

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NETTLECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE EMN HALL, MONKSILVER
MONDAY 8th AUGUST 2022 at 8.00 pm**

Present: Cllrs Robin Wichard (Chair), Iain Mackie, Marilyn Crothers, Liz Scott, Caroline Moore, Martin Dewdney. Somerset Cllr Christine Lawrence. Carol Juffs- Clerk.

1. Apologies for Absence

Oliver Reynolds, SW&T Cllr Marcus Kravis

2. MINUTES of the Meeting Held on May 9th 2022

The Minutes were reviewed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. OPEN FORUM – FOR ALL RESIDENTS

Jubilee Celebration and picnic held at the EMN Hall in June was attended by the Chairman and Clerk. It is hoped to do more events in the future combining the interests of the parishes and bringing together the two communities.

4. POLICE REPORT

The Chairman reported a vehicle break-in in the Notley Arms Car park at Monksilver, when a vehicle window was smashed and a purse stolen. The victim of this crime is the Chairman's neighbour and she had spent four hours trying to get a response from dialling 101 unsuccessfully. The Chairman offered to assist with contacting the Police and he too waited almost 3 hours until finally getting a response that someone would return his call, which had not happened after 7 hours! The next day he rang again and finally got a response after nearly a two hour wait, was given a Crime reference number for the incident, but advised that was basically all they would do, implying there would be no follow up. This is despite the fact that cctv images exist of the crime area with suspicious activity around the cars parked.

The Chairman raised his concerns over the poor level of policing received in this Parish. This is not a reflection on our local PCSO (in whom we have great confidence) but in the wider support given by the Avon and Somerset Police.

The Clerk also reported that youths were driving their cars in tight circles in the EMN Hall car park late at night. When Monksilver's Chairman had also tried reporting the incident via 101 he too had spent considerable time trying to get through.

PCSO Sue Thompson has advised that concerns like these of poor response should be addressed to the Police Commissioner. Cllr Lawrence gave his contact details below:

Mark.shelford@avonandsomerset.police.uk

5. SOMERSET and SOMERSET WEST & TAUNTON COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

The Local Government reorganisation is on-going, but sadly the geography of the Local Community Networks – LCNs – has not been completed, and is expected later in the year. This is not an encouraging start as there are no further details to boundaries or even the total number of LCNs, following a meeting earlier today.

Council Tax consultation runs until 19th September for those requiring support. The maximum relief is set at 80-85% for most parts of the County, and this is the first major policy consultation for the new Council.

Somerset & Devon Trading Standards had a recent raid on illegal tobacco estimated to be worth in excess of £200k – one of the largest of its kind by the service. Recent operations through 2021 and 2022 have now totalled in excess of £310k in illegal tobacco.

The launch of a new Wheelchair and community equipment service will help people to live more independently. More information is available at

www.somerset.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/equipment-to-help-you

Cllr Lawrence also advised that additional funding had been made available to support tackling violence against women and girls. The Councillors hoped this would be extended to support men and boys too.

Somerset Business Climate Change Summit will take place at Queens College Taunton on September 21st 10 – 13.00. More details can be found at

www.somerset.gov.uk/climate-emergency/climate-emergency-businesses/climate-summit

The Chairman asked about the Cost of Living crisis and its impact on the parishioners. If anyone knows of anyone requiring help please contact the Village Agent Izzy Sylvester on 07931018045 to advise her and she will follow this up.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Lawrence for her comprehensive and concise report.

There was no report from the Somerset West Councillors

6. CORRESPONDENCE

No items of correspondence had been received.

7. MATTERS of REPORT

The Chairman is preparing a report for Cllr Kravis regarding local internet provision and had raised a query with BT about the roll-out of Fibre Broadband to the area. However, there is no update for the Yarde and Woodford areas even in the next 3-month bulletin, which is very frustrating, despite being rolled out to neighbouring Stogumber, Bicknoller, and Vellow areas.

There will be a talk in Nettlecombe Church about the restoration of the effigies there on 16th September – further details to be found in Pathways magazine.

8. REPORTS - CURRENT

Chairman's Report and ENPA

The Exmoor National Park Meeting took place on June 23rd without any direct impact on the Parish. The topic of Rural Housing might have referred to the Parish but the scheduled speaker had stood down ahead of the meeting.

It was interesting to hear the Voices of Young Exmoor, and other matters but nothing specifically related to the Parish to be able to report back.

The Chairman will attend the next meeting on September 15th at 8pm.

It was very interesting to hear about the Ukranian family now living with the Chairman, and their introduction to the community and Old Cleeve school.

It is regretted that there has been no re-convening of the Dunster Panel and the positive networking it generated. The Council's concerns will be passed on to Cllr Kravis to ensure that the Dunster Panel can be re-instated in the near future.

