall

Anna Thomas reported that recent functions in the Hall have been very successful. The Craft fair was well attended last weekend.

West Somerset Flood Group

Cllr Reynolds attended the recent October meeting of the West Somerset Flood Group where there were some IT issues and the meeting became rather protracted.

Finance

The Clerk presented two payments for approval – The EMN Hall annual hire for £40, and the Clerk's salary payment 2 hours per week, over 13 weeks at the agreed rate of £9.77 per hour, £254.02. Proposed by Oliver Reynolds and seconded by Martin Dewdney, and signed by the Chairman.

The Clerk presented a spreadsheet showing all transactions to date, with the Bank Balance of £4426.17. The VAT claim for the last two years had been made in September on-line for the first time, and the repayment of £114.01 had been received direct to Bank.

It was noted that there had been no grass cutting invoice since the beginning of June and the Chairman was going to follow this up with Derek Quartly who now sweeps chimneys in the winter months. We may owe some £650 for the mowing to date.

11. FUTURE BUSINESS/MATTERS FOR MEMBERS' INFORMATION

Parish Supper at Nettlecombe Court Friday 17th January 2020 at 19.00 for 19.30

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 Clive Thorne IT Support

Clive Thorne has emailed to advise he would like to step down from running the Nettlecombe website at the February meeting. He sent a brief description of what the role entails, amounting to a couple of hours per month. All Councillors were asked to consider who might be asked to take on this voluntary role.

12.2 Chairmanship

Cllr Marilyn Crothers announced that she would like to step down from the role of Chairman at the AGM in May, but would like to remain on the Parish Council.

12.3 Defibrillator

A resident had asked if there was an opportunity to have a defibrillator installed in the Parish as the nearest would be either Roadwater or Monksilver. It was agreed that there was not really a suitable location in or near Beggearn Huish, but recognised the concerns with the senior average age of the community.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday February 10th 2020 – 8pm at the EMN Hall