

NEWTON IN THE ISLE

PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Dave Gibbs, 358 High Road, Newton-in-the-Isle, PE13 5HS
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Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Newton-in-the-Isle Parish Council held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 9th May 2023

Present - R Moore (in the Chair), Cllr R Bradley, Cllr S Clark, Cllr D Freeman, Cllr C Seaton (FDC), D Gibbs (Clerk), B Simpson

001/23 Apologies for Absence

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

002/23 Election of Chairman for the Municipal Year 2023/24

Cllr Bradley was nominated by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Freeman and duly elected. He signed his declaration of acceptance, witnessed by the Clerk. Cllr Bradley took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

003/23 Election of Vice Chairman for the Municipal Year 2023/24

Cllr Freeman was nominated by Cllr Bradley, seconded by Cllr Clark and duly elected. He signed his declaration of acceptance, witnessed by the Clerk.

004/23 Acceptance of Office

All members of the Council signed their declarations of acceptance in the presence of the Clerk.

005/23 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman thanked the retiring councillors for their commitment during their terms of office and congratulated District Councillors Barber, Clark and Seaton on their recent election.

006/23 Public Forum

The issue of trees in Westfield Road was raised. The Clerk confirmed that the Council is aware of the condition of the trees and they will be included in a forthcoming programme of tree works.

007/23 Membership of the Council

Ms Simpson indicated that she would like to join the Council. She was nominated by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Freeman and duly co-opted. She signed her declaration of acceptance, witnessed by the Clerk.

The Clerk will publish notice of the remaining vacancies in the forthcoming newsletter to encourage further prospective members to come forward.

008/23 Annual Meeting of the Parish Council

- a) Delegation to committees - Members reviewed the existing delegation arrangements to the Planning, Amenities and Highways committees and resolved to continue with the current arrangements.
- b) Terms of reference and membership of committees - Members reviewed and readopted the terms of reference and membership of the Planning Committee, with all members except Cllr Clark. They readopted the terms of reference for the Amenities and Highways Committees, but deferred a decision on the membership until the vacant positions on the Council have been filled.
- c) Standing orders and financial regulations - The Clerk confirmed that the Council has adopted the current versions of the NALC model documents. Members resolved to readopt both documents.
- d) Insurance - The Clerk confirmed that the Council carries insurance cover for all known risks arranged with Zurich Municipal with renewal due on 1 June. The forthcoming renewal will be the final year of the current three-year agreement.
- e) Subscriptions to other bodies - The Clerk reminded members that they currently have subscriptions to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils and to Cambridgeshire ACRE. Members resolved to continue with both subscriptions.
- f) Appointment of a Trustee to the Newton Village Hall charity - Members resolved not to make an appointment at the current time, but to review the situation when the vacant positions on the Council have been filled. Mr Moore offered to notify the Clerk of any relevant matters in the interim.
- g) Appointment of an Armed Forces Champion - Cllr Freeman agreed to accept the role.
- h) Register of assets - The register has been updated to include recent purchases and the total value of assets now stands at £129,874.
- i) Meeting dates - Members agreed to meet on the second Tuesday of alternate months, namely 11 July, 12 September, 14 November, 9 January 2023, 12 March and 14 May. All meetings will commence at 7.30pm.

009/23 Minutes of Previous Meetings

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 14th March 2023 be agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.

010/23 County and District Councillors Reports

County - In Cllr King's absence, there was no report.

District - Cllr Seaton advised members that the pre-election restrictions had curtailed most District Council activity. He confirmed that he and Cllr Clark had been re-elected alongside Cllr Brenda Barber, who won the vacant seat resulting from the recent boundary review. The election of Leader and the appointments of members to the cabinet will take place shortly.

011/23 Police Matters

The Clerk reported that no meetings had taken place with the Police. Residents have reported seeing cars parked in the Village Hall car park late at night. The Clerk requested that people note the vehicle registrations in order that the Police may be notified and action taken, where appropriate.

