

# 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 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

**Present** - Cllr R Bradley (Chairman), Cllr S Clark, Cllr R Moore, Cllr B Simpson, Cllr K Simpson, Cllr C Seaton (FDC), D Gibbs (Clerk), 8 parishioners

#### **075/23 Apologies for Absence**

Cllr S King (CCC), Cllr B Barber (FDC)

#### **076/23 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman thanked former Councillors Freeman and Jones for their contributions to the Council and expressed his regret at the circumstances leading to their resignations.

#### **077/23 Public Forum**

Questions were raised regarding the timing and public display of the minutes of meetings. The Clerk explained that draft minutes were issued as soon as possible after each meeting and published on the Council's website. The minutes of January's meeting were not displayed on notice boards, as the boards had not been installed.

A resident expressed concern regarding the condition of the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field. The Chairman explained that various works were under way to improve the site but the adverse weather had affected the timing of these works.

Several residents mentioned highway issues. The Clerk confirmed that he had reported all of these issues to Cambridgeshire Highways and hoped that the necessary remedial action would be taken shortly.

#### **078/23 Membership of the Council**

The Clerk advised Members that four valid nominations had been received for the two vacant positions on the Council. Members considered the personal statements submitted by each of the candidates. A ballot was held and the Clerk confirmed that Andrew Clark and Kate Humphris were the two successful candidates. The Chairman thanked the four candidates for their interest and congratulated the two successful candidates. Mr Clark signed his acceptance of office form, witnessed by the Clerk. Mrs Humphris was not present, so Members agreed that she should sign her acceptance form at a later date.

#### **079/23 Election of Vice Chairman**

Following the resignation of Cllr Freeman, the position of Vice Chairman of the Council became vacant. Cllr Moore was nominated and duly elected as Vice Chairman until the Annual Meeting.

### **080/23 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January be agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.

### **081/23 County and District Councillors Reports**

County - In Cllr King's absence no matters were discussed.

District - Cllr Seaton reported that a motion had been passed at the District Council's February meeting regarding the proposed changes to bus services in Fenland. The motion opposed the increase in the Mayoral precept and called on the Mayor to review the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan to ensure that future bus provision in Fenland meets the needs of rural communities.

### **082/23 Police Matters**

The Clerk reported that he had attended a meeting with the Neighbourhood Sergeant. The vacant roles on the Neighbourhood Team have been filled. The two new constables have police and military experience respectively. Cllr Seaton noted that Inspector Andy Morris has left Cambridgeshire Police.

### **083/23 Clerk's Report**

The Clerk reported on meetings attended and correspondence received, including two consultation events on the proposed National Grid Grimsby to Walpole upgrade and a CAPALC Clerks' Briefing on internal audits. Correspondence included a Combined Authority survey on electric vehicles and charging points, the Great British Spring Clean, Cambridgeshire ACRE's Centenary Community Buildings Conference, the launch of the Volunteer Cambs volunteering portal, an Online Playgrounds playground inspection course and the North Level District Internal Drainage Board's View Day.

### **084/23 Outstanding Matters**

- a) Abandoned vehicle in Colvile Road - no update received.
- b) Accumulation of scrap in Colvile Road - no update received.
- c) Dangerous path surface at St James Close - no update received.
- d) Vacant properties - no update received.
- e) High Road bench - brackets have been made to fix the bench to the plinth, so the installation can now proceed.
- f) Mossy pavement in Westfield Road - no progress.
- g) Allocation of vacant allotment - the site has been cleared and the hedges cut. A contractor will rotovate the site.
- h) Wildflower meadow - the Clerk will remind the contractor.
- i) Arboretum - the Clerk has the replacement trees to be planted when the weather improves.

- j) Byway winter closures - the Chairman is preparing the paperwork to enable the closures to be implemented in time for next winter.
- k) Village bus service - the meeting with neighbouring parishes will take place in May.
- l) Former Colville School site - the site has been cleared and the owner will now consider options for development.
- m) Playing Field dyke - the Clerk will discuss this with the North Level Drainage Board.
- n) Welcome packs - Cllr Clark reported that she has received tote bags from the District Council and has a supply of leaflets and other useful information. Tea and biscuits will also be included.

