

## NORTH CURRY PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 7:30pm in the Village Hall Meeting Room.

**Present or comments received:** Mrs Tina Stodgell (Chairman), Mrs Jeanne Leader (Vice-Chairman), Mr Phil Stone, Mr Tony Turner, Mr Paul Deacon, Mr Adam Hardwick, Mr Brian Jeanes, Mr Graham Cable, Mrs Griffiths, Mr Mike Dennis, Ms Cecilia Smith, Mr Maurice Wilkins. County Cllr Norman Cavill was also present.

#### 1. Preliminaries:

**To receive and approve apologies for absence:** Apologies were received from Mr Fugett, and Cllr David Fothergill.

**Approve and sign minutes for the previous meeting dated 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023:** Mr Hardwick proposed that the AGM minutes were a true record; Mr Deacon seconded, and all were in favour. Mr Jeanes proposed the Parish Council meeting minutes were a true record; Mrs Griffiths seconded, and all were in favour.

**Declarations of interest** (*Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary interests they have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct*): None declared.

#### 2. Matters Arising:

**Policing matters:** Police weren't involved, but half a bag of compost was stolen from the allotments.

**Update on defibrillator for the Village Hall:** Still waiting for delivery as there is a national shortage. It's been said it may be here by the end of June.

**Update on Wrantage SIDs:** Mr Deacon has circulated a report. Currently just waiting for Highways to confirm when the post will be installed, and a sign needs revising on the existing post. There is a five-day lead time on the SIDs themselves, so they will be installed quickly once the Highways issues are resolved.

**Update on flooding on Broad Lane:** The Clerk has contacted Cllr Fothergill who is still trying to chase setting up the meeting about the flood gates. New manholes have been put in Broad Lane; Mr Stone will investigate this. It is believed a ditch still needs digging by the double bend. Mr Jeanes and Mr Stone will draft a letter to Wessex Water with the Clerk.

**Update on Queen Square line markings:** Still waiting for the work to be done, estimated to be before the end of June. The Clerk has also spoken to the Traffic Management department about re-painting the roundels. One of the traffic engineers will visit the Parish soon to inventory what needs re-doing.

**Update on car parking at Cricket Cottages:** Mr Jeanes has informally spoken to the landowners of the field behind Cricket Cottages about whether they would sell a section of the field to convert into a car park. Pros and cons of building a car park for use by villagers were discussed, and that it could be a use for CIL money. Mr Stone proposed this issue should go on next month's agenda; Mrs Leader seconded, all were in favour. Initial discussions will be had with Highways to see if this is feasible.

**Update on Windmill Hill obstruction:** Complaints are still coming in about this from residents. Somerset Highways has shared there is no funding to create a build-out for this area, especially with lack of accidents. It would have to be funded by the Parish Council. Highways are willing to cover the manhole to reduce the noise. The Chairman proposed not to fund a build-out for this area, and support Highways decision in covering the manhole; Mr Turner seconded, and all were in favour bar one abstention. Mr Turner proposed to write to the property owner explaining what has been decided; Mr Deacon seconded, and all were in favour.

**Update on tree work planning application for Queen Square Garden:** Mr Stone has circulated his report as Tree Warden; he believes the Conifer can come down, and the Holly needs pruning to open up the space. A planning application will be needed due to the size of them as it is in the Conservation area. Some tidying and pruning of other shrubs has been done by Mr Jeanes and Mr Turner.

**Update on plaques for commemorative trees:** Mr Turner has made the complete plaques and was thanked for doing a lovely job.

**County Cllr. Report:** Weekly update being forwarded by email. £4 million has been made available from the Government for EV charger grants. A new Somerset Tree Policy has come in that aims to plant 240 hectares of extra woodland trees per year for 10 years.

**3. Planning applications for comment by North Curry Parish Council:**

**24/23/0017 & 24/23/0019/LB:** *Removal of shed and erection of a veranda to the rear of Manor Lodge, 2 The Fosse, North Curry:* Mr Turner explained the application, and proposed to support it; The Chairman seconded, and all were in favour.

**24/23/0020:** *Erection of a single storey extension to the rear, conversion of garage into ancillary accommodation and replacement of balcony at 1 Lodwells Orchard, North Curry:* Mr Turner explained the application and proposed to support it; Mrs Leader seconded, and all were in favour bar Mr Deacon who abstained.