012/23 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on meetings attended, correspondence received and local issues, including a forthcoming closure of Fen Road, the Local Highway Improvements assessment panel meeting, and a webinar for Rural Housing Week. A resident has expressed concern regarding the proposed positioning of the new signage in Chapel Lane and the Clerk is working with the Highways Project Officer to address these concerns, prior to the installation of the signage next month.

013/23 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) Dangerous path surface at St James Close - the trees causing the damage to the path have been removed. Further remedial work is anticipated.
- d) Planter around village sign - the planter needs to be removed and replaced. Members discussed various design options and agreed that a more robust construction is preferable. The Clerk will obtain prices from local timber merchants.
- e) Mossy pavement in Westfield Road - the Clerk will arrange for this to be swept shortly.
- f) Fly-tipping in Roman Bank and elsewhere - the Clerk reported that fly-tippers have again been active in Roman Bank, Goredike Bank and the High Road. All fly-tipping is checked for evidence and the District Council has been able to investigate several recent incidents with a view to taking enforcement action.
- g) Former school site - the District Council will write to the owner about the appearance of the site and the need to remove the brambles.
- h) Allocation of vacant allotment - no progress has been made regarding the clearance of the site.
- i) Request from Village Hall Management Committee to use Playing Field for an event - Cllr Bradley agreed to remove the remaining BMX ramps and level the site to enable the event to proceed.
- j) Crime and anti-social behaviour in the village - the Clerk advised members that there had been a number of incidents reported in a short space of time, both in Newton-in-the-Isle and Tydd St Giles. A small group of teenagers was believed to be responsible and the Police will be visiting the village during the hours of darkness to look out for suspicious activity. The Clerk noted that several residents had CCTV footage of a group of young people in the village, but were not willing to share it with the Police.

014/23 Amenities Committee

The contractor has finished pruning the cherry tree in Westfield Road and removed the broken branch from the cherry tree in the High Road. The three dog bag dispensers have been installed. A contractor has been appointed to remove the old bench in the High Road opposite Fen Road and to relay the path in readiness for a new bench.

015/23 Highways Committee

The County Council's Rights of Way Officer has commenced the process of introducing a winter closure on the byways to the west of the village. The Clerk will present the Local Highways Improvement application for the kerb build-out at the junction of High Road and Fen Road to the assessment panel shortly. A number of potholes have been repaired. The surface dressing of Chapel Lane has been completed, but the presence of the contractors' vehicles and machinery in Rectory Road resulted in a number of vehicles driving on the grass verge, causing considerable damage.

016/23 Planning

Members considered the following planning applications:

- a) *F/YR23/0297/VOC - Removal of condition 1 relating to planning permission F/0108/87/F (Continued use of dwelling as residential children's home without its occupancy being restricted to Mr and Mrs Chapman as imposed on previous planning permission No. F/0667/85/F) to remove personal condition - Chartwell House, Goodens Lane, Newton-in-the-Isle*

Members resolved to offer no objection.

- b) *F/YR23/0315/O - Erect up to 2 x dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) involving the demolition of 3x existing outbuildings - Land East and West of Croft Grange, 307 High Road, Newton-in-the-Isle*

Members resolved to give this their full support. Whilst agriculture is an important part of the local economy, the overbearing appearance of the two substantial steel buildings in an otherwise residential location in the heart of the village is an unwelcome blot on the streetscape. The temperature control machinery required by these buildings gives a constant audible drone in an otherwise silent landscape, accompanied by the odour of onions, affecting the lives of many residents in the vicinity of the site. Heavy goods vehicle traffic visits the site constantly, and it is the only location in the village to attract HGV traffic. The High Road is too narrow for two lorries to pass without venturing onto the grass verge or the narrow pavement, so removing this traffic from our roads would benefit all residents and dog walkers along half a mile of the road. The current appearance of the site and its proximity to the adjoining listed building are of serious detriment to that building and the proposed development would enhance its setting greatly.

