

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 12th September 2023

Present - Cllr R Bradley (Chairman), Cllr S Clark, Cllr D Freeman, Cllr E Jones, Cllr B Simpson, Cllr K Simpson, Cllr S King (CCC), Cllr B Barber (FDC), Cllr C Seaton (FDC), D Gibbs (Clerk), R Moore, G Palmer

035/23 Apologies for Absence

None

036/23 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed Cllr K Simpson to the meeting.

037/23 Public Forum

None.

038/23 Membership of the Council

Mr Moore indicated that he would like to rejoin the Council. Members voted unanimously and he was duly co-opted. He signed his declaration of acceptance, witnessed by the Clerk.

039/23 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 11th July 2023 be agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.

040/23 County and District Councillors Reports

County - Cllr King reported that the County Council has now agreed to review its earlier decision to discontinue the cyclical spraying of weeds on the public highway. He urged the Council to sign the petition or to write to the County Council.

A new Local Highways Officer, Bob Rossiter has been appointed and will be arranging to visit the Parish shortly.

Cllr King also circulated details of a range of grants available through Cambridgeshire Community Foundation.

District - Cllr Barber reported that she had been attending training since her election as a Councillor.

Cllr Seaton advised members that August is always a quiet month, with many staff on leave. He noted that the village bus service was to continue as a new contract had been signed with the operator.

041/23 Police Matters

The Clerk reported that two meetings had taken place with the Police. Quarterly priorities were anti-social behaviour in Leverington and neighbouring villages, particularly involving mopeds and motorbikes, speeding in the villages and annual issues arising during the school summer holidays.

042/23 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on meetings attended and correspondence received, including community gritting scheme applications, a consultation on involvement in planning decisions, the timetable for the decision on the Wisbech incinerator application, the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Association's Annual Conference, a consultation on the model financial regulations, the launch of the new Community Living Rooms initiative, and a playground inspection course.

043/23 Outstanding Matters

- a) Abandoned vehicle in Colvile Road - no update received.
- b) Accumulation of scrap in Colvile Road - a skip has been delivered.
- c) Dangerous path surface at St James Close - no update received.
- d) Vacant properties - there are two vacant Clarion Housing properties, in Poppy Close and Goodens Lane. The Longhurst Housing property in Goodens Lane has now been relet.
- e) High Road bench - the new bench has been ordered for delivery in October.
- f) Planter around village sign - Cllr K Simpson will replace the planter shortly.
- g) Mossy pavement in Westfield Road - Cllr B Simpson has swept it, but further work may be required.
- h) Allocation of vacant allotment - Cllr Bradley offered to clear the site for the new tenants.
- i) Wildflower meadow - Cllr Bradley has cut the meadow, which is now awaiting spraying and reseeding by the contractor.
- j) Arboretum - a number of trees will need to be replaced in the autumn.
- k) Byway winter closures - Cllr Bradley will prepare the application for submission to the County Council.
- l) Village bus service - the bus service will continue, but a meeting will be arranged for the seven parishes on the route to discuss the service and the needs of their communities.
- m) Blackdike bridge - the bridge has now been repaired and reopened.
- n) Local High Improvements application 2024/25 - a resubmission of the last application was suggested. Further suggestions were invited. A decision will be made at November's meeting.
- o) Campaign to Protect Rural England membership invitation - members discussed the invitation and agreed to subscribe for a year at a cost of £36 to gain a better understanding of the support available.

044/23 Members' and Residents' Issues

- a) Hedgehog highway project - members agreed to purchase 50 hedgehog highway surrounds at a cost of £150 to be advertised in the newsletter and given to interested residents. Cllr Jones will oversee the initiative.
- b) Playing Field dyke - members noted that the dyke is overgrown and there is evidence of fly-tipping of garden waste. It is due to be cut and sprayed in the autumn. Members asked the Clerk to discuss the possibility of infilling the dyke with the North Level District Internal Drainage Board.
- c) Overgrown hedges - Cllr B Simpson reported a number of hedges obstructing pavements and the sound of dogs barking all night. The Clerk will write an article for the newsletter asking residents to trim their hedges and Cllr Clark will discuss the barking dogs with the District Council.
- d) Cllr Freeman reported that the access to the Playing Field from Goodens Lane adjacent to the school site is overgrown. The Clerk will speak to the grounds maintenance contractor.
- e) Cllr Jones noted that the grounds maintenance contractor has damaged several graves in the churchyard. The Clerk advised members that this contract is managed by the District Council. Cllr Clark will pursue this. He also asked about the long-awaited National Cycle Route signs. The Clerk will discuss this with the new Local Highways Officer.

045/23 Former Colvile School Site

The Chairman welcomed Mr Palmer, the owner of the school site, to the meeting. Mr Palmer outlined the background to his family's involvement with the site over the last 35 years. He explained that the family would like to develop the site and would like help to achieve this. The immediate priorities are to clear the brambles from the site and secure the vehicular entrance to prevent unauthorised access. Cllr Bradley offered to assist with the removal of the brambles and securing of the gateway.

The Clerk noted that the architect who worked on the original plans for the site is still working locally and may be able to revive the original plan, which secured planning permission in 1990.

Members thanked Mr Palmer for attending the meeting and agreed to work with him to bring the site back into use.

046/23 Village Handyman

Members discussed the role of Village Handyman and resolved not to continue this on the current basis. The Clerk will notify the Handyman. Alternative arrangements will be considered in the coming months.

047/23 Speed Monitoring

The Clerk presented data recorded by the MVAS device on the High Road at the western end of the village.

Number of vehicles - 19,278
 Minimum speed - 5mph
 Maximum speed - 63mph
 Average speed - 31.66mph
 85th percentile speed - 38mph
 Number over speed limit - 5.69% - 1,097 vehicles
 Number over prosecutable limit (10%+2 above limit) - 0.99% - 190 vehicles
 Number over disqualification limit (30mph above limit) - 0.0% - 0 vehicles

048/23 Finance

a) The Clerk presented an updated financial statement as at the end of August, showing income of £7,093.18 and expenditure of £9,017.43, resulting in a deficit of £1,924.25 and total funds held of £32,760.75.

b) Members noted the following sum paid by direct debit:

North Level District Internal Drainage Board (drainage rates)..... £ 51.06

c) Members approved the following payments:

<i>100767</i>	<i>D A Gibbs (salary August and September)</i>	<i>£ 895.60</i>
<i>100768</i>	<i>Newton Village Hall (hall hire)</i>	<i><u>£ 60.00</u></i>
		<i>£ 955.60</i>

d) Members considered a request for financial support from the Village Hall Management Committee. Cllrs Clerk and Moore declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item as Trustees of the charity and did not participate in the discussion. Members were reassured that the charity had sufficient funds to cover all current expenditure. They resolved not to provide support at the current time and to consider future requests only when evidence of financial need was provided. The Clerk was asked to notify the charity accordingly.

049/23 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council will take place on Tuesday 14th November at 7.30pm.