- 4. To discuss producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan:** Cllr Fothergill got the Clerk in contact with some local Clerks who have recently completed NDPs. The Clerk has also sent round some information about the process. Mr Jeanes has found someone who is interested, and Mrs Leader volunteered to get the project going but doesn't want to lead it long term. Cllr Cavill explained his experience of putting a NDP together and its benefits. Mrs Leader, with help from Mr Hardwick, will start putting the project together and begin investigating and looking for volunteers.
- 5. To discuss creating a new Welcome Booklet:** The Clerk report that Mr Fugett is happy to help. Mr Deacon believes that building a better, regularly updated website would be easier to keep up to date than a welcome booklet. An A4 sheet with a brief history of North Curry that signposts to the website would be a better option than printing a booklet. Mr Deacon proposed not to print a booklet, but instead create this A4 sheet and update the website; Mr Dennis seconded, and all were in favour. The Clerk will also help. The Chairman proposed a separate A4 copy goes out in the Pink Paper when ready, so everyone gets one; Mrs Leader seconded, all in favour.
- 6. To discuss purchasing two 'Thank you for driving carefully through our Village' signs:** Mr Stone has picked out possible locations where there is already room to add these signs to current poles. Three signs will be needed, Mr Stone will get prices for next month's meeting.
- 7. To review the grass cutting grants for NC Sport and Greenway Playing Fields:** North Curry Sport have raised a lot of complications that would come from sharing the tractor with Greenway, but Greenway are happy to investigate whether this could be overcome.
- 8. To discuss purchasing more kissing gates:** Mr Stone explained that another four kissing gates are needed, which would cost £1,800. He has sites in mind for the four new gates and just needs to confer with the landowners. Half of the cost will come from CIL and the other half from the Footpath fund. Mr Stone proposed to go ahead and purchase four gates with a budget of £1,800; Mrs Leader seconded, and all were in favour.
- 9. To consider a tree planting initiative within the Parish:** Mr Stone has circulated a report prior to the meeting. As Mr Stone is a member of Reimagining the Levels, he can get good prices for trees. The Government may also provide a grant due to their new Tree Policy coming into effect. Mr Dennis shared that hedges are undervalued, and he would like to see planting in hedges too. Mr Stone is open to the idea but said it may be difficult for young trees to compete with hedges. Mr Stone asked for a £500 budget which could come out of the tree budget. The Chairman proposed to take £500 from the tree fund for this project; Mr Hardwick seconded, and all were in favour.
- 10. To discuss possible ideas to tackle speeding in the village:** An email was received stating that the funding request for the SID for Moor Lane was unsuccessful, so Mr Meehan and the Speedwatch team have asked if the Parish Council might fund the SID instead. Mr Meehan also sent a report about road signs that are hidden by vegetation, and road markings that are very worn, which would make some speed limits not legally enforceable and therefore police will not set up speed traps in the area. A Highways Engineer has been in touch stating they will be coming to take inventory of what needs refreshing. Mr Meehan and Mr Deacon have taken inventory of road signs which need clearing or cleaning, or are missing, this should be done by Highways and can be reported online. There are strict rules on who can perform the maintenance. Mr Deacon stated a £250 budget would cover replacing and adding new signs, and it could come out of the Wrantage SID budget as money was saved on a pole. The Chairman proposed to go ahead with the £250 budget from the Wrantage SID fund; Mr Wilkins seconded, and all were in favour. A note will go in the Pink Sheet for people to keep their hedges clear of speed signs. There was a discussion about whether to purchase another SID for Moor Lane or get the training required to move the current SIDs around the approved locations. The Chairman proposed that as Moor Lane have gone to so much effort to try and get the SID, the Parish Council should support them and pay £3,000 for the SID, with some coming out of CIL money; Mrs Leader seconded, seven were in favour, two against, and three abstained. The motion was carried. Mr Hardwick would like to know where speed is recorded, whether it

records 'speeding' whilst still in the 30mph zone. Mr Meehan is stepping down as Speedwatch coordinator, so the team are searching for someone to take on this role. The Parish Council thank him for his hard work.

#### 11. Finance:

- a. **Monthly accounts:** The Clerk presented the accounts, The Chairman proposed to accept the accounts; Mr Turner seconded, all were in favour.
- b. **Payment List:** The Clerk presented the payment list and added a late payment of £20 to Mr Case from strimming the allotments twice. Mr Dennis proposed to proceed with the payments; Mrs Griffiths seconded, and all were in favour.

Monthly Payment List - June 2023	Cheque/ BACS/DD	Net	VAT	Due Date
Clerk Salary (June)	BACS	£680.89		30-Jun
NCVH- Room hire (Inv 4007)	BACS	£49.91		
Josh Williams- grass cutting (Inv 77)	BACS	£75.00		
BT phone line (Inv M009 L5)	DD	£29.27	£5.85	
IONOS Website (Inv 203036393012)	DD	£4.00	£0.80	
PlusNet (Inv 061)	DD	£31.44	£6.29	
IONOS HiDrive (Inv 203036286898)	DD	£3.00	£0.60	

12. **Correspondence:** An email was received from a resident stating a van has been blocking the entrance to a footpath to the Meadow at the top of Loscombe Meadow. A discussion was had over whether this is a public right of way; the location needs to be confirmed.

An allotment holder emailed with an idea of creating a produce shed for Greenway Allotments where people can swap produce or leave excess for people to take. The Clerk will write to the Greenway plot holders to see how they would feel about non-plot holders entering the allotments.

An email was received about an overgrown footpath; Mr Stone immediately went and cleared the footpath and was thanked for his dedication and hard work.

#### 13. Committee /Delegate reports:

**Allotments (JL):** A couple of plots were noticed to be overgrown, the Clerk contacted the plot holders, and one plot has now been cleared.

**Footpaths (PS + PD):** A stile has collapsed on one of the footpaths and will need fixing.

**Wildlife Group (PS):** A meeting is being held tomorrow night for those responding to the leaflet about the new group.

14. **Publicity Inputs:** A note about making sure vegetation isn't obscuring traffic signage, a reminder to people to collect coronation mugs, a notice about the three new SIDs coming to the parish, and a bit about how the footpaths are maintained by a couple of hard-working people and those using the footpaths should consider carrying some secateurs with them to do some trimming to help out.

#### 15. Matters for Discussion:

**Mr Dennis:** The LCN meeting was very interesting with lots of ideas. There is another meeting on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> and an official LCN representative is needed as only one person per Parish Council can be nominated to vote, although others can attend as 'members of the public'. As he has attended a previous meeting, it was agreed Mr Dennis would be our voting nominee at this meeting.

**Mr Turner:** The signpost at Burrough Post is tipping over and rusty. This will go on the agenda for next month.

**Mrs Griffiths:** Thank you for the Music Festival support, it was a great success. There is already talk of repeating it next year.

**The meeting was closed at 10:17pm.**