

PRIDDY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

held at Priddy Village Hall at 7:30pm on Wednesday 6th January, 2016

Present: Cllrs Kate Greet (Chairman), Tina Bath, Alan Butcher, Judith Coles, Chris Dyke, Robin Maine, Barry Wilkinson

In attendance: William Newton Newey (Clerk)
Eight members of the public

PPC16/001 **Apologies for absence**
Cllr Tom Killen (Mendip District Council)

PPC16/002 **Public Forum**

a) **Mendip Farmer's Boxing Day Hunt**

Mr Nick Furze wished to speak in respect of the Boxing Day Meet held by Mendip Farmers Hunt (item PPC16/007(f) on the agenda). He was concerned about the impact on the Village, in particular the fact that parked cars had made roads impassable and that it would have been impossible for an emergency vehicle to access parts of the Village. Further concern was expressed about marshalling arrangements (age and number of marshals), damage to road verges and the Village Green, the raising of money from those present and the large number of people present. Mr Furze was concerned that the Hunt was not demonstrating that it was exercising a duty of care towards the Village or those who attended the Meet.

b) **Road Verges**

Mr Robin Ames raised the condition of the verges by his home near the Castle of Comfort. A wide verge had been eroded by lorries and farm vehicles to such an extent that vehicles were now rubbing against the boundary wall. He had contacted Mendip District Council, who had referred him to Somerset Highways. Somerset Highways said that the verge could be kerbed but that they did not have the funds to do so. Some flexible posts had been installed but these had not lasted any length of time. The contractors instructed to paint white lines, to mark the edge of the highway, had not been able to do so as the edge of the road surface had been badly eroded. Concern had been expressed by Avon and Somerset Police and it was believed that they had sent emails to Somerset Highways about the condition of the verges. Somerset Highways had suggested that the Parish Council might be able to fund works. Mr Ames asked if the Council would consider some sort of protection, perhaps substantial posts rather than kerbing. The Chairman said that the suggestion that Parish Councils could fund these types of highway works was not uncommon and that several meetings had already taken place about locations in the Parish.

PPC16/003 **Declarations of Interest**

Members are required to act in accordance with the Priddy Parish Council Code of Conduct dated 1st August 2012 (clauses 10 – 14) where a matter arises at the meeting in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest as detailed in the Code. Unless a dispensation has been granted the member shall not participate in the discussion or vote on the matter or shall withdraw from the meeting as required by the Code.

Cllr Dyke for Item 5(a)

PPC16/004 **Acceptance of the Minutes of previous Meetings**

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2nd December and Extra-Ordinary Council Meeting held on 16th December were signed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

PPC16/005 **Matters Arising and continuing business from previous Meetings**

a) **Land Registration and Greenhill Cottage**

Cllr Dyke reported that the driveway had been completed and that the relevant return would be made to the Parish Clerk by the following meeting.

b) **Parish Newsletter**

The Chairman confirmed that the amendments had been made to the Newsletter (a final version having been circulated to Councillors by email). The Clerk would print the Newsletters and the Chairman would arrange distribution (Cllr Wilkinson

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delivering to Wells Road, Cllr Dyke to Pelting Drove, Cllr Maine to the centre of the Village and the Chairman to Nine Barrows, with the balance being sent by post).

c) **Remedial Works following filming by Milou Ltd**

The Clerk confirmed that a donation of £200 had been received from Milou Ltd and that remedial works had been undertaken, including the gravelled area in front of the New Inn. Cllrs Butcher and Wilkinson had been present when a return visit had been made to undertake repairs to the flagpole. This was still not working perfectly but there was an improvement on how it had been.

d) **The New Inn**

Councillors had visited the New Inn before Christmas, at the invitation of the new owner Mr Russell Sage, to see the condition of the building and to hear of his initial thinking in terms of refurbishing the New Inn as village pub with accommodation. As Mr Sage had become the owner of the premises at the time that Milou Ltd were filming, he had received the payment of use of the New Inn and car park as a film base. He had offered the £500 pounds to the Parish Council to be used for the benefit of the Village. During the visit, the Chairman had suggested that the money could be used to provide Wi-Fi in the Village Hall and Mr Sage had seemed happy with this suggestion. Cllr Dyke said that she would discuss the matter with the Village Hall Committee and the pre-school who had the telephone line installed. It was suggested that the Priddy Friendly Society Trust might be a suitable organisation to receive the donation and to fund the Village Hall Wi-Fi.

