

Priddy Parish Council

MINUTES

Minutes of the Meeting of Priddy Parish Council held on **Wednesday 21 July 2021**
at **7:00pm** in Priddy Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Rachel Thompson (Chair), Chris Dyke, Gemma Butterell, Dean Collier, Amy Keith
In attendance: Chloe Williams (Parish Clerk).

The Chairman welcomed all present. She thanked Cllr Collier for undertaking the COVID 19 safety arrangements and asked all present to note that the clerk intended to record the meeting for her own use.

Cllr Collier asked for volunteer stewards for the next parish council meeting.

1. Apologies for absence: Cllr Phippen, Leann Chinnock, Avon and Somerset Police

2. Declarations of Interest: no interests were declared.

3. Public Forum

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 19.05 for a maximum of 30 minutes to allow for public participation. Ten members of the public were present.

One member of the public said that there had been misunderstandings about decisions made at the June parish council meeting resulting in a number of comments, some rather unpleasant, recorded on the Priddy village community page. He hoped that the council would address this.

Another member asked if councillors were aware of Statutory Guidelines of Local Government Act 2003, with regard to investments and loans. The chairman asked that an electronic version of the document be sent to the clerk, to be circulated to councillors. This member also said that the security lights recently installed at the New Inn are causing light pollution and queried if any action could be taken. It was agreed that those affected should refer the matter to Mendip District Council.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting at 19.15. She asked the public to indicate if they wanted to ask a question at any point in the proceedings.

4. Acceptance of Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 23/06/21

Cllr Keith asked for an amendment to the minutes due to the misunderstanding caused by the minute recorded under item 11f) *Proposal to Purchase Land at Nine Barrows Lane*.

The following amendment was proposed and agreed *"The Council did not consider going to auction due to not meeting financial regulations and that any consideration for buying land would follow a consultation with the community."*

The clerk was requested to amend the minutes. Once this was done the minutes were proposed and agreed as a true record.

5. Appointments

a) Election of Vice Chairman - the Chairman informed the meeting that Cllr Phippen (absent) had written to express an interest in being elected as Vice Chairman. The Chairman had checked with the Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) that an election could be held in Cllr Phippen's absence. This being the case the Chairman asked for proposals for election to the office of Vice Chairman. Cllr Dyke proposed Cllr Phippen and Cllr Butterell seconded. At a vote all were in favour and Cllr Phippen was duly elected. Acceptance of office to be completed on her return – the clerk to action.

b) Appointment of parish clerk - the Chairman welcomed Chloe Williams as Parish Clerk.

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c) Casual Vacancy due to the resignation of Lucy-Rose Wilkes: the Chairman thanked Lucy-Rose Wilkes for serving as a Councillor and for her support at a difficult time. The Council wished Lucy-Rose good luck for the future in her new job. The casual vacancy has to be notified until 29th July 2021. During this period an election to fill the seat can be called for by the electors. If an election is not called for, the Council has the power to co-opt a new member. The clerk was asked to check the position following this date with electoral services at Mendip District Council and to post a revised notice as required.

6. Reports

(a) Somerset County Council – there was no report as Cllr Pullin was not present.

(b) Mendip District Council – there was no report as Cllr Killen was not present

(c) Police Matters – Leanne Chinnock, Avon & Somerset Police had forwarded a report. The clerk was asked to read this out. The report included:

1x Criminal Damage

3x Road Traffic Collision

1x Concern for Welfare

1x Covid 19 Breach.

The Chairman suggested that it would be helpful if the police report could be more detailed, particularly with regard to traffic issues since these would be of interest to the Council's traffic calming advisory group. The clerk was asked to email Leann Chinnock to ask for more details in the report if possible.

(d) PPLO – still vacant

(e) Traffic Calming Advisory Group – Cllr Collier reported that Cllrs Phippen and Butterell had joined the committee. The group intends to consider the feasibility and cost of the traffic calming proposals presented in the report and would make recommendations at a future meeting.

A member of the public asked if a timetable would be possible and suggested that the Council could consider examples of traffic management arrangements at other local villages.

7. Procedural Matters

(a) Adoption of parish council policies and procedures – the Chairman stated that the Council's policies should have been re-adopted at the Annual Parish Meeting. This had not been done as only three councillors were present. It was proposed and agreed that:

- the standing orders be adopted in their entirety
- SALC be asked if a new code of conduct has been approved and if yes should be adopted (as both the Chairman and Cllr Keith did not consider the Council's existing code to be fit for purpose).
- one council policy should be considered or amended at each meeting and readopted – commencing with the Financial Regulations.

