

Priddy Parish Council

COUNCIL MINUTES

Meeting of the Parish Council held on **Wednesday 4th March 2020**
at **7:30pm** in **Priddy Village Hall**

Present: Cllrs Alan Butcher (Chair), Mark Leach, Alan Adams, Chris Dyke, Juanita Glass.

PPC20/27 **Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Andrews and Thompson

PPC20/28 **Declarations of Interest:**
No interests were declared.

PPC20/29 **Public Forum**
Eight members of the public were present. A member of the public spoke about the lack of broadband service from the Voneous service, due to lack of line of sight from the nearest mast, despite having contributed the broadband voucher to the Voneous scheme. She also observed that Truespeed had also indicated that they would not be offering a fibre connection to her property. The service by BT had also been problematical with a number of intermittent faults which seemed difficult to identify and rectify. The Chairman asked that the Clerk write to Truespeed and that the matter be raised with the ex-councillor who had led on broadband services.

PPC20/30 **Council Reports:**

- a) **Somerset County Council.**
There was no report as Cllr Pullin had sent his apologies
- b) **Mendip District Council.**
There was no report as Cllr Killen had sent his apologies.

PPC20/31 **Police Report.**
There was no report from the Police.

PPC20/32 **Parish Paths Liaison Officer.**
No report had been received and the Clerk was asked to request a report for the next meeting of the Council.

PPC20/33 **Acceptance of the Minutes of previous meetings:**
Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th February 2020 were agreed and signed as a true record.

PPC20/34 **Planning**
a) **2020/0363/APP** Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 8 (risk assessment) and 11 (minimum Dwelling Emission Rate) on planning consent 2017/3014/FUL. Communication Station Hill Farm Road Priddy Cheddar Somerset

The application, not requiring a response from the Council, was noted.

Planning Cases Decided

- b) **2019/2164/FUL** Re-development of existing Stone Barn to form a single residential dwelling and associated landscaping. Plot 1 At Home Farm Nordrach Lane Priddy Cheddar Somerset. This application was noted as withdrawn
- c) **2019/2165/FUL** Proposed change of use from agricultural barn to residential dwelling with associated building and landscaping works (amended description) Home Farm Nordrach Lane Priddy Cheddar BS40 6LG. This application was noted as withdrawn

PPC20/35 **Clerk's Report**

- a) **Heavy Goods Vehicle Signage: Wells Way / Wallace Lane junction with Western Lane**

A plan was marked with the location for signage. The junction with Western Lane and Wallace Lane falling in the Bath and North East Somerset Area it would be referred back to their Highways Department. It was also agreed to

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continue with the request for the installation of a sign at the junction of Western Lane with Harptree Hill (Wellsway / Old Bristol Road) which is in the Parish and would need to be referred to Somerset County Council Highways Department.

b) **Heavy Goods Vehicle Signage: Nine Barrows Lane**

The Clerk confirmed that the quoted cost had been approximately £240 for a pair of pictographic signs. He had been informed that the cost would need to be confirmed after the contract with the County Council's highways contractor had been agreed at the end of March.

It was resolved to request that one sign be erected at either end of Nine Barrows Lane.

c) **Welcome Pack**

Cllr Andrews had received no further contributions and it was agreed that the matter be raised at the annual Parish Meeting.

PPC20/36 **Parish Council Matters**

a) **Annual Parish Meeting (18th March 2020)**

The Chairman would produce a poster advertising the Annual Parish Meeting. In addition to reports from organisations and the Parish Council (there would be no booklet in 2020), the agenda would include: Community Led Housing and whether there was interest in this topic within the Parish, the formation of a Climate Emergency Working Group and the World War Memorial Tree planting on 8th May 2020.

Tea, coffee and biscuits would be provided by way of refreshments.

It was noted that there was to be a presentation on Community Led Housing Initiatives in Wells on Tuesday 10th March and Cllr Glass said that she would attempt to attend.

b) **Mendip Farmers Hunt**

The Chairman reported on a meeting held between Councillors and the Hunt in February, which he described as positive and amicable. There had been a review of the events of the last Boxing Day meet but the focus of the meeting had been on future arrangements. The Chairman restated that the Council was unable to ban the Hunt from using the Village Green as, under statute, the Green was available to local people and organisations for recreation, exercise, enjoyment and lawful pastimes. This had been the subject of a media release made by the Council.

