

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NETTLECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE EMN HALL, MONKSILVER
TUESDAY 8th AUGUST 2023 at 7.30 pm**

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

In attendance: Shelagh Laver, Dan House.

1. Apologies for Absence

Elizabeth Scott, Somerset Councillor Marcus Kravis

2. MINUTES of the Meeting Held on May 9th 2023

It was noted to record the Solar Farm Planning application at Washford Cross in the Planning Review of the Year, which has subsequently been declined, following a lot of opposition.

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

3. OPEN FORUM - FOR ALL RESIDENTS

There were no residents present.

4. SOMERSET COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Cllr Christine Lawrence reported a minimum of £20m overspend with a potential for £28m by the end of this financial year, which will need to be met from reserves. It is going to be a tough year for everybody, with an increasing number of people needing help.

Youth Justice team are looking for volunteers to help support and give encouragement to young people in distress requiring mentoring. If anyone knows of somebody who might be able to help to make a real difference to young people www.volunteering.somerset.gov.uk

It was good to hear that Blenheim Gardens in Minehead had received a Green Flag award. The International Green Flag Award, now in its fourth decade, is a sign to the public that the space has the highest possible environmental standards, is beautifully maintained, and has excellent visitor facilities and 7 parks were awarded in Somerset, including also Vivary Park in Taunton and Swains lane Nature Reserve in Wellington.

The compliance with Allergen Laws has been targeted across Devon and Somerset with 56/100 sandwich shops and Delis that were inspected, breaching the new legislation. This requires full ingredient and allergen labelling on all food made on the premises and pre-packed for direct sale.

The work in Blue Anchor to protect the crumbling cliffs is going well. But the B3191 road to Watchet will not be re-opened due to subsidence of the cliffs, due to no available funding.

5. MATTERS of REPORT from May 9th meeting

There was nothing to report.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

An invitation has been received from Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner Mark Shefford to attend Councillor Forums being held locally - Taunton on 12th September at Trull Village Memorial Hall, or Woolavington Village Hall on 31st October - both meetings scheduled to commence at 17.00. If interested please contact the Clerk to book a place.

7. REPORTS

Chairman's Report

The Chairman has recently been incapacitated through illness and had little to report as a consequence during an otherwise quiet period of the year.

Local Community Network LCN

RW/MC

Marilyn recently attended the first Area 13 LCN meeting via Zoom with the Clerk. Many Parishes were represented for the inaugural meeting and Chairman Councillor Andy Sully and Vice-Chairman Brenda Maitland-Walker were elected. It is hoped that these meetings will deal with the more local issues in this area of Somerset with many Somerset Council representatives present too. Following a short discussion period in small groups it was agreed that the three most topical issues at present were the concerns for Youth development and employment, highways issues and public transport problems serving the countryside. The next meeting is planned for early Autumn.

ENPA

RW

The Chairman was unable to attend the recent meeting due to illness.

Highways

MC

Marilyn recently attended a pre- LCN meeting specifically relating to Highways, when three others attended to discuss local road issues.

There are still two roadside areas coned off where the verge is crumbling away on the approach to Woodford and towards Chidgley.

Several pot holes are worsening on the road from Egypt to Vempletts Cross and beyond. Also Clitsome Lane is deteriorating in a similar way.

MC to email Kali.martin@somerset.gov.uk to get updates on the state of recent submissions

Footpaths

RW

The Chairman visited local farmer Justin Nicholls at Huish Barton farm to request the footpath in Yarde is re-opened, which currently has a cereal crop across it. There is a similar situation from the Egypt junction where the field is also in cereals. Unfortunately, the new owner has not received sufficient information about existing footpaths, but very receptive to guidance on what is needed.

Planning

IM

It is unclear what the state of progress is with the Kennels at Woodford since the application has disappeared from the website. Two days ago it was **undecided** but it is no longer listed and there is no indication of the outcome, which is very unusual. If it had been withdrawn this is usually stated.

A letter was received from Somerset Planning with reference to the Planning application for the development of the former Wansborough Paper Mill at Watchet. Although not in our Parish the impact of traffic transporting materials from Minehead on the A39 over an intense period of multiple HGV movements. It is not clear what these movements involve, but we have been invited to comment on the traffic implications. There are 247 documents relating to the application, with comments across the board from the usual nature related – badgers voles and plants, and even the NHS commenting on the lack of Doctors. Also concerns to the historic importance of the Church on the hill. But there is nothing specific about the number of vehicle movements. The application is for the erection of 350 dwellings and up to 80 sheltered and assisted living apartments; a local centre including hotel and associated leisure facilities; business industrial units up to 8000 m²; business space building up to 480 m²; a public car park and associated footpaths, roads drainage and engineering works. This is one of four applications totalling some 680 houses all together. Massively intensified use of the neighbouring road systems.

Proposal to put a mini roundabout outside the Co-op in Williton and bring the traffic down past the Danesfield school, as opposed to using the large roundabout outside Tropiquaria.

It was agreed to respond with concerns about the long term impact of the volume of traffic, following the closure of the coastal road between Watchet and Blue Anchor Bay as the existing infrastructure of roads will not cope, and to question the proposed route through Williton. It was generally agreed that the development of a

brownfield site was preferable, but whether the material is recycled materials, and hopefully not contaminated – which was the original concern of the industrial site.

Iain Mackie will draft a response and circulate it.

