

Priddy Parish Council

COUNCIL MINUTES

An Extra-Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on **Wednesday 1st July 2020**
at **7:30pm** by Zoom Virtual Platform

Present: Cllrs Alan Butcher (Chair), Chris Dyke, Juanita Glass, Mark Leach, Rachel Thompson OBE

In attendance: William Newton Newey, Parish Clerk, six members of the public

PPC20/67 **Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Adams and Andrews

It was agreed that the Chairman would send a card and flowers to Cllr Andrews.

PPC20/68 **Declarations of Interest:**

Cllr Dyke declared an interest in item PPC20/074e as a neighbour of the site.

Cllr Leach declared an interest in item PPC20/074b as a neighbour of the site.

PPC20/69 **Public Forum**

Four members of the public spoke in support of their planning applications which were to be considered by the Council. One member of the public spoke in relation to the subject of Village Green Grass Cutting. An email had also been received from two parishioners, not able to attend, who wished to comment on car parking associated with a planning application as well as more generally in the Parish. (The email was read, by the Clerk, to the meeting under the appropriate item of business).

PPC20/70 **Council Reports:**

a) **Somerset County Council.**

There was no report from Cllr Pullin.

b) **Mendip District Council.**

There was no report from Cllr Killen.

PPC20/71 **Police Report.**

There was no report from the Police.

PPC20/72 **Parish Paths Liaison Officer.**

No report had been received despite a request from the Clerk.

PPC20/73 **Acceptance of the Minutes of previous meetings:**

Minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 27th May 2020 were agreed. It was confirmed that the Chairman would sign the minutes when available.

PPC20/74 **Planning**

a) **2020/0951/FUL** Application to demolish barns B and C and extend barn A. Higher Eastwater Farm East Water Lane Priddy Cheddar BA5 3AX

It was noted that this application had been resubmitted for purely technical reasons and was the same in substance to that previously considered by the Council

At a vote, it was unanimously resolved to support the application.

b) **2020/1037/FUL** Change of Use of Agricultural Barn to Use Classes, C3 dwelling house, A1 - Shops and A3 Restaurants and Cafes. Laurel Farm Pelting Drove Priddy Wells BA5 3BA

Councillors wished to support the new business and enterprise. Concerns were expressed over car parking and trees on the site. It was noted that the applicants had addressed the issue of parking and saw the majority of their customers as those who lived in Priddy or were already visiting the village. References were made to sustainable transport and those already camping or caravanning in the Village. Deliveries to site would be made by smaller vehicles. It was noted that a tree preservation order had been placed on two trees on the site. The meeting was told that the opening hours for the business would be 8:00am to 6:00pm Wednesday to Sunday.

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It was confirmed that the rooflights proposed would have suitable blinds to avoid light spill

Cllr Leach was absent from the meeting due to a technical issue.

At a vote, it was resolved unanimously to support the application

- c) **2020/0899/FUL** Change of Use of Agricultural Building to Dwelling House. Ubley Drove Farm Ubley Drove Charterhouse Cheddar BS40 7XN

It was noted that a similar application had been supported in the past.

The application under consideration appeared to contain a few changes from the previous application but was still felt to be a good design.

At a vote, it was resolved unanimously to support the application.

- d) **2020/1117/HSE** Erection of a Single Storey Side Extension. Perro House Ubley Drove Charterhouse Cheddar BS40 7XN

At a vote, it was resolved unanimously to support the application.

- e) **2020/1162/FUL** Erection of an agricultural building Land At 352732 150252 Pelting Drove Priddy Cheddar Somerset

Councillors were concerned by the size, design and location of this building. It was felt that it was over large and not commensurate with the land that it served or stated purposes. It would also stand at entrance to the village of Priddy and would adversely affect vistas of and from the village situated in an AONB.

At a vote, it was resolved unanimously not to support the application.

In responding to Mendip District Council, the Clerk was asked to include the following comments: The proposed building is inappropriate in its large size, design and location. It would be intrusive upon a classic limestone plateau vista and, affecting the visual aspect of the village, would be prejudicial to tourism.

