

NEROCHE PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN: Mark Palmer

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CLERK: Emily York

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Draft minutes of the meeting of Neroche Parish Council held at Neroche Hall on Tuesday 9th January 2024.

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

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

Public Session: None

2023/118 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Mrs F Gledhill (illness), Mr D Knight and Mrs R Humphrey (work commitments) and Mr K Cutler (family commitments)

These were recognised and approved absence for the purposes of s.185 of the Local Government Act 1972.

2023/119 Declarations of interest and dispensations

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

2023/120 Approval of the minutes from previous meetings

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 12th December 2023 were approved without amendment to be signed by the Chair.

2023/121 Reports from County Councillor

Cllr Sarah Wakefield provided an overview of the SC January report. Clerk to circulate to cllrs post meeting. SC have applied for an increase to Council Tax to catch up by 10% which would equate to £17.1m this year. Historically SC is a lower rated council.

A capitalisation direction application to borrow to pay revenue has been sought. Surplus assets to be sold. £36.8m of £50m reserves to be used.

Trying to avoid S114 Bankruptcy notice being served. As in talks to rectify the position then this has not been necessary so far.

SC will be paying for less services.

Budget meeting is 20 February 2024.

Govt are doing an online consultation on settlement with Councils at present.

Reworking the structure of the council – too many staff at present. Overall will be a reduction of 1500 staff, from 5500 to 4000, Settlements will make that a revenue neutral exercise.

SC have published a list of the savings proposed which equates to £36m of savings.

£9.6m govt funding has been secured for phosphate mitigation schemes at water treatment plants.

Stagecoach are taking over the P&R services which will see a reduction of services to every 20 minutes but will also tie in with shift change times at Musgrove Park.

Appendix 6 – removal of open spaces maintenance grants

Increase fees of registration services

Removal of relief staff services for libraries

Closure of performing arts centre, Yeovil

Removal of the Mobile Library Service

Closure of Council owned toilets

Stop overnight locking of park gates
Closure of visitor information centres
Gully emptying and jetting

New Highways contract starting 1 April 2024 which will be broken into smaller more flexible contracts

All except the Yeovil MP are in support
60% of Somerset households pay council tax bands A-C
Overall budget £500 million.

2023/122 Rights of Way Update

1. T2/8 – Closure notice was issued on 21/11 which is valid for 21 days. As of Sunday nothing has been done to remove the fallen tree and thus reopen the path. Clerk to write to RoW department to enforce the request to remove the tree so that the footpath can be reopened.
2. T2/11 – Martin Ford of the RoW department has taken a different stance in regard to this RoW stating that regardless of the modification order, the original route should be re-opened (as on the definitive map) until the Landowner can prove the requirement for the modification order.
S43 Highways Act – PC can take on responsibility for footpaths and bridleways. Ceri Rapsey has confirmed that Somerset Council would be happy for us to take on this responsibility.

2023/123 Actions from the minutes of the last meeting

1. Crown Estate Covenants – Clerk to follow up with Savills
2. Curland Green – Clerk to attend archives with regard to past conveyancing
3. Orchard Portman Noticeboard – Clerk in contact with Cygnet Hospital in Orchard Portman with regards to reinstatement of the noticeboard
4. Bridge at the Greyhound – All works are not completed
5. Curland Hedge Encroachment – Clerk to follow up. It was agreed that Councillor Sarah Wakefield will also follow up this matter.

2023/124 Planning

1. To discuss and review planning applications received since the last meeting
04/23/0006/CQ – No Comment
2. To receive updates relating to planning enforcement applications
 - a) E/105/15/19 – Land Adjacent to New England, Curland (Closed)
Awaiting inventory of items left
 - b) E/264/15/22 – Caravans in field, Curland Common Road
No update – clerk to follow up with Simon Moon with regards to planning application.

2023/125 Finance

1. The following items were approved for payment:

Salary and Expenses of Clerk	£388.62
Open Spaces Membership	£45.00
2. To receive the draft budget from the Finance Committee Meeting, and to agree the 2024/25 Precept
The draft budget was circulated ahead of the meeting, and the precept request suggested by the Finance Committee was unanimously approved.

2023/126 Items of Report and Correspondence

1. LCN Working Groups
Clerk to circulate details to all councillors
2. Airband update

None was received in advance of the meeting

2023/127 Highways

1. To receive any update relating to the Staple Fitzpaine Village Gateway Project
Gateway designs were circulated, and all voted in favour of the JACS design.
2. To receive any update relating to Staple Hill – potential speed limit reduction
None at present
3. To receive any update regarding potholes and road repairs
Badger Street pothole / drain has now been repaired
4. To note any accident in the locality since last meeting
It is noted that an accident occurred this evening on Staple Hill
5. A358 Update
No update
6. Grit Bins Update
It was agreed that these be sited and the old bin near the Hall to be removed.

2023/128 Community Plan

It was agreed to defer the audit of the Community Plan to the February 2024 meeting due to a large number of absent councillors at the meeting.

It was suggested that a TWH speaker be approached for the Annual Parish Meeting.

2023/129 Date of Next Meeting and Items for the Agenda

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 13th February 2024 at Neroche Hall.

Clerk to contact Forestry England for details of the new community ranger to reinstate conversations about dog waste.

The meeting was declared closed at 21.24.