

## NORTH CURRY PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 7:30pm in the Greenway playing field Pavilion.

**Present or comments received:** Mrs Tina Stodgell (Chairman), Mrs Jeanne Leader (Vice-Chairman), Mr Graham Cable, Mr Paul Deacon, Mr Mike Dennis, Mr Brian Jeanes, Ms Cecilia Smith, Mr Phil Stone, Mr Tony Turner. Unitary Councillor David Fothergill was also present. Three members of the public were present.

#### 1. Preliminaries:

**To receive and approve apologies for absence:** Apologies were received from Mr Fugett, Mrs Griffiths, Mr Hardwick, and Mr Wilkins.

**Approve and sign minutes for the previous meeting dated 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024:** Mr Jeanes proposed the minutes were a true record, Mr Turner 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*): Mrs Leader declared an interest in item 4 and 5.

#### 2. Matters arising: see project tracker. Correspondence has been received relating to the project tracker.

**A7527- Ditches on Stoke Road and Huntham Lane:** Highways have said ditches are the landowner's responsibility. The Clerk will copy the email to Cllr Fothergill and Mr Stone who will monitor the situation.

**A7528- Bollard by Borough Post bus stop:** Highways have clarified that training would be needed to install the post and the Parish Council would be liable if it was knocked down again. It was agreed not to proceed with this for now.

**A7529- Nine Acre Lane building site:** Once the deliveries to the site are complete, the developer will organise having the road repaired, likely to be in April. The Clerk will email asking for the damaged road to be temporarily filled with stone to prevent injuries until then.

**A7530- Village Taxi:** The Clerk has spoken to Hatch Beauchamp Parish Council and been given information on running this service. This will be put on hold until Mrs Griffiths is back.

**Car park behind Cricket Cottages:** Mr Jeanes has spoken to the landowners and shown them a realistic car park plan, the field has tenants for another 2 years and nothing would be done until near the end of the tenancy. There was a tentative agreement that around 1/3 of an acre may be acceptable to sell, possibly for around £5,000. This could be considered further in the Neighbourhood Plan.

**LCN meetings:** Mr Dennis shared that the LCN meetings have been discussing that Highways Wardens may be brought in to tackle small jobs on the highways, with one Warden per several parishes. There are concerns about this and Mr Dennis has joined the steering group. This will be discussed properly at the next Parish Council meeting.

#### 3. County Cllr. Report: Weekly update being forwarded by email.

There are free photos of King Charles III available for councils; Mrs Leader proposed to get one, Mr Deacon seconded, and all were in favour. The clerk will order one.

#### 4. To approve the North Curry Sport Ltd draft renewal lease, following the meeting of the working group:

The working group meeting went through each item requested from North Curry Sport Ltd (NCSL), and the solicitor is working on a draft lease. It is not yet ready. The clerk will chase the solicitor and a special meeting can be called if needed to get this sorted as NCSL have a tight deadline.

#### 5. To discuss the contractor chosen to design the drainage project, and agree the procedure should North Curry Sport Ltd have CIL funds leftover after paying for the design and feasibility process:

NCSL have found a contractor, Mr Jackson has sent a report on how this contractor was chosen to prove value for money; Mr Jeanes proposed they have done due diligence in finding a contractor, the Chairman seconded, and all were in favour bar Mrs Leader who abstained. In terms of leftover CIL, it was decided that the parish council will cover the cost of the design invoice and keep the remaining CIL money.

#### 6. To consider contributing towards the costs of the May Fair:

The May Fair committee are facing costs of £800 just to open the May Fair with road closure costs. Road closure applications will cover 2 events for an 18-month period, so would cover two May Fairs. The Chairman proposed to grant £400 to help this year but encourage fundraising and forward planning for coming years; Mr Dennis seconded, and all were in favour.