It was noted that declarations of interest (DOI) need to be in place on the Mendip DC and Priddy PC websites.

Cllr Keith confirmed that her DOI has now been uploaded. The clerk was asked to contact Mendip DC (monitoring officer) to ensure the parish clerk's details are correctly recorded on the Mendip DC website.

(b) Finance Committee meeting date – the Chairman stated that it was Priddy PC's normal practice to hold finance meetings in closed session. However, some new members had queried why this was necessary? It was proposed and agreed that a finance committee meeting to set the budget, tenders and the precept be held on Wednesday 20/10/21 at 7PM in Priddy Village Hall in open session with the public invited to attend. A member of the public queried if a spending plan would be created. The Chairman stated that the budget is the plan and that the Council was working to the budget set by the previous clerk and agreed by the council. The Chairman proposed that the current budget should be available on the website and all agreed.

(c) Training arrangements for parish clerk and councillors – Cllr Keith & Cllr Collier proposed to attend the Neighbourhood Planning training offered by SALC. This was agreed. It was also agreed that all councillors should attend Councillor essentials training when this was available and other individual training as appropriate and agreed. The clerk proposed to join the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and to

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undertake a training programme. It was agreed that it is essential to invest in training for the clerk. It was proposed and agreed that the Council should pay the SLCC subscription of £206 +£15 joining fee and the first training of £30 plus VAT.

8. Planning

The Chairman advised the meeting of an impending planning application by Yeo Valley at 2 locations – Ubley Warren Farm and Hazel Manor. She noted that councillors and clerk have been invited to a pre-application meeting on 18/08/21.

9. Highways and Rights of Way Matters

(a) Byways and public paths report – the Chairman had submitted a report. She summarised this by noting that in respect of Dursdon Drove 4x4 issues, these were being dealt with by St Cuthbert Out Parish Council Rights of Way group who had sent a report. PC Darren Pearson at Wells police station is the contact for all motorised vehicle unauthorised use or abuse of rights of way, everyone is asked to forward number plate / and vehicle details or photographs to him and he will visit the registered keepers. Landowners along East Water Lane RB are still being contacted with regard to authorising barriers, once this is done the Council will need to decide whether to pursue this or other options. Motor vehicle prohibited sign installation is awaited at East Water Lane. Similar signs have been requested by landowners at Upper Pitts bridleway and Dark Lane RB.

The Chairman proposed that these signs be requested through Somerset County Council (SCC). This was agreed, subject to the point raised by Cllr Dyke that signs should be clear that authorised motor vehicle access continues to be permitted (as now). The clerk was asked to write to SCC.

The Chairman also reported that Rainsbatch bridleway is totally overgrown and asked that this should be reported to SCC. This was agreed – the clerk was asked to report this to SCC. A number of public footpaths in the village have been reported as obstructed with wire, these have been reported by members of the public through the SCC rights of way report system.

10. Clerk's Report

(a) Tenders and Sub Contracture Agreements: proposal to update the mowing and strimming specifications. Cllr Collier had noted that the mowing and strimming specifications need to agree in respect of areas to be left to grow wild. He had discussed this with the strimming contractor and the Chairman had agreed to discuss with the mowing contractor. Cllr Keith agreed to check the documents, amend for inconsistencies and upload to the website. A member of the public asked if a sign could be displayed on the notice board to show where the wild areas are, where parking should be discouraged and said that the Top Green should be included. The Chairman noted that a number of requests regarding wildflower areas and provision for more benches had come forward and proposed that these suggestions should be included in the consultation planned, this was agreed.

(b) Request to use the Lower Green for the Church Animal Service on 29/08/2021 – this was unanimously agreed. The Chairman asked Cllr Collier to check the existing policy document relating to the use of the Greens for events and the provision of goods and services to ensure that it is fit for purpose. It was proposed that a more comprehensive document could be created for regular users of the Green making automatic approval by the clerk a possibility. Cllr Collier agreed.

11. Financial Matters / Assets.

(a) Parish Online – proposal to repay RMT £90 – agreed by all.

(b) Defibrillator Accessories – proposal to purchase additional pads – agreed by all.