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The Clerk wondered if a presentation on the New Inn and Mr Sage's plans could be part of the Annual Parish Meeting. The suggestion met with general approval and the date of the Annual Parish Meeting was confirmed as the first Wednesday in May (4th).

e) **Information Commissioner**

The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council was now registered with the Information Commissioner.

PPC16/006

Planning

a) **2015/2924/HSE** – Conversion of garage as flexible space including office space, play area for our children and an art studio – Castlebarn, Burrington Road, Priddy, Cheddar, Bristol, Somerset BS40 6DD

Cllr Wilkinson noted that no facilities such as a kitchen, bathroom or toilet were included in the application despite a member of the public having been told that it was to be a "granny annexe". Cllr Bath felt that the application was acceptable if ancillary to a domestic dwelling but should not be used for any sort of commercial purpose. It was noted that there was minimal alteration to the external elevations. Cllr Maine was concerned that the address on the application was garbled and incorrect.

Council unanimously resolved to support the application.

PPC16/07

Parish Council Matters

a) **Policy on the use of the Village Green for Filming and other Commercial Activities**

This matter was deferred to the February meeting, before which the Chairman would circulate a draft policy based on those from other councils previously circulated.

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The discussion then turned to the use of the Village Green by Mendip Farmers' Hunt for its Boxing Day Meet. (See item PPC16/007(f) below.)

In the light of the discussion about the Boxing Day Meet, it was agreed that the draft policy would also include reference to local / not-for-profit organisations use of the Village Green.

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b) **Greens Policy**

Cllr Butcher had re-drafted the policy as previously agreed including a reference to Areas of Local Significance in the Mendip Local Plan Part II

The Policy was unanimously adopted.

c) **Replacement / New Noticeboards and Bus Shelter (Youth Project)**

It had been resolved not to site a noticeboard at Charterhouse as the residents had stated a preference for electronic communications. It was proposed that the existing Village Green noticeboard be re-located at Nordrach with a new noticeboard, possibly combined with a bus shelter being obtained for the Village

Green. The Clerk stated that a concern had been raised by a parent about the location of a bus shelter next to the phone box, following an accident which had badly damaged the phone box. The Clerk undertook to arrange a site visit with Tamsin Smith (who had undertaken research into Youth Projects which had produced the idea of a bus shelter) and carpenter Charley Roberts-Arnold (who had proposed the combination of Noticeboard and Bus shelter).

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d) **Priddy Parish Contingency and Emergency Plan**

This items was deferred until the February meeting.

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e) **Mendip Hills AONB Partnership: Parish Council Representative**

Concern was expressed that the Parish Council had not been invited to nominate a candidate for Parish Council Representative, especially as it was the only Parish entirely within the Mendip Hills AONB. Cllr Siggs said that the paperwork had been sent to Parish Clerks but both Cllr Butcher (previous Clerk) and the current Clerk said that they had not received the nomination papers.

A motion as to whether to abstain from voting was defeated by 3 votes to 2 with 2 abstentions.

It was resolved that Councillors should email their preference, in terms of the three nominated candidates, to the Clerk so that he could return the ballot paper with a vote for the preferred candidate.

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f) **Mendip Farmers' Boxing Day Meet**

This subject had already been raised the Public Forum (see PPC16/02a above). Cllr Butcher was concerned that there had been infringement of Village Green By-Laws in terms of use and the sale of food and drink. He also wondered if the Hunt had a permit to make a collection from Mendip District Council. As far a parking was concerned, Cllr Butcher said the situation seemed to be going unchecked unlike the criticism that had been received from the Police in connection with the Priddy Bonfire nights held in the past. Cllr Bath wonder why the event did not require a "temporary event licence". Cllr Maine said that the Master of the Hunt had visited prior to the meet and that he had directed him to the driest area of the Green. Cllr Maine then stated, that whilst his advice had not been followed, he did not feel that the condition of the Green was worse than in previous years.

The Chairman said that re-instatement and repair of the Green had been part of the letter sent to local users some years ago. Cllr Coles felt that it would be appropriate for members of the Council to meet with representatives of the Hunt but Cllr Butcher felt that a letter should be written to the Hunt. He further felt that if no response was received, permission for future Hunt meets should be denied. The Clerk pointed out that the Village Green By-Laws, whilst on the website, were not displayed on the Village Green. This was to be investigated with a view to making sure that that by-laws were displayed.

It was resolved that the Clerk should write to the Mendip Farmers' Hunt drawing attention to the issues around the Boxing Day Meet and requesting a meeting.

