

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 10th October 2023.

Public Session: A parishioner in attendance at the meeting advised that he has put in a complaint to the Ombudsman regarding the handling of the enforcement case at Curland, and the failure of the Council to act and to respond. It is noted that he has also been informed that this particular enforcement case has now been completed and the enforcement officer is satisfied that all conditions have been met.

Members Present: Councillors Messrs M Palmer (Chair), D Macey, M Prosser, D Knight, Mrs R Humphrey, Mrs S Hayman, Mrs F Gledhill, J Hole

In attendance: Mrs E York (Clerk), Cllr Sarah Wakefield and 2 members of the public

2023/80 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Mr J Parsons (illness) and Mrs K Street (illness).

These were recognised and approved absences for the purpose of s.185 of the Local Government Act 1972

Cllr Rebecca Humphrey introduced herself as the new councillor for Bickenhall.

2023/81 Declarations of interest and dispensations

There were none.

2023/82 Approval of the minutes from previous meetings

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 12th September were approved with a small amendment to note that the Parishioner discussing the Hedge encroachment in Curland raised the matter on a point of safety.

2023/83 Reports from County Councillor

Cllr Sarah Wakefield was in attendance at the meeting. Clerk is in receipt of the Somerset Council report for circulation.

- Staple Fitzpaine – Bridge by The Greyhound. Clerk to follow this matter up with Cllr Macey and Cllr Wakefield
- Planning application has now gone in for the Taylor Wimpey Development at Ruishton. Is not yet at committee stage. As a point of note, the application states that the proposed development site is on good quality agricultural land.
- Cllr Wakefield continues to liaise with parishioners regarding an ongoing issue with relocating and replacing a septic tank at a property in Curland.

2023/84 Actions from the minutes of the last meeting

1. Bridge by The Greyhound
This was discussed in the report from the County Councillor and will be followed up.
2. Communications update – Whatsapp
Clerk thanked all who had provided contact details for the Councillors Whatsapp group. To note that it is to be used for general information only and must not contain individual parishioner information. Reminder to councillors to please ensure that they are using their new email addresses and to provide mobile numbers to the Clerk.

3. Curland Hedge

It is noted that the Hedge is deemed to be on council owned land, and highways have been to inspect.

4. Curland Green Management

Clerk to contact Highways Authority to confirm ownership and confirm management of it going forwards.

2023/85 Planning

1. To discuss and review planning applications received since the last meeting

None have been received.

2. To receive updates relating to planning enforcement applications

To note that the Parish Council have not been notified of the planning application having been submitted for the site at Curland where planning enforcement are involved. Cllr Wakefield to follow up with the enforcement officer, Simon Moon.

By way of note, the Clerk has been in contact with the Planning Obligations team at Somerset Council who have advised that the dwelling associated with application number 33/23/0003/LEW has been granted a Certificate of Lawfulness it is not subject to Community Infrastructure Levy and no payment is due to the Parish.

2023/86 Finance

The following accounts were approved for payment:

Salary and Expenses of the Clerk	£394.51
SALC Affiliation Fees	£151.18
Blackdown Hills Parish Network	£50.00

2023/87 Items of Report and Correspondence

1. Crown Estate Covenants

Cllr Macey has been in contact with the Agents for The Crown Estate (TCE) who have advised that they will speak to Parishioners with queries on an individual basis but parishioners would be required to bear any costs involved (solicitors, legal fees, agents fees).

Anyone with queries should contact the Clerk who can put them in contact with the relevant person.

2. To discuss moving the time of the Parish Council Meeting to 7pm

It was felt that this was unachievable for a number of council members and therefore agreed unanimously to keep the meeting time at 7.30pm. To note that only one County Councillor will be able to attend; due to the clash with other meetings.

3. BHPN: Hunt the Heat

Clerk to contact BHPN and confirm that Cllr Palmer will attend the training.

4. Somerset Prepared Community Questionnaire

Answers for the questionnaire were collated. Cllr Gledhill raised a point regarding iodine tablets being available in the case of an incident at Hinckley Point; Cllr Wakefield to follow this up.

5. Funding for Flood Resilience

The funding available is not relevant to this Parish, but it was discussed that proper ditches are needed.

2023/88 Highways

1. To receive any update relating to the Staple Fitzpaine Village Gateway Project

Report has not been received. Clerk to follow up with Traffic Management and cc Cllr Wakefield.

2. To receive any update relating to Staple Hill – potential speed limit reduction

Report has not been received. Clerk to follow up with Traffic Management and cc Cllr Wakefield

On both of the above points, it is noted that any replacement signs would be paid for by Somerset Council but any new signs would be paid for by the Parish Council. Traffic management were due to investigate with the police the option for the new 30mph limit to start at the location of the village gateway. Traffic Management initial thoughts were that a speed limit on Staple Hill would not help and would potentially create more issues; suggested use of rumble strips, lines and review of existing signage.

3. To receive any update regarding potholes and road repairs
The pothole in Badger Street has now been unattended for more than 12 months. Highways have confirmed that it is “in the hands of the contractor”. It is noted that the current contract is due to finish shortly and more local contractors will be in use.
4. To note any accident in the locality since last meeting
It is noted that a car went in the ditch near to Winterwell approximately five weeks ago.
5. A358 Update
No news to report from the Community of Parishes.
The project is paused at present in High level government reviews. It is assessed as being “poor to low value for money”. Cllr Palmer to discuss with Community of Parishes to be lobbying Rebecca Pow MP for support.
To note that the COP and Somerset Council support improvements to Henlade Bypass and Southfields roundabout which would form a part of the overall A358 project. Somerset Council do not have the funds to complete these projects without support from National Highways.

2023/89 Community Plan

Cllr Hole has discussed with Karen Learoyd having a page for signposting various items in the Parish magazine. Due to timings, it was agreed that the Hunt the Heat scheme be included.

2023/90 Rights of Way Update

1. To discuss membership of the Open Spaces Society
Cllr Hayman proposed Parish Council membership of the Open Spaces Society which can provide support relating to the legalities surrounding RoW, verges and common land. PC already have membership of BHPN and CPRE but neither have the same focus or expertise regarding RoW. All councillors were in favour of taking out a PC membership.
2. To receive updates relating to:
 1. T2/8
Cllr Hayman reported that she is still unable to persuade the RoW department that their explanatory note is not correct. She is drafting a letter to the RoW department with evidence from local landowners.
 2. T2/11
BHS and the Ramblers have served a s130 notice on Somerset Council relating to this RoW.

2023/91 To consider candidates for Co-option

This item is deferred to the November 2023 Meeting.

2023/92 Date of Next Meeting and Items for the Agenda

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 14th November 2023 at 7.30 in Neroche Hall.

Items for the agenda:

1. Annual Parish Meeting 2024
2. Crown Estate Covenants
3. Orchard Portman Noticeboard

The meeting was declared closed at 21.11.