

NEROCHE PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN: Mark Palmer

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Draft minutes of the meeting of Neroche Parish Council held at Neroche Hall on Tuesday 11th December 2023.

In Attendance: Cllrs Mr M Palmer (Chair), D Macey, M Prosser, J Parsons, D Knight, K Cutler, Mrs S Hayman, Mrs F Gledhill, Mrs K Street, J Hole

Also Present: Mrs E York (Clerk), and two members of public.

Public Session: Unfortunately due to M5 closure, the airband liaison officer was unable to attend the meeting.

2023/106 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Rebecca Humphrey (Work Commitments).

This was a recognised and approved absence for the purposes of s.185 of the Local Government Act 1972.

2023/107 Declarations of interest and dispensations

Cllr Mrs K Street declared a work conflict in agenda item 2023/110 Rights of Way Update.

2023/108 Approval of the minutes from previous meetings

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 11th November were approved with amendments due to the wrong date being on them.

2023/109 Reports from District Councillor

Neither District Councillor was present at the meeting.

The Clerk delivered a short update to Councillors from Cllr Sarah Wakefield:

Wednesday 13th December – there is a briefing online about the SC financial emergency for all LCN members.

An online consultation has been launched about savings the SC will need to make in order to balance its budget for the remainder of this, and the 2024-25 financial year. Open for 6 weeks.

2023/110 Rights of Way Update

Cllr Mrs S Hayman reported. There are no updates relating to T2/8 or T2/11 at present.

Cllr Hayman has requested a meeting with Ceri Raxby, the volunteer co-ordinator for Public rights of Way with a view to us having a scheme in place similar to that of the Ramblers whereby we can undertake minor works to RoW.

2023/111 Actions from the minutes of the last meeting

1. Crown Estate Covenants – Clerk continues to liaise with the Agent for the Crown to have a definitive answer.
2. Curland Green – ownership – no response from Highways regarding ownership. Cllr Mrs K Street reported that the property now known as the Post Office which at one time owned the Green was formerly known as Stoneleigh – Clerk to continue investigations.
3. Orchard Portman Noticeboard – Clerk to continue investigations to wall ownership
4. Parish Council meeting – accessibility & noise levels. It is difficult to hear in the hall with the heaters running as sound is “lost” into the roof space. It was agreed that installation of sound pillows might

not be practical due to badminton being played in the hall. To trial microphones and speakers to increase meeting accessibility.

2023/112 Planning

1. To discuss and review planning applications received since the last meeting
15/23/0004 – Replacement of sheep shelter with sheep shelter and car port with alterations to dwelling at Mount Pleasant, Curland Common Road, Curland – There were no objections to this application.
2. To receive updates relating to planning enforcement applications
 - a) E/105/15/19 – Land Adjacent to New England, Curland (Closed)
 - b) E/264/15/22 – Caravans in field, Curland Common RoadClerk has contacted Myra Spalding with regards to the closed enforcement case – no response as yet and no update regarding planning application at the other site.

2023/113 Finance

1. The following items were approved for payment:
Salary and Expenses of Clerk £426.51
2. It is recorded that £1590 has been received from Somerset Council for the Burial Ground Grants to be distributed to Staple Fitzpaine Church, St Michael's Church, Stoke St Mark PCC (in respect of Thurlbear Churchyard) and TDSS (in respect of the Curland Methodist Church)
3. Draft budget was not available for circulation at the meeting. Budget was discussed following finance committee meeting. As the Precept request date has been pushed back to February to was agreed to defer setting the precept to the January meeting.

2023/114 Items of Report and Correspondence

1. SALC AGM – Cllr Mr M Palmer attended the SALC AGM on 2nd December where the leader of SC was one of the speakers. SC shortfall is due to increasing costs and reduced funding from central government. Reserves from the districts have been pooled following the creation of the Unitary Council in April 2023 – some of which can be cashed in and some of which are fixed term items. The deficit has been reduced from £100m to £80m
Clerk of Bridgwater Town Council confirmed that they have taken on responsibility of a number of items from SC at a saving of £20,000 compared to what it was costing SC.

2023/115 Highways

1. To receive any update relating to the Staple Fitzpaine Village Gateway Project
The TRO advertising has now completed and no objections were received, which means that we are able to proceed with the 30mph speed limit and village gateway in Staple Fitzpaine. Cllr Mrs F Gledhill to circulate designs to Councillors.
2. To receive any update relating to Staple Hill – potential speed limit reduction
No update on this, but it was agreed to revisit this item in the new year once we have completed the Gateway project as issues are ongoing. Suggestions include – 30mph limit from the current temporary caution sign, advisory speed limit, horses crossing signs, rumble strips.
3. To receive any update regarding potholes and road repairs
Any pothole painted red should now be dealt with in 7 days. The second collapsed drain in Badger Street was painted red today.
4. To note any accident in the locality since last meeting
It is noted that there was an incident involving an Ambulance which skidded on the road due to it travelling too fast for the muddy road conditions.
5. A358 Update
It is confirmed that the DCO will now not be submitted this year.

The convener of the COP is stepping down and there is a push for a TOR to be agreed for anyone taking it forward. It is possible that a subscription will be required for member parishes to make the COP a credible organisation but it is noted that this was budgeted for during the 2023/24 financial year so funds are available if necessary.

6. Grit Bins Update

Approval has now been granted for the four grit bins to be sited. There is uncertainty as to who will fill the three new bins (Hill Farm, Staple Hill and Wych Lodge) which the Clerk is discussing with the Assistant Highways Service Manager. Quotes to be obtained for grit salt in case the PC are required to fill them.

2023/116 Community Plan

Cllrs J Hole and Mr K Cutler are due to meet with the new Community Ranger from Forestry England. Also in contact with an environmental group in Chardstock.

It was agreed that an audit of the Community Plan action group take place at the January PC meeting.

Cllr Mr M Palmer to follow up on the Middleroom Wood project.

It was agreed to proceed with initial ditch clearance where there are known issues which cause sheets of ice when the weather turns.

2023/117 Date of Next Meeting and Items for the Agenda

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 9th January 2024 at Neroche Hall.

Clerk to obtain an update from Airband – timescales? Staggered switch on?