The Hunt had informed Councillors that they had been using the Green for 98 years and this pre-dated that registration of the Green under the 1965 Act regarding Village Greens. The Council as owners and 'guardian trustees' had a responsibility to ensure that laws and bye laws were upheld. There would have to be a specific reason for banning the use of the Green by any person or group of person, such as damage to the surface of the Green, including unavoidable damage to the condition of the ground due to heavy rainfall.

Cllr Glass observed that the trouble at the Boxing Day meet appeared to be caused by others than the Mendip Farmer Hunt. The Chairman said that the public order offences had been investigated by the Police.

Cllr Adams felt that it should be noted that the issues on Boxing Day were due to the fact that the Hunt was using the Green for its meet and felt that the Hunt should be more proactive in maintaining order at its meets. Once again the Chairman noted that public order was a matter for the Police and that the Parish Council had no jurisdiction over criminal matters of this nature. The Parish Council was also not accountable for the actions of the Hunt elsewhere.

Cllrs Dyke and Leach said that they felt that the meeting with the Hunt had been positive and that the Hunt had agreed to make their stewarding of future meets more visible. It had also been agreed that the Police be requested to provide a more visible presence; the Chairman and the Hunt had both been in contact with the Police.

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Cllr Glass noted that, over the considerable number of years that the Hunt had held its meets on Priddy Village Green, there had been protests but that these had always been amicable until 2019.

The online petition in respect of Hunt meets on the village green was noted, with comment that some of the signatories were far from local. Reference was also made to email correspondence which had been received in respect of the Hunt's use of Priddy Village Green to which the Chairman had replied, making the same points as in the media release.

c) **World War Commemorative Tree Planting**

The Chairman reminded the meeting that it was the intention to plant four trees on the 75th Anniversary of VE Day (8th May 2020) in memory of the three people who lost their lives in WWI and the one person who died in WWII. The location of the planting would be the hedge line on the Top Village Green.

It was agreed that the Chairman would approach Westbury Quarry for a piece of stone to act as a bench and that a budget of £500 be set for a plaque to be set on the stone to record the planting of the trees. The wording of the plaque would be available for the Annual Parish Meeting.

It was suggested that the nephew of the person who died in WWII be invited to unveil the plaque on 8th May 2020.

The Council had been offered a 7' Oak tree and a 5' horse Chestnut Tree. The final choice of the two other trees was deferred, though it was noted that planting would need to be undertaken well before 8th May. At Cllr Glass' suggestion it was agreed that the ground be tested to ensure there was sufficient depth of soil to allow the trees to be planted.

It was agreed that the unveiling would be followed by refreshments (cream tea) in the village Hall.

It was noted that the Friendly Society had decided to hold a VE themed quiz in the Village Hall on the evening 8th May with a supper of corned beef hash. Plans to move Club Day had not been carried through.

d) **Personnel Committee**

The Clerk was asked to arrange a meeting of the Committee (Cllrs Butcher, Leach and Adams) for his annual review. This would take place after 17th March due to the availability of councillors.

It was also noted that the recent Finance Committee meeting had not taken place due to the absence of the Clerk and the next scheduled meeting was now the date of the Annual Parish Meeting. It was agreed that a meeting of the Finance Committee be held on 15th April at the Hunters Lodge Inn.

e) **New Inn**

There had been no further contact with the owner.

f) **Trench for fibre optic cable, Lower Green**

The chairman reported that the trench would run from the flagpole outside Manor Farm to the bottom of The Batch. It was noted that specific regulations, especially relating to the siting of communication cabinets, applied in AONBs. Truespeed had offered a one off payment for the trench of £3.90 per meter with an additional £100 for each existing pole (telecoms or power) accessed.

It was noted that the communications cabinet had already been installed at the Nine Barrows Lane junction.

It was resolved to permit the digging of the trench subject to the monetary consideration identified above and that full restoration of surfaces was made.