### **085/23 Members' and Residents' Issues**

- a) Pride in Fenland Awards - the Clerk confirmed that he had nominated Shyla Brown for her inspirational fundraising activities.
- b) High Road speeding - the Clerk reported that a resident's cat had been struck and killed by a speeding motorist, following which the resident asked whether the speed limit could be reduced or traffic calming introduced. Members agreed to consider options for a future Local Highways Improvement application. The Clerk will move the MVAS speed monitoring device to the eastern end of the High Road.
- c) National Grid Grimsby to Walpole upgrade - the initial consultation ends on 13<sup>th</sup> March. A further consultation will take place once the final proposed route has been selected. Members noted that as a national infrastructure project it is likely that consent will be granted.
- d) Annual Parish Meeting planning - the meeting will take place on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May. Members suggested that the new Cambridgeshire Police Inspector be invited to attend.
- e) Request from Village Hall Management Committee - the Committee intends to arrange another community event in the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July. Members agreed to support the event.
- f) Drainage issues - the Clerk notified Members that the Clarion Housing sewer system covering Goodens Lane and surrounding properties had become blocked again, causing problems for some residents. Tankers were used to empty the system and the blockage was cleared, however it took more than a week to resolve the problem fully. The excessive rainfall has highlighted a number of blocked drains, which have been reported to Cambridgeshire Highways for clearing.

### **086/23 Highways**

- a) The Clerk reported that some of the larger potholes have been repaired using the Dragon Patcher but there are still many defects to be addressed. The HGV sign at the junction of Chapel Lane and Rectory Road has still not been repaired eight months after being reported. Further reports will be submitted. Pre surface dressing conditioning works have started on the B1165 between the western end of the village and Tydd St Giles.

- b) The Clerk confirmed that he was in the process of preparing an application to the County Council for a 20mph zone comprising the current 30mph zone around Goodens Lane and Church Lane.
- c) Members considered the questionnaire issued by Cambridgeshire Highways regarding future treatment of highway weeds. They resolved to revert to the previous arrangement of twice-yearly spraying.

**087/23 Planning**

Members considered the following planning applications and resolved accordingly:

- a) *F/YR24/0157/F - Erect 1 x polytunnel - Land North of 1 Brewers Lane, Newton-in-the-Isle*

Members resolved to offer no objection.

- b) *F/YR24/0167/F - Erect a 2-storey side extension a single-storey rear extension and front boundary fence 1.95m high (max) - Lodge Farm, Sutton Road, Four Gotes*

Cllr Bradley declared a non-pecuniary interest in this application as a relative of the applicant. He took no part in the discussion or vote. Cllr Moore took the Chair for this item. Members resolved to offer no objection.

- c) *F/YR24/0200/CERTP - Certificate of lawfulness (Proposed): Insertion of dormer roof extension to side of existing dwelling (to enable loft conversion) - 14 Westfield Road, Newton-in-the-Isle*

Cllr Bradley returned to the Chair. Members noted this application.

**088/23 Finance**

- a) The Clerk presented an updated financial statement as at the end of February, showing income of £12,516.47 and expenditure of £13,166.43, resulting in a deficit of £649.96 and total funds held of £34,035.04.

- b) Members noted the following sum received:

<i>Fenland District Council (recycling credits) .....</i>	£ 63.17
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- c) Members ratified the following payments issued since the previous meeting:

100775	<i>Newton Village Hall (hall hire) .....</i>	£ 30.00
100776	<i>O H Williams (allotment clearance) .....</i>	£ <u>200.00</u>
		£ 230.00

- d) Members approved the following payments:

100777	<i>D A Gibbs (salary February and March) .....</i>	£ 947.60
100778	<i>D A Gibbs (expenses) .....</i>	£ 344.49
100779	<i>Fenland District Council (election costs).....</i>	£ 331.08
100780	<i>T A Blackamore Ltd (grass cutting) .....</i>	£ 2,112.00
100781	<i>D Freeman (outdoor maintenance).....</i>	£ <u>101.46</u>
		£ 3,836.63

- e) Members considered options for future banking arrangements and resolved to remain with Barclays Bank. The previous decision to open accounts with National Westminster

Bank (minute 027/22(e)) was reversed as new information regarding charges has come to light that was not evident at the time.

**089/23 Village Handyman**

The Clerk reported that there had been two expressions of interest in the role. Members resolved to delegate the responsibility for the appointment to Cllrs A Clark, Bradley and K Simpson.

**090/23 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

**091/23 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Council will take place on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30pm.

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