(c) Proposal to accept an increase in strimming costs of £20 per cut (from £230 to £250) - agreed by all.

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(d) SALC affiliation fee – proposal to pay £185.20 annual affiliation fee – agreed by all.

(e) Banking arrangements – Cllr Dyke reported that arrangements for the new signatories and to enable electronic banking were in hand. She agreed to chase the bank and report back as soon as possible.

(f) Removal of Top Green bin – it was proposed and agreed to ask if Barry Payne could pick this up.

12. Events

(a) Implement Sale / tractor run 28/08/21 – Cllr Dyke advised that leaflets have been created, one will be put up on the noticeboard and should anyone want any to put up, to please ask. Cllr Dyke asked for volunteers to help run the event and said that she would discuss other arrangements such as the tractor run, the Church tea and cake stall and the possibility of an additional food van with the appropriate parties.

(b) Open air cinema – Cllr Butterell advised that she can arrange for an open-air cinema to visit Priddy at cost price. A proposed date of 2/10/21 was agreed. Cllr Butterell will make and confirm the arrangements. A member of the public suggested that the marquee could be provided in case of inclement weather.

(c) Village picnic / archaeology walk / tree / history trail – Priddy Friendly Society is working with Tamsin Smith to put on a village picnic and music on 29/08/21 – the day after the implement sale. Final arrangements to be advised to Cllr Dyke.

Cllr Keith is working on an archaeology walk/trail.

13. Parish Council Initiatives

(a) Consultation with the parish regarding projects and possible investments. Cllrs Keith and Collier are working on the public consultation which will also inform the Parish Plan. There will be several stages, research, consultation and planning. This could take some time. A member of the public suggested that a simple ‘what three things matter to you’ consultation could be run quickly, easily and to good effect. For example, the three things that mattered to him were traffic management, children’s play area and doing something about ‘eyesores’ especially in the centre of the village.

It was agreed to proceed with this simple consultation since it is likely to yield information that could be built on in the wider consultation. It was agreed to prepare a short document that could be circulated throughout the parish and available on the website.

Cllr Collier offered to write to the owner of the New Inn to ask for an update on a potential sale and to offer any assistance the Council might give.

(b) Parish Plan - Cllr Keith pointed to the availability of grants for this process and existing plans that could be researched for ideas e.g. Frome and Shepton Mallet. The Chairman asked if there is a timescale for the public consultation for the Parish plan. Cllr Collier suggested September-October.

(c) Website Update – Cllr Keith advised that Phase 1 is completed for the new website, i.e. it performs all the functions that the existing website does. Phase 2 is a research stage to gather opinions from tourists and parishioners as to what they would like to see on the website. The URL for anyone that would like to look at the new website is www.priddyparishcouncil.co.uk The Chairman thanked Cllr Keith for her hard work on building the new website.

(d) Sky/Light Pollution – The Chairman advised that the Mendip Hills AONB Planning Officer, Judith Chubb Whittle, has offered to hold a talk on this topic and on ‘planning in a protected landscape’ at a Council meeting. The Chairman proposed to invite her to the October meeting and all agreed. A member of the public inquired if the Planning Officer has the power to act on light pollution issues. The Chairman advised contacting Mendip District Council as the appropriate authority.

(f) Memorial Trees - the Chairman referred to the suggestion that trees should be planted either side of the road on the Top Green. A member of the public had previously suggested planting European Plane Trees but after further research suggested Bristol Plane trees. This was met with approval. He did not agree with the proposed location suggesting planting on the Glebe Land behind the church or in the church yard. It was proposed by the Chairman and agreed that the clerk should write to the Parochial Church Council to ask

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whether either location would be acceptable and that the question of where to plant the memorial trees should be a question in the consultation – Cllrs Keith and Collier to note.

13. Matters of Report

a) Council Facebook page - Cllr Collier proposed that a page should be created for the purpose of disseminating information to parishioners. The Chairman, Cllr Dyke & Cllr Butterell expressed reservations about the suggestion. Following discussion, it was agreed that an outward facing page should be created which would also direct users to a forum page on the website where comments and suggestions could be submitted for consideration by the Council. The clerk offered to work with Cllr Keith create the Facebook page.

b) Document retention policy – the Chairman offered to write a policy to deal with both electronic and paper documents for approval by the Council.

14. Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday August 4th 2021 at 7PM