

NEROCHE PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN: Mark Palmer

Tel: 07957 952784

mark.palmer@nerochevillages.org.uk

CLERK: Emily York

Tel: 07842 430003

emily.york@nerochevillages.org.uk

Draft minutes of the Ordinary meeting of Neroche Parish Council held at Neroche Hall on Tuesday 10th September 2024.

Present: Cllrs Messrs M Palmer (Chair), J Parsons, D Macey, M Prosser, T Pope, Mrs S Hayman, Mrs F Gledhill

In Attendance: Mrs E York (Clerk), Cllr Mrs Sarah Wakefield and three parishioners

Public Session:

- 1) Parishioner present wished to discuss issue of flooding at the bottom of the lane on Staple Fitzpaine Road. Question over who is responsible for maintaining and clearing the drain, and who is responsible for the subsequent damage due to the flooding caused by this not being cleared and maintained.

It was agreed that Cllr Daniel Macey would contact the Highways Superintendent and arrange to meet with him on site.

- 2) Parishioners present wished to receive an update on the Drove – by The Paddocks.
T2/10 – Curry Mallet Drove – As per the August minutes, John Melrose from the RoW department at Somerset Council advised that he had spoken with the landowner who had said that he would only be using the new entrance off T2/10 3-4 times per year. At present this is clearly not the case. It was also noted that whoever has damaged the Drove would be responsible for the repairs and this has not been done. Builders' rubble has been dumped and it is an unsuitable surface due to sharp edges and glass present.

It was agreed that the Clerk write to the landowner to ask him to reinstate the Drove in the original condition. It is noted that the surface of the Drive had significant works to create a good surface, which was Lottery Funded. The landowner is undertaking drainage works which it is understood need to be completed before the track is fully reinstated.

It was agreed that Cllr Sarah Wakefield will also follow up with Peter Hobley at RoW. Clerk to investigate if there is a specification for the surface of bridleways?

- 3) Parishioner present wished to draw the Council's attention to a number of incidents involving tractors using this RoW and near miss incidents with a number of horse and riders.

2024/67 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs J Hole (Holiday) and Mrs K Street (Illness)

These were recognised and approved as absences under s185 of the Local Government Act 1972.

2024/68 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

None were declared.

2024/69 Approval of the minutes from the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 13th August 2024 were approved and signed by the Chair.

2024/70 Report from County Councillor

Cllr Sarah Wakefield was present at the meeting.

- Cllr Wakefield advised that she had taken photos of the hedge at Curland and submitted these to Highways. It is noted that the hedge has now been cut back around the layby but is still in need of cutting along the remaining length. There is still significant debris in the layby which has been exposed.
- Cllr Wakefield has also inspected Underhill Lane and notes that the potholes are not as bad as has been reported.
- Curland planning update – planning officer has advised that they cannot give a decision yet and the application has been referred to a senior planning officer. If the application is recommended for approval then it will go to a committee.
- Traffic lights by Sainsbury's in town are due to be replaced during November / December – expect disruptions as the junction is being realigned.
- Works at Vivary Park traffic lights were Government funded to bring the crossing in line with the High Street and thus create a straight, safe crossing on a direct route from the Station. Additional funding has been received for works to the bridge by Morrisons.
- There is still a Council deficit. New Financial Director is now in position. They are highly experienced, having come from a London Borough.
- New Planning Framework is expected from Government. Taylor Wimpey application at Ruishton has been rejected due to limited pedestrian access. This has gone straight to appeal. Taylor Wimpey were in breach of a number of planning policies.
- Winter Fuel Allowance – Top up fund application has been extended until March 25.

2024/71 Actions from the minutes of the last meeting

- 1) Parish Council Noticeboards / Communications Update – Cllr Palmer to produce a QR code to link directly to the Highways reporting portal. Cllr Hole has contacted the Parish Hall who have agreed to a PC display in the Hall.
- 2) Forestry England – Noticeboards – FE have granted permission to use their noticeboards. They have a number of dog waste related posters which they will add into circulation.
- 3) Neroche Hall – Clerk has received information regarding helping the hall with funding. Under the Local Government Act 1972 s137 the PC are able to make a discretionary donation of up to £10.81 per elector (2024/25 rates) for the direct benefit of the area and inhabitants. It was agreed that the Hall committee be asked to provide their quotes for the roof repairs required in order for the Council to fully consider a contribution.
- 4) Orchard Portman Noticeboard – Road Records department have confirmed that permission was granted in 2012 for a noticeboard to be erected on the road in Orchard Portman.
- 5) Curland Hedge – As previously discussed. Cllr Palmer brought up the need to seed Curland Green. Cllr Pope advised that it is better now to wait until the spring to plant wildflower mixes, but that Yellow Rattle can be sowed up until November.
- 6) Identification of Landowners – update – Cllr Hole was not present at the meeting to report on this matter. Clerk confirmed that Savills had contacted the landowner at Broughton Farm, who was not aware of an issue with a roadside ditch. It was agreed that the Clerk write to the landowner.

2024/72 Items of Report and Correspondence

- 1) Ditch by Polo Ground – Fooding Update – Cllr Macey confirmed that he has inspected the ditch and that the left hand side ditch stops and goes into an old culvert which needs to be dug out. It was agreed that Cllrs Macey and Prosser will dig this out and install a 12inch pipe to alleviate.
- 2) Churchyard Grants – Somerset Council will no longer be making contributions to Parish Councils to pass on for maintenance of churchyards. Council have received a request to consider continuing to fund this donation. Donations are currently made as follows:

- Staple Fitzpaine Church - £874.50
- St Michaels Church - £270.30
- Stoke St Mary PCC (Thurlbear Churchyard) - £270.30
- Taunton Deane Methodist Church (Curland Churchyard) - £174.90

It was agreed that the Clerk contact Stoke St Mary PC and find out what approach they are taking.

2023/73 Local Community Network Update

Cllr Palmer reported that he has met with Chris Goode from FE and he is keen to progress school / education group visits to the forests.

Council link person is exploring what the rights of the PC are relating to hedge cutting.

There is a combined highways and environmental group meeting at the Farmers Arms, with Keir (Somerset Council Highways contractor) at 11am on 17/10/24

2024/74 Planning and Applications

None have been received since the last meeting.

2024/75 Community Plan

There was no update relating to the Community Plan as Cllr Hole was not present at the meeting.

2024/76 Finance

The following items were approved for payment:

Salary & Expenses of Clerk	£334.76
HMRC	£80.80

2024/77 Highways

1. Village Gateway – Received updated approximate costs from Traffic Management, but still no firm figures. Cllr Wakefield is assisting the Clerk with obtaining this information from Traffic Management.
2. Staple Hill – Traffic Management have confirmed that the missing sign at the top of Staple Hill is due to be replaced.
3. Potholes & Road Repairs – Enhanced Scheme details received from Somerset Council regarding additional services with PCs are able to purchase. Clerk to circulate details to Councillors.
4. Accidents – Orchard Portman – car ran into side of house (on corner of Broughton Lane) 02/09 – Accident on Staple Hill

2024/78 Rights of Way Update

Cllr Hayman reported that T2/11 is due to be open on Friday with a slight diversion, but at present both gates are chained and padlocked. Communications from RoW department state that the RoW will be opened “unless there are any hold ups”

T2/8 – Tree has not yet been removed.

2024/66 Date of the Next Meeting and Items for the Agenda

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 8th October 2024.

The meeting was declared closed at 21:37.