

# NEWTON IN THE ISLE

## PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Dave Gibbs, 358 High Road, Newton-in-the-Isle, PE13 5HS  
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### **Minutes of a Meeting of Newton-in-the-Isle Parish Council held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

**Present** - Cllr R Moore (in the Chair), Cllr R Bradley, Cllr S Clark, Cllr D Freeman, Cllr E Jones, Cllr G Wilkinson, D Gibbs (Clerk)

#### **074/22 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr D Nunn, Cllr S King (CCC) and Cllr C Seaton (FDC)

#### **075/22 Chairman's Announcements**

None.

#### **076/22 Public Forum**

None.

#### **077/22 Minutes of Previous Meetings**

- a) RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2023 be agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.
- b) Members noted the draft minutes of the Highways Committee meeting held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> February.
- c) RESOLVED - that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February be agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.
- d) Members noted the draft minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February.

#### **078/22 County and District Councillors Reports**

County - Cllr King submitted a report confirming that he had attended a virtual meeting with the County Asset Planning Manager and the Local Highways Officer regarding flooding at 158 High Road and is awaiting feedback on suggested actions to alleviate the problem.

District - Cllr Clark reported that the District Council had resolved to reduce its share of the Council Tax by 2% this year, although many other components will increase, leading to higher bills overall. She also reiterated her concerns regarding the trees overhanging the A1101 following another fallen branch recently.

### **079/22 Police Matters**

The Clerk reported that he had attended a meeting with the Police at which they outlined their current priorities, namely speeding in the villages and drugs including nitrous oxide in Wisbech and surrounding rural areas. Members asked the Clerk to request speed enforcement activity within the village. The Clerk reported that Norfolk Police had pursued a van into the village from the King's Lynn area resulting in damage to several Police vehicles. The van was eventually stopped in Hogens Lane and the occupants arrested. It is believed that they had a connection to the village.

### **080/22 Clerk's Report**

The Clerk reported on meetings attended, including webinars on community led housing and village hall energy costs, a District Council cost of living support event and an election briefing. Correspondence received included the new 20mph application process, details of surface dressing in Chapel Lane, Home Energy Support Service Plus launch and the Great British Spring Clean.

### **081/22 Members' and Residents' Issues**

- a) Abandoned vehicle in Colville Road - awaiting update from Clarion Housing Group.
- b) Accumulation of scrap in Colville Road - awaiting update from Clarion Housing Group.
- c) Overgrown hedge in Colville Road - this hedge has now been cut back.
- d) Dangerous path surface at St James Close - a meeting will be arranged with Clarion Housing Group in the new financial year.
- e) Planter around village sign - Cllr Wilkinson will attend to this.
- f) Mossy pavement in Westfield Road - the Clerk will arrange for this to be swept shortly.
- g) Fly-tipping in Roman Bank and elsewhere - the Clerk reported that fly-tippers have again been active in the village. Cllr Freeman and the Clerk removed a large quantity of waste from the dyke in Roman Bank and also from Little Ramper, including 26 empty nitrous oxide cylinders. Somebody set fire to some of the waste in Roman Bank before the Rapid Response Team was able to collect it. Rubbish was also dumped in Mill Lane and Franks Lane.
- h) Former school site - Cllr Clark has spoken to the Enforcement Team about the appearance of the site.
- i) Allocation of vacant allotment - the Clerk advised members that four residents have expressed an interest in the vacant allotment. Members resolved that the allotment could be divided into three parts and that Mr Setchell be invited to select a plot, following which two further names be drawn at random for the remaining areas.
- j) Request from Village Hall Management Committee to use Playing Field for an event - the request involves use of the whole site for a Family Summer Gala on the afternoon of Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> July. Members resolved to support the event and Cllr Bradley agreed to remove the remaining BMX ramps in May to enable the event to proceed.

## **082/22 Amenities Committee**

- a) Spraying and reseeded of the wildflower meadow - see 086/22(f)
- b) Works to two cherry trees in Westfield Road and adjacent to 334 High Road - see 086/22(g)
- c) Replacement bench and relaying of path opposite Fen Road - see 086/22(h)
- d) Preparation of vacant allotment on the High Road - see 086/22(i)

## **083/22 Highways Committee**

Cllr Bradley reminded members of the recent reports of damage to the byways to the west of the village caused by excessive recreational use by off-road vehicles. A meeting was arranged with the County Council Rights of Way Officer and landowners affected by the issue. A solution has been identified, involving a winter closure of the byways to motor vehicles with the installation of four gates at the access points. The estimated cost is £7,500 including the necessary legal work, signage and the purchase and installation of the gates. Funding could be made available through the Local Highway Improvements scheme, however this could take up to two years to deliver. The beneficiaries could be asked to make a financial contribution, including the landowners and the North Level District Internal Drainage Board.

Members resolved to proceed with this scheme to install the gates by October 2023, to obtain more accurate costings and to discuss financial contributions or labour and materials from the other partners.