Highways

Two pot holes between Woodford and the Church access lane had been repaired today, according to the confirmation email sent to Cllr Crothers.

Footpaths

Cllr Scott had met the ENP officer responsible for footpaths in the area and established that the responsibility for her local footpath had returned to Ben Lintott, and yet they were very overgrown. The ENP Officer returned the next day and trimmed the path to regain access. As the farm is now sold it will be necessary to establish responsibility again.

The footpath behind the Manor House in Beggearn Huish, heading down towards the river, has now been fenced off from the cattle grazing in the field adjacent, which is very satisfactory.

Planning

The Blade Mill, drawing number 1122/11, has got consent for the garage to be extended to provide a further room and access to the loft externally. The visual impact will be limited behind what already exists, and cannot go much further due to the new landscaping.

Torre house was a small application due to the property being Listed, to provide a porch and adapt an outbuilding. The property has now been sold.

Tinker's Cottage planning application was granted.

Gerald Cole at Huish Farm has put in a permitted development application under the GDO to extend his green barn constructed some 8 or 9 years ago. The original barn was only built to ¾ of the size of the original consent so is now looking to add on the additional quarter on the field side in the ENP. The current excavation works are to divert water entering the back of the building and do not form part of the application.

The application has been withdrawn at Higher Barn Farm, Slade Lane to install solar panels, and it is not currently understood as to why.

The Solar farm application on Rob Dibble's tenanted farm, Wyndham Estate, has much more information submitted relating to alterations and has received 116 objections already. The site comes under Williton Parish Council but impacts the neighbourhood. Cllr Reynolds has again written to object about the loss of good quality agricultural land if this solar farm goes ahead. A photo montage had been submitted trying to allay fears about the visual impact, but as it extends to over 100 acres it will be a significant sight. No decision has yet been made.

There has been no official planning application relating to Langham barns in Beggearn Huish yet.

EMN Hall

No report has been received from Ann Thomas since the lockdown period. The significant hike in room rental fees stands despite writing to appeal. The Committee are clearly trying to recoup loss of income during the pandemic. When our meetings were held via Zoom, the Committee did agree to a reduced letting fee for 2021-2 of £20.

West Somerset Flood Group

Cllr Moore attended her first WSFG meeting on 28th June and met the Chair Brenda Maitland-Walker and other attendees. Unfortunately, the Minutes of that meeting have not yet been circulated. There have been a couple of emails recently from SWAN - Somerset Water Action Network, which covers

right across the county Their next meeting is on October 5th at Dunster Memorial Hall, which Cllr Moore will attend.

Other Parish Matters

The Noticeboard in Yarde is in a state of disrepair and will be dealt with shortly by Mr Juffs.

Parking of cars on the roadside at Yarde has been increasing again and the Chairman asked if anyone sees obstructions to give him a ring and he will deal with it.

It was noted that traffic generally moves at high speed in the local narrow lanes.

The Parish Supper will take place in November at Nettlecombe Court on Friday November 18th.

Bench is missing from the Church yard of Nettlecombe and Cllr Crothers will follow this up with Lucy Devitt of the PCC.

Clerk – Finance

The reconciled accounts to date were circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting.

1. Confirmation of approval re Accounts 2021/22 sent to Auditors PKF Littlejohn LLP

An email has been received from PKF Littlejohn confirming that Nettlecombe is exempt from External Audit.

2. Payments sent since last meeting

The following payments were all noted and agreed as follows:

Exmoor Search & Rescue £50.00

Devon and Somerset Air Ambulance £50

Monksilver Jubilee group – Lucy Devitt £100

Zurich Insurance 2022/23 £167.44

Auditor Debbie Dennis £20.00

Garden Care and Creation £160.00

Black Cat Computers £125

E C Juffs salary April to June incl £288.60 Gross

Additional Payments for approval:

The following current invoices were all agreed for payment

Garden Care & Creation – Daren Grellier May and June 2022 £320.00

E C Juffs Salary July – September GROSS £270.92 Tax to be paid by ECJ direct to HMRC

EMN Hall - £20 – reduced for 2021-2

E C Juffs – incidental expenses for postage & stationery - £20.21

9. FUTURE BUSINESS/MATTERS FOR MEMBERS' INFORMATION

The Councillors recorded their best wishes and hope for a speedy recovery to Oliver Reynolds. The Clerk will also send a card on behalf of the Councillors.

A letter of thanks will be sent to Ben Lintott as the farm has now been sold, and he has not applied to stand for a Councillor again. An email will be sent as it is uncertain where he will be moving to for a postal address.

10. Date of Next Meeting – Monday 7th November 2022