- e) **2020/1177/TPO** G1 - Ash Trees and - Horse Chestnut - Remediation works to TPO Group M1024. New House Priddy Green Priddy Cheddar BA5 3BB Works/Felling of TPO Trees

At a vote, it was resolved unanimously to support the application.

Planning Cases Decided

- f) **2020/0735/FOOT** Divert footpath CL 8/39 around new boundary. Hill Farm Hill Farm Road Priddy Cheddar Bristol

It was noted that this application had been withdrawn by the applicant.

- g) **2020/0890/APP** Application for approval of details reserved by condition 4 (bat roost and bird boxes), and condition 7 (external lighting) on planning consent 2015/2150/FUL (Appeal ref: APP/Q3305/W/16/3155532).

It was noted that this application had been approved.

PPC20/75 **Clerk's Report**

- a) **Access and trenches for Communications Cables and Equipment**

The Clerk confirmed payment for access had been received in respect of Nine Barrows Triangle. He had contacted Truespeed Communications Limited about the condition of the area around the turning chamber and, although he believed a site visit had been made by Truespeed's contractors, had heard nothing further.

- b) **Asset Register**

The Clerk had circulated councillors with a paper outlining access to Parish Online and its operation. The Clerk proposed to use Parish Online to record the Council's assets as it would allow not only be a record of assets but their location on a map could be clearly shown as well as cost, replacement value and condition. He noted that there were a number of additional functions including the fill level of grit bins.

In reply to a question from the Chairman, the Clerk confirmed that the information would be extracted from Parish Online to create an Asset Register document for approval and retention.

PPC20/76 **Parish Council Matters**

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a) **Local Government Re-organisation**

The proposal by Somerset County Council that a unitary authority for Somerset (to replace the County Council and four District Councils) was discussed. Reference was made to the paper which had been prepared with support from the Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) and the Somerset branch of the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC). The Clerk noted that both SALC and the SLCC branch felt it was important that the voice of parish and town councils was heard as they would remain after any re-organisation. The Chairman noted that the role of parish and town councils would probably be much altered by the creation of a unitary authority for the area covered by Somerset County Council and that the relationship with that authority and neighbouring council might also be affected by the creation of community hubs, grouping parishes together.

Cllr Leach believed that the County Council was running a public relations exercise as prelude to submitting a proposal for a single unitary authority to central government, which he believed it could do without the consent of the District Councils. He felt that closer working relationships were required between all councils and that this worked in both directions with the County Council having to enter fully into arrangements with the District Councils. In respect of community grouping, he believed that hub arrangements for services or activities could see Priddy Parish Council having a diminished voice, with one representative in a potentially large group. He felt that smaller was better than larger.

Cllr Thompson recalled that an early poll held on the creation of unitary authority for Somerset had shown a significant majority not in favour of a unitary authority. She felt that people like services delivered locally to be locally accountable and that bigger was not better. Cllr Thompson was also concerned that parish and town councils would be called upon to bear a heavier burden in the provision of services without any transfer of resources to them.

Cllr Dyke felt that it was very important that the voice of parish and town councils be heard.

The Chairman was concerned that community grouping might lead to an unfortunate mix of communities, such as Priddy being linked to less rural communities.

The Clerk was asked to make a corporate response on behalf of the Council to the questionnaire seeking feedback on the proposal, sent out on behalf of the County Council. The replies were to be:

Question 5 What benefits do you believe could come from the proposal to create one Council for Somerset, delivering the services currently provided by the County and four District Councils? No benefit.

Question 6 What concerns do you have about the proposal to create one Council for Somerset, delivering the services currently provided by the County and four District Councils? Local people like the local representation in the delivery of services. There is a greater appreciation of the services delivered by the District rather than County Council.

Question 7 Considering the four possible outcomes below for the future of local government in Somerset, which of the following would be your preference: Remain as is.

Question 8 Can you explain the reason for your answer? See reply to Question 6.