- c) *F/YR23/0347/F - Erect a dwelling (2-storey, 2-bed) involving demolition of existing outbuilding - Land East of Fitton House, Fitton End Road, Newton-in-the-Isle*

Members agreed that the proposal represents unsustainable development in the open countryside, outside the core built form of the village, contrary to policies LP12 and LP3.

The proposed dwelling would be out of keeping with surrounding properties contrary to policy LP16 making neither a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness and character of the area, nor enhancing its local setting or improving the character of the local built environment. Permitting this development would set a precedent for further unsustainable development on numerous similar sites fronting onto Fitton End Road.

017/23 Finance

- a) Members approved the internal accounts for the 2022/23 financial year.
- b) Members reviewed and approved the Governance and Management Risk Assessment.
- c) Members approved the internal audit report. Three minor procedural matters were highlighted, each of which was already being addressed.
- d) Members reviewed and approved the Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 and authorised the Chairman to sign it.
- e) Members reviewed and approved the Accounting Statements 2022/23 and authorised the Chairman to sign it.
- f) Members reviewed and approved the Certificate of Exemption for 2022/23 and authorised the Chairman to sign it.
- g) Members resolved that the period for the exercise of public rights be from Monday 5 June to Friday 14 July.
- h) Members resolved to re-appoint Auditing Solutions Ltd as the internal auditor for the 2023/24 financial year.
- i) Members resolved not to publish a paper copy of the annual report, but to include information on the Council’s website and the new Facebook page.
- j) The Clerk presented an updated financial statement as at the end of April, showing income of £5,100.00 and expenditure of £11.98, resulting in a surplus of £5,088.02 and total funds held of £39,773.02.

k) Members noted the following sums received:

<i>Barclays Bank (interest)</i>	£ 14.97
<i>HMRC (VAT refund)</i>	£ 2,646.83
<i>R Kublik (rent)</i>	£ 189.20
<i>Newton Village Hall (rent)</i>	£ 1.00
<i>Fenland District Council (precept instalment)</i>	£ 5,000.00
<i>J McGregor (licence fee)</i>	<u>£ 100.00</u>
	£ 7,952.00

l) Members ratified the following payments:

<i>100752 Magpas Air Ambulance (donation)</i>	£ 250.00
<i>100753 East Anglian Air Ambulance (donation)</i>	£ 250.00
<i>100754 D Freeman (gate hinges)</i>	<u>£ 11.98</u>
	£ 511.98

m) Members approved the following payments:

100750	T A Blackamore Ltd (grass cutting)	£ 1,885.44*
100755	D A Gibbs (salary April and May)	£ 895.60
100756	Zurich Municipal (insurance).....	£ 796.11
100757	CAPALC Ltd (affiliation fee)	£ 403.10
100758	Sam Johnson Landscapes (tree work)	£ 330.00
100759	Playsafety Ltd (play equipment inspection)	£ 111.00
100760	Information Commissioner (registration fee).....	<u>£ 40.00</u>
		£ 4,461.25

* Approved as £1,597.44 at previous meeting. Additional works added.

n) Members resolved to add Cllrs Bradley and Freeman to the list of authorised signatories for the new NatWest bank account.

018/23 Annual Parish Meeting

The Clerk reported that he had invited a speaker from Cambridgeshire Neighbourhood Watch to address the meeting. The event will be advertised in the forthcoming newsletter.

019/23 Play Equipment Safety Inspection

- a) Members considered the report on the recent inspection. The bearing on the roundabout requires lubrication. The Clerk will clarify how to access this. The BMX ramps will be removed. The shelter needs to be cleaned.
- b) Cllr Freeman offered to undertake the regular inspections of the play equipment.

020/23 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council will take place on Tuesday 11th July at 7.30pm.