Sarah Wilsher is responsible for this area for the Council and can be contacted at Sarah.Wilsher@somerset.gov.uk and may be able to notify us specifically of applications in the village.

West Somerset Flood Group

CM

There has not been a date for the Autumn meeting as the WSFG Chairman is awaiting an operation.

Other Parish Matters

The West Somerset Railway Association has hired two Community Engagement Officers with a view to taking the Railway out into the Community, by way of talks and promoting how the Railway can work with the community. The two primary projects at the moment are Heritage – producing information about how the Railway has served the Community in the past, and also generating a series of walks between the stations and out into the communities themselves. Some are being designed specifically for Dementia patients and similar groups, and there is also funding for these groups to come and engage with the railway direct, from an Association legacy. Any suggestions from this Parish can be passed to the Chairman for forwarding to the Association.

The Quantocks Towers Benefice now includes 7 parishes, with East and West Quantoxhead joining this Benefice. The contact details are all on the recently updated Parish Church section of the new Website.

Nettlecombe Parish new website

The Councillors were very impressed with the professional new site and wide variety of information. A few new sections were demonstrated at the meeting to show the Local Community Network, and the recent Police newsletter, now that they are no longer able to attend our meetings, and the Parish Church pages.

The Clerk expressed concern over the extra time and effort that Black Cat Computers had put into creating this new site, with hiccups and glitches along the way transferring information from the original website etc. A timesheet of 41 extra hours totalling in excess of £2k had been submitted with an invoice for £160. The Councillors agreed that a further £250 could be offered to reflect inflation, post Covid costs etc. and a gesture of our gratitude for the work carried out. Proposed by Robin Wichard and seconded by Iain Mackie. The Clerk will request an invoice to cover the extra hours.

The Clerk was also thanked for her involvement with the extra work.

www.nettlecombewestsomerset.life

Clerk – Finance

ECJ

We have received confirmation from the County Auditors PKF Littlejohn that they have received our accounts which did not require external auditing.

The financial position of the reconciled bank at July 5th was circulated prior to the meeting, with a bank balance of £3775.

The following payments were approved and paid since the last meeting

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|
| Exmoor Search and Rescue | £50 |
| Devon and Somerset Air Ambulance | £50 |
| Quantock Food Bank | £50 |
| Zurich Insurance 2023/24 | £167.44 |
| Black Cat Computers | £145.00 |
| Auditor, Debbie Dennis | £25 |
| Black Cat Computers Website deposit | £400 |

The following payments were agreed at the meeting for payment

| | |
|--|---------|
| E Carol Juffs Gross salary July-September | £270.92 |
| Black Cat Computers balance of website + extra | £560 |
| <i>Invoiced</i> | |
| Black Cat Computers additional extra hours | £250 |
| <i>To be invoiced</i> | |
| Garden Care and Maintenance | £400 |

There is an error on the calculation of this invoice at £60 per cut opposed to the £80 quoted, and a replacement invoice needs to be submitted – Clerk to follow this up, and to refer to the area under the Yew tree to be cut. All these payments were proposed by the Chairman and seconded by the Vice Chairman

8. CO-OPTION OF NEW COUNCILLORS

The Chairman introduced Shelagh Laver and Dan House who each gave a brief introduction about themselves. Dan House is currently the Centre Manager at Nettlecombe Court since September 2022, having worked with the Field Studies Council for the past fourteen years, and lives locally. The Centre is certainly the largest institution within Nettlecombe Parish and the largest employer, and it is important to be represented. Shelagh Laver is a retired Teacher and Nurse and lives in the Parish, with her family living locally as well. The Chairman welcomed them and asked if they were happy to be co-opted on to Nettlecombe Parish Council. Both agreed and were proposed by the Chairman and seconded by the Vice Chairman. It is proposed that Shelagh will shadow Iain for the rest of the year with a view to taking on the Planning role from him when he steps down.

9. STANDING ORDERS 2023

While updating the website it was noted that there had not been a recent update of the Standing Orders. The Clerk had circulated a draft of the Standing Orders 2023 revision to include updates since the 2014 edition currently on our website.

The main considerations were the *meeting day* has now changed to a Tuesday – the second in the month generally, at an earlier time of 19.30.

Under *Reports from External Organisations* – remove reference to the Police as they no longer attend meetings, but supply a quarterly newsletter.

The *Expenditure* in section 3 needed to be more specific, in particular supplying a reconciled statement of the year-to-date expenditure bank balance ahead of each meeting, and not just at Year End. Also to add about producing the AGAR annually.

Inspection of the Minutes in hard copy is now updated to reflect that they are all available to view on the website by the public.

The *Planning* section reflects that there is no longer documentation recorded in a book. ENP documentation is forwarded to the Councillor responsible for Planning and a link is on the Nettlecombe website direct to Somerset Planning to refer to any application within the Parish.

Finally to reflect moving from District Councillors under the new unitary authority they are referred to as Somerset Councillors.

There is also a stated link to the Nettlecombe Code of Conduct adopted in May 2022

The revised 2023 Standing Orders were adopted, proposed by the Chairman and seconded by the Vice Chairman.

10. FUTURE BUSINESS/MATTERS FOR MEMBERS' INFORMATION

There were no further matters for consideration

11. Date of Next Meeting AGM – Tuesday 7th November 2023

The meeting closed at 20.47 pm