The Chairman encouraged Councillors to also make a personal response to the questionnaire.

b) **Car Parking and Vehicles on Village Greens**

The recent good weather had seen an increase of cars parked on the Village Green by those picnicking and walking in the local area. There had been an

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issue with cars parking on the centre of the Green and it appeared that if one car was parked in the location others followed. It was noted that on the majority of occasions cars had been parked on the area in front of New House at right angles to the roadway and this was more acceptable.

Cllr Leach wondered if there should be an indication that cars could be parked on the top Green. Cllr Thompson queried if there was any scope for increasing or improving signage. Cllr Glass said that on a number of occasions, the gravelled area in front of the New Inn had been occupied by horse boxes with no space for cars to park.

Cllr Dyke said that her previous experience of marshalling events on the Green showed that if one vehicle was parked correctly others would follow. The Chairman wondered if use of the Green cones might avoid parking on the centre of the lower Green. He and Cllr Leach often spoke to drivers about careful and considerate parking.

It was agreed that the matter be kept under review and should appear as item on the agenda for the next Council meeting.

c) **Village Green Grass Cutting**

Cllr Leach had noticed that the grass at Pincross (behind the houses) had not been cut. This appeared to be because of vehicles parked adjacent to the houses. Cllr Leach asked if the contractor could be requested to inform the occupants of the houses of the need to move their vehicles to allow room for his tractor and gang mower. The Clerk would also produce a note about Pincross and the cutting of the grass which could be sent to the tenants and landlord of the property.

It was noted that the small area of grass in front of the New Inn adjacent to the gravelled area was no longer being cut by the gardeners from the New Inn.

It was resolved that the Clerk ask the contractor responsible for strimming to include this area in that which he was strimming.

d) **Bus Shelter**

The Clerk said that he would contact the contractor who had erected the bus shelter to see if he was still willing to undertake the roof repairs gratis as the Council had purchased the roofing material.

The Chairman said that the material to improve the noticeboards would be applied when there was a period of fine, dry and warm weather. This had been delayed by the lockdown associated with Covid-19.

e) **Code of Conduct**

Councillors were asked to consider the draft of a new Code of Conduct.

f) **Remediation Works TPO Group M1024**

The consultation these works had been discussed under item PPC20/074f earlier in the meeting.

It was resolved unanimously that permission be granted for these works to take place on the Village Green.

PPC20/77 **Financial:**

a) To receive a bank reconciliation.

The bank reconciliation, which had been included with the accounts and accounting records circulated to Councillors, was noted.

To authorise the following payments

b) Major Maintenance for Strimming of the Village Green and other Areas £230.00

c) Somerset Association of Local Councils for affiliation fees (SALC and National Association of Local Councils £188.24) and training (Being a successful Chairman £30.00) £218.24

d) WD Newton Newey in respect of Clerk's Remuneration (gross pay including payment of £118.80 for PAYE to HMRC) £594.00

The payments having been approved, the Clerk would send the cheques and

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paperwork to the Chairman and Vice Chairman for signature.

PPC20/78 **Matters of Report**

a) **Footpaths**

Cllr Leach was concerned about the condition of footpaths in the parish. In particular he drew attention to the path from The Batch to Dale Lane junction and at Townsend which he felt were impassable. In the case the latter the path had been blocked by an electric fence and gates, with the area occupied by some 'rather frisky livestock'.

These issues would be drawn to the attention of the Parish Paths Liaison Officer when the Clerk requested report for the next Council meeting.

b) **Westbury Quarry**

There had been concern expressed by parishioners over the frequency and magnitude of blasts at the Quarry. Cllr Thompson said that the magnitude was commensurate with East Mendip Quarries where a siren was sounded to warn residents of blasting. The Chairman noted that the Clerk had suggested that the matter be raised with Environmental Health Department at Mendip District Council as a nuisance issue. The Chairman would speak with the County Councillor who had at one time been responsible for running Westbury Quarry.

PPC20/79 **Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 5th August 2020**

This meeting would also be held virtually on the Zoom platform

The meeting closed at 8:58pm.

William Newton Newey, Parish Clerk
3rd July 2020