- 7. To discuss recent issues regarding management of the Moor Lane flood gate:** A complaint was received from a resident about management of the flood gates and signs (A7533); the Clerk will assure the resident that this is being worked on, with Caroline Vaughan the Flood Warden too. Cllr Fothergill has also spoken to Highways about this (A7534); Highways have said that people are opening the flood gates when the road is officially closed, which causes confusion. Highways suggest that more communication is needed with the public so they understand that just because the water is gone, the road is not necessarily safe; Highways have to inspect the road substrate as it could be damaged. It is an offence to tamper with a road closure, and driving on a closed road invalidates car insurance and endangers life.
- 8. To decide whether to proceed with setting up councillor email addresses:** This was postponed until the next meeting due to Mr Hardwick's absence.
- 9. To discuss ideas and plans for the APM:** The Clerk has contacted the Police and Crime Commissioner who have agreed that a representative can come to the APM and talk about relevant issues. The Neighbourhood Plan launch is also confirmed. Ideas were discussed for others to invite; this will be reviewed and finalised next month. It was agreed that cheese and wine should be on offer as well as tea and coffee. The Village Hall will be contacted to see if the King Charles III portrait can be unveiled at the APM and hung in the hall.
- 10. To agree a date for the March litter pick:** The litter pick will be held on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March starting at 10:30am at the Village Hall. The clerk will organise for the litter to be collected by IdVerde.
- 11. To decide whether to grant £200 to the inter-parish Tug of War event:** Mr Dennis explained that this doesn't appear to be needed at the moment and is still under discussion. The Chairman proposed to put this request on hold until further notice; Mr Dennis seconded, and all were in favour. Going forwards, the Parish Council would be willing to support North Curry's team entry fee!
- 12. To review the grass cutting price for 2024-2025 for Queen Square Gardens:** The price per cut is increasing from £75 to £79. As this is such a small increase and still significantly less than last year's other quotes, the Chairman proposed to accept the £79 per cut; Mrs Leader seconded, and all were in favour.
- 13. To approve the quote from Somerset Council for dog bin emptying 2024-2025:** The price is increasing from £1,524.64 + VAT to £1,626.56 + VAT. The dog bins are heavily used which is excellent, and it is a vital service. The Chairman proposed to accept the new price, Mr Deacon seconded, and all were in favour.
- 14. To consider a request from the North Curry Environment Group to have a direct link to their website on the front page of the Parish Council website:** The group are setting up a new website to merge the two groups and would like a link to it on the top bar of the website. Mr Jeanes proposed to go ahead, Mr Deacon seconded, and all were in favour. Mrs Leader will ask Mr Wilkins to link the Environment Group Facebook page to the Parish Council one too.
- 15. To discuss possible replacement of the Loscombe Meadow footpath fence and barrier:** Mr Stone still needs to speak to the owner of the cows that have damaged the fence. Mr Jeanes suggested that to repair the barrier, it could be concreted and bolted in; the concrete stump would cost £15.84 and some bolts would be needed. Mr Dennis proposed to proceed with this repair with a £25 budget; Mrs Leader seconded, and all were in favour.
- 16. To discuss the possibility of purchasing the small piece of land off of Stoke Road, as Somerset Council are selling off some of their assets:** There has been no progress with this.
- 17. Finance:**
- Monthly accounts:** The Chairman proposed to accept the accounts, Mr Deacon seconded, and all were in favour.
  - Payment list:** Mr Dennis proposed to proceed with the payments, Ms Smith seconded, and all were in favour.

Monthly Payment List - February 2024	Cheque/ BACS/DD	Net	VAT	Due Date
Somerset Forge- Borough Post refurb	BACS	£1,335.00	£267.00	
Somerset Council- dog bin emptying	BACS	£381.16	£76.23	
NCVH- Pink Sheet Contribution (Inv 3040)	BACS	£620.00		
Post Office 8 x 2nd class stamps (refund to Clerk)	BACS	£6.00		<b>PAID</b>
SLCC training- engaging community	BACS	£65.00	£13.00	18-Feb
Materials for allotment produce shed (refund to Paul)	BACS	£121.95		<b>PAID</b>
Screwfix- padlocks for SIDs	BACS	£16.48	£3.30	
Viking- toner and stationary (Inv 3629212)	BACS	£241.76	£48.35	

SLCC finance and audit training (Inv BK214835-1)	BACS	£20.00	£4.00	07-Mar
NCVH room hire (Inv 4204)	BACS	£23.27		
Inkspiration- Neighbourhood Plan Logo (refund to Jeanne)	BACS	£20.00		<b>PAID</b>
Clerk salary (February)	BACS	£736.10		29-Feb
BT EV charger line (M017 IM)	DD	£29.27	£5.85	
IONOS Website (Inv 203040184466)	DD	£4.00	£0.80	
BT office broadband (Inv M007 NU)	DD	£35.94	£7.19	
IONOS HiDrive (Inv 203040072058)	DD	£3.00	£0.60	

- c. **To consider an additional bank signatory and member for the Finance Advisory Panel:** Mr Jeanes proposed that Mrs Leader should be added as a bank signatory on all three accounts; the Chairman seconded, and all were in favour. It was also decided that all petty cash should be paid into the bank accounts as it is used so little, and BACS is preferred for refunds.

#### 18. Correspondence.

**A7536:** A notice that there will be 28 weeks of road works on Stoke Road to upgrade the water works.

**A7537:** A reminder from a resident for people to stick to footpaths.

**A7538:** An Affordable Housing Report was received from Polden Planning; they have been trying to find a plot for a housing scheme in Hatch Beauchamp and had to show they have explored all areas, so have included North Curry and asked if the Parish Council want to comment. Mr Turner proposed to reply saying the Parish Council have noted the report but at this time do not wish to make a comment especially as creating a Neighbourhood Plan; Mr Dennis seconded, and all were in favour.