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- g) **Parish Councils Representative on the Mendip Hills ANB Partnership**
It was noted that Priddy Parish was the only parish entirely within the Mendip Hills AONB.

It was resolved that Cllr Thompson be approached to be nominated for election as Parish Council representative from the Somerset constituency of parish councils. It was further resolved that if Cllr Thompson did not wish to stand for election, Cllr Adams would be nominated.

- h) **Parish Pools**

Discussion of this item was deferred in the absence of Cllr Thompson.

- i) **Grit Bin**

The Clerk informed councillors that the Highways Authority would fill grit bins if they were told of their location.

It was resolved to purchase a Grit Bin for The Batch.

- j) **Keep Britain Tidy**

The Great British Spring Clean organised by Keep Britain Tidy Group was due to take place between 20th March and 13th April.

It was resolved to hold a litter picking event on 5th April and that new equipment be purchased for the event.

It was noted that Mendip District Council would need to be informed so that bags of rubbish could be collected from verge side rather than being returned to a central collecting point.

The Chairman wondered if a working party could be held to clear and re-instate the footpath by the Fountain on the Village Green.

PPC20/37 **Financial:**

- a) To receive a bank reconciliation. This had been prepared by the clerk and was checked and signed by Cllr Glass in the absence of Cllr Andrews.
To authorise the following payments
- b) Open Spaces Society Subscription 2020 (£45.00)
- c) Cutting Parish Greens August and September 2019 [RP & S Maine] (£288.00)
- d) Clerk's Remuneration for January, February and March 2020 [HMRC] (£44.00) [WD Newton Newey] (£176.00)
- e) Internal Auditor's Gratuity [Mrs Pam Lloyd] (£50.00)

The sums and payees having been agreed, cheques were raised and signed.

PPC20/38 **Matters of Report**

- a) **Dursdon Drove** – Cllr Glass noted that the surface of the Drove had been repaired but that the banks had now been vandalised to provide 4x4 drivers with a more challenging driving experience. Cllr Leach queried whether a temporary closure of the Drove might be helpful but Cllr Glass felt that this would be almost impossible to police. The Chairman said that he would mention this in his report to the Annual Parish Meeting. It was noted that there had been similar problems at Stock Hill and on the Village Green. The Police had been approached and it was reported had spoken to drivers of 4x4 vehicles at Nordrach.
- b) **Fly-Tipping** – Cllr Glass had noted fly-tipping at Hen Acres on Wells Road which the Clerk was asked to report to Mendip District Council
- c) **Ash Trees** – Cllr Dyke was concerned that Ash trees were being felled indiscriminately by the Highways Authority. It was noted that the Authority was also serving notice on landowners requiring the removal of Ash trees on property adjacent to highways.
- d) **NALC / BTA Toilet Tax Survey** – no action was felt necessary on this survey by the National Association of local Councils / British Toilet Association as there were no public conveniences in the parish.

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- e) **Internal Auditor Appointment Training** – the Clerk noted that the Chairman was booked onto this training offered by the Somerset Association of Local Councils. The Chairman said that he would also be attending on behalf of Doulling Parish Council and that it might be possible to divide the cost of the training.
- f) **Unitary Authority for Somerset** – The Chairman reported that Mendip District Council's leader had invited parishes to discuss a response to the proposal and future ways of working with the District Council at meeting on 10th March.
- g) **Litter Bin for Lower Green** – it was confirmed that the litter bin recently purchased would be installed on the Top Green. The Clerk was asked to include the purchase of a bin for Lower Green (to be sited adjacent to Manor Farm) on the agenda for the next meeting.
- h) **Access and walls to new dwelling adjoining Bay Tree Cottage, Green Hill, Priddy** – the Chairman had spoken with the landowner who stated that the wall was in the correct position though it appeared to that shown in the plans submitted. No further action would be taken. It was believed that Cllr Thompson had also spoken or made site visits with the Highways officer to other areas of concern.
- i) **Bob Pitt Bench** – The Friendly Society had agreed to replace this bench which had been removed from the Lower Green as it was unsafe.

PPC20/39 **Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday 1st April 2020

The meeting closed at 8:49pm.

William Newton Newey, Parish Clerk
7th March 2020.