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PPC16/008 **Police Matters**

Cllr Butcher said that he would forward details of Beat Surgeries to the Clerk.

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PPC16/009 **Council Reports**

a) **Somerset County Council**

Cllr Siggs reported that he had attended a meeting of the Somerset Rivers Authority. The measures put into place to alleviate flooding appeared to be having the desired effect. There was a view that the Rivers Authority should be a spate precepting body to ensure funding for longer term projects; discussion as to who should pay had led to the observation that the water that collected on the levels ran off the hills.

Cllr Siggs also reported that the County Council budget currently showed a significant shortfall between income and expenditure. A 2% above cap increase would be allowed for Social Care but there would be an early termination of the New Homes Bonus after 4 rather than 6 years. Most of the 2% above cap increase would be absorbed by the introduction of the Living Wage

b) **Mendip District Council**

In the absence of Cllr Killen, Cllr Siggs reported that Mendip District Council would be increasing its element of the Community Charge for the first time in several years.

Cost improvements were expected from the business services contract which Mendip was negotiating with four other councils.

PPC16/010

Financial

a) **Budget Statement**

The latest budget statement had been circulated to Councillors before the meeting. Cllr Bath asked if the £200 received from Milo Ltd was to be divided between the Parish Council and the Church. The Chairman said that a donation of £100 to the Church had been mentioned as well as a donation to the Parish Council but that Milou Ltd had decided to make a donation of £200 to the Council; half the donation could be passed to the Parish Church.

b) **VAT Reclaim**

The Clerk confirmed that the VAT reclaim completed by Cllr Butcher had been submitted.

c) **Open Spaces Donation**

It was restated that the Council's policy was not to make donations to organisations or activities outside the Village.

It was resolved not to make a donation to Open Spaces.

d) **Community Council Somerset Subscription**

The Chairman spoke in favour of paying the subscription given that the Council had benefited from free training and Cllr Wilkinson reported that the offer of running free training in the Village had been made. The CCS could also offer support with a number of activities, such as a parish plan and finding sources of funding.

It was resolved to pay the £40 annual subscription to Community Council Somerset

e) **Clerk's Remuneration**

The Clerk apologised that he had not been able to calculate his remuneration payment.

PPC16/011

Clerk's Report

a) **Submission of Comment on Mendip Local Plan Part II**

The Clerk confirmed that the agreed submission had been made.

b) **Comment to Planning Inspectorate re Appeal by Mr J Baynes**

The Clerk confirmed that a letter containing the agreed comment had been sent.

c) **Community Council Somerset Newsletter** - This had been circulated by email.

d) **Rural Services Network** - to be forwarded by email

e) **Parish Online (Mapping Services)**

It was noted that the Council had previously signed up to this service e but it had been little used. Cllr Butcher said that he had not been impressed with what Parish Online had to offer and suggested that the Clerk investigate the Public sector Licence that the Council would have with the Ordnance Survey.

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PPC16/012

Matters of Report

a) **Defibrillator and Phone Box**

In answer to a question from Cllr Maine it was confirmed that the Phone Box and Defibrillator were checked by Cllr Coles. It was further confirmed that the access code to the defibrillator would be supplied by the Ambulance Service to those who called in case of need and that the Automatic External Defibrillator would then play announcements as to its use. Anybody using the defibrillator would be covered by insurance.

Cllr Bath suggested that a session on the use of the Defibrillator and Basic Life Support might be held at the Village Hall. It was further suggested that this might for part of the Annual Parish Meeting on 4th May.

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b) **Broadband**

Cllr Wilkinson reported that the BT website showed that the telecoms cabinet at Townsend was to be fibre enabled within 6 months. The lack of mobile signal in the Village was noted, especially as this was BT's preferred method of contacting those with landline issues. It also became apparent that there were a number of line faults in the Village. Nothing further had been heard in terms of alternative provision of broadband by satellite.

c) **Verge at Nine Barrows Triangle**

The Chairman reported that the Highways contractor had attended and laid some scalpings but a greater proportion of top soil around the cars parked on the verge. A return visit had been agreed to lay some more scalpings and it was thought best to rope off the area rather than use bollards while the grass re-established itself.

PPC16/014 **Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting: Wednesday 3rd February, 2016.

The meeting closed at 9:20pm

Signed
(Chairman)

3rd February, 2016

William Newton Newey
11th January, 2016
parish.clerk@priddyparish.org

Final Draft