**A7539:** The Brewhouse are asking for a small grant towards community events such as warm rooms and children's activities. Mr Jeanes proposed not to go ahead as the Parish Council prefer to look after local facilities; Ms Smith seconded, and all were in favour.

**Late addition:** The Clerk received a postcard from local walkers asking if the broken stile on Denman's Hill footpath could be repaired. Mr Stone will investigate.

#### 19. Committee /Delegate reports:

**Allotments (JL):** Loscombe allotments- see if one has been given up. Adam will be contacting the school to mention their overgrown plot. Mr Deacon will install the allotment box around Easter time.

**Tree Warden (PS):** Mr Stone needs to pick up bird cherry. Investigating problematic lime tree still. Going to plant 8 fruit trees in Lockyers field.

**Footpaths (PS + PD):** Lots of requests to replace styles with kissing gates.

**Neighbourhood Plan (JL):** Working towards launch events at APM and May Fair. Sorting out questionnaire too. Also want to set up Facebook page. Having post office display window for 2 weeks leading up to APM.

**20. Publicity Inputs:** Will include a reminder to footpath users and landowners, information about the March litter pick, a note about the APM and Neighbourhood Plan launch.

#### 21. Matters for Discussion:

**Mrs Leader:** The proposed glamping site at the bottom of Oxen Lane is being discussed by Somerset Council Planning Committee on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> and the agenda says the officers have recommended approving it. The owner of the traveller site has previously said if this is passed, his community will fight for approval to live on their site. Mrs Leader will attend the Somerset Council meeting to represent the views of the Parish Council and ensure they know the history of the surrounding site.

**Ms Smith:** Dr Hickman is leaving the practise; the Parish Council will do something to mark this. One Tree Farm is apparently looking for new tenants to move in, they are also potentially discharging grey water onto thirteen bends- this is being looked into.

**The meeting concluded at 9:57pm.**

## North Curry Parish Council - Project Tracker/ Matters Arising

Project	Latest progress	Still to do
<b>Helland to Huntham drove</b>	Phil has written to Bridleways asking if the application has been withdrawn yet so the drove can be cleared- no response yet.	Liaise with involved parties to re-open.
<b>Wrantage and Moor Lane SIDS</b>	<i>New Wrantage post has been installed in the wrong location- Paul is liaising with Highways to fix this.</i> Moor Lane post and SID are installed.	Need post from Highways to relocate Wrantage West SID. Two new posts expected in Spring 2024.
<b>Broad Lane flooding</b>	Working group formed to tackle issues (Brian, Phil, Ian). Phil has sent a report out to residents on Broad Lane and affected parties. Has received 7 responses; mixed feedback.	Discuss actions to get the rest of the landowners to get agreement from as many as possible to work together to reduce the flooding.
<b>Queen Square line markings</b>	Line markings have been done in Queen Square.	Waiting for roundels to be done, large back log. 30mph roundels are showing again on Stoke Road- need to be burned out.
<b>Queen Square Gardens tree work</b>	Replacement tree has been decided upon- white bird cherry tree.	Date for work to go ahead. Plant new bird cherry tree when work complete.
<b>Neighbourhood Plan</b>	Steering group terms of reference have been agreed, as has consultant. Initial funding of £5,000 from CIL agreed. Official Designation has been received and can be seen on the SC website.	First mailshot to residents with January pink paper. Working towards launch date of 1 <sup>st</sup> May (APM), collating ideas for first survey with launch target of June. Working on resources for the launch events.
<b>Cricket Cottages potential car park</b>	Initial contact has been made with Highways to discuss feasibility.	Brian is speaking to the landowners to determine whether the land might be for sale, before any further steps are taken.
<b>Windmill Hill obstruction</b>	<i>Another response from Highways; the obstruction has their permission.</i>	The drain will be covered by Highways.
<b>Inter-Parish Tug of War summer 2024</b>	Initial meeting was held, lots to plan but under control.	Event will be Saturday 29 <sup>th</sup> June 2024.
<b>Fingerpost maintenance- Borough Post and Queen Square</b>	Borough Post sign has been restored and looks good.	Paul will clean and paint Queen Square fingerpost. Waiting for better weather.
<b>Allotment produce box</b>	Paul has finished building the box.	Paul to install on site by Spring.
<b>Post Box at Borough Post</b>	<i>A resident has suggested a new box could be put next to the bus shelter.</i> Clerk has emailed the Taunton Royal Mail manager to express the Parish Council's support.	Waiting for response from Royal Mail.
<b>Large road ditches on Broad Lane and Huntham Lane</b>	The Clerk has emailed Highways and included Cllr Fothergill. So far nothing seems to have been done...	Highways have said they will visit.