## **084/22 Policies and Procedures**

Members reviewed the following policies and procedures and resolved to re-adopt them:

- a) Equality and Diversity Policy
- b) Homeworking Policy
- c) Expenses Policy

## **085/22 Planning**

- a) Members considered the following planning application:

*F/YR23/0144/F - Insertion of roof lights to front and rear elevations and windows at first-floor on side elevations of existing dwelling (to enable loft conversion) and erect porch to front elevation - Heathfield, Fen Road, Newton-in-the-Isle*

They resolved to offer no objection.

- b) Members considered the following pre-application consultation:

*Proposed base station upgrade at Wisbech BT radio station - Black Dyke, Newton, Wisbech, PE13 5HY*

They resolved to offer no objection.

## 086/22 Finance

a) The Clerk presented an updated financial statement as at the end of February, showing income of £12,828.58 and expenditure of £14,550.39, resulting in a shortfall of £1,721.81 and total funds held of £36,587.92.

b) Members noted the following sums received:

<i>C Buckley (memorial tree)</i> .....	£	35.00
<i>C Gregory (memorial tree)</i> .....	£	35.00
<i>E Jones (memorial tree)</i> .....	£	35.00
<i>S King (memorial tree)</i> .....	£	35.00
<i>Lea family (memorial tree)</i> .....	£	35.00
<i>A Scott (memorial tree)</i> .....	£	35.00
<i>Taylor family (memorial tree)</i> .....	£	35.00
<i>L Wakefield (memorial tree)</i> .....	£	35.00
<i>G Wilkinson (memorial tree)</i> .....	<u>£</u>	<u>35.00</u>
	£	315.00

c) Members ratified the following payments:

100742	<i>Fenland Leisure Products Ltd (play equipment repairs)</i> .....	£	4,066.08
100743	<i>Engraving Studios Ltd (tree plaques)</i> .....	£	146.50
100744	<i>Newton Village Hall (hall hire)</i> .....	£	40.00
100745	<i>D A Gibbs (salary February)</i> .....	<u>£</u>	<u>447.80</u>
		£	4,700.38

d) Members approved the following payments:

100746	<i>D A Gibbs (salary March)</i> .....	£	447.80
100747	<i>D A Gibbs (expenses)</i> .....	£	1,747.78
100748	<i>Cambridgeshire ACRE (affiliation fee)</i> .....	£	60.00
100749	<i>Newton Village Hall (hall hire)</i> .....	£	50.00
100751	<i>Mrs P Wilkinson (expenses)</i> .....	<u>£</u>	<u>63.90</u>
		£	2,369.48

e) Members approved the following payment, pending receipt of an invoice:

100750	<i>T A Blackamore Ltd (grass cutting)</i> .....	£	1,597.44
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f) Members approved a quotation of £394 from T A Blackamore Ltd for the spraying and reseeding with grass of the meadow area.

g) Members approved a quotation of £330 from Sam Johnson Landscapes for works to a cherry tree in Westfield Road and the removal of the broken branch on the cherry tree above the bench adjacent to 334 High Road.

h) Members approved a quotation of £1,040 from ProEdge Construction for the removal of the bench opposite Fen Road, the relaying of the path to the bench and the installation of the replacement bench.

i) Members considered a quotation of £525 from DTL Landscapes for clearing the brambles and cutting the hedges on the vacant allotment in the High Road. They noted

that the quote did not include the removal of the cuttings. The Clerk was asked to clarify the additional cost of including this. Cllr Bradley offered to receive the cuttings if the contractor had no alternative repository for them. A budget of up to £600 was approved to enable the Clerk to proceed with this matter. Members asked the Clerk to clarify the terms of the Council's allotment tenancy agreement with regard to the cost of each plot.

- j) Members considered requests received for financial assistance under Section 137 of the Local Government Act. They resolved to make payments of £250 each to the Magpas Air Ambulance charity (100752) and the East Anglian Air Ambulance charity (100753).
- k) The Clerk advised members that NatWest bank does not offer free banking to parish councils, so transaction charges of 35p per item would be applied to the new account. The annual cost is estimated to be in the region of £20. Members resolved to proceed with the opening of the new account.

#### **087/22 Annual Parish Meeting**

Members discussed the timing of the Annual Parish Meeting and resolved to postpone it until Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May. They asked the Clerk to contact potential speakers to invite them to attend.

#### **088/22 Local Council Elections**

The Clerk advised members that elections are taking place on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May for all seats on Fenland District Council and each of the Town and Parish Councils in Fenland. The Notice of Election is to be published on 20<sup>th</sup> March, with nominations to be submitted by 4.00pm on 4<sup>th</sup> April. Due to a change in the law, anybody voting in person at this election will be required to show a photographic identity document.

#### **089/22 Date of Next Meeting**

The Annual Meeting of the Council will take place on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> May.