

MINUTES OF NORTON SUB HAMDON PARISH COUNCIL
VIRTUAL MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 8th FEBRUARY 2021
VIA ZOOM AT 7.30 P.M.

21/1611 PRESENT:

Mrs S. More (Chairman), Mr S. Maunder (Vice Chair), Mrs P. Biddle, Mr J Cole, Mr B.Matrades, Ms R.Cumberbatch , Mike Hewitson (District Councillor), Mrs L.Brooks (Clerk), and 1 member of the public.

21/1612 APOLOGIES:

Mr R.Middleton (Personal – agreed with Chairman)

Mark Keating (County Councillor) – Council redeployed commitments

21/1613 PUBLIC TIME

21/1613/a Public Time

Nothing to report

21/1613/b P.C.S.O. Report:

Nothing to report

21/1613/c District Councillor: A report from Councillor Hewitson was received. The Clerk forwarded it to all Parish Councillors. Councillor Hewitson reported on the following:

SSDC: A number of Committees have been cancelled including Area Committees and Audit Committee due to the redeployment of staff to support the COVID Vaccination Programme.

Octagon Theatre: District Executive has agreed in principle to the investment of £23m to extend the Octagon theatre in Yeovil. The expanded premises will add a new circle, two flexible studio spaces, backstage and accessibility improvements. This will allow the Octagon to host larger touring productions which will help to bring visitors into the area, boosting our economic development. A final decision will be made when further scoping activity reports.

Phosphates – There is a problem in Somerset with high levels of phosphate finding their way into water courses and concentrating on The Levels. High levels of phosphate can lead to dense overgrowth of plant life and can damage ecosystems. All developments need to have their impact on phosphate levels assessed, and as a result there are currently over 4,000 applications stuck in South Somerset.

Somerset Councils are working together to produce a Nutrient Strategy with work to be completed by the autumn.

Somerset County Council have written to Government to request permission to postpone the May 2021 Local Elections. No decision has yet been made.

Delivery of political leaflets by volunteers has been banned. However this may create a political imbalance where some parties can afford to have paid-for literature delivered, and others cannot.

21/1613/d County Councillor:

There was no report from Councillor Keating and he was not present at the meeting.

21/1613/e CLT Update:

Cllr Maunder reported that they had recently had a visit from the Council to check their Covid Regulations and Response. The shop received an excellent report and also commented on how well stocked the shop was.

21/1613/g Hamdon Youth Group:

The Youth Worker is once again furloughed. HYG are paying the remaining 20% of her furlough pay.

21/1614 MINUTES

The Minutes from the January meeting have been circulated. They were agreed and signed.

Proposed: Cllr. Biddle

Seconded: Cllr.Maunder

Agreed unanimously.

21/1615 MATTERS ARISING

1. **Changes required to banking:** The Chair reported that due to a change in policy by Nat West, The Clerk can no longer carry out admin duties as she is not a signatory on the account. This was highlighted last month when we ran out of new cheque books, and she was unable to reorder a new one. It was unanimously agreed to set up the Clerk as a signatory on the Parish Council accounts so she is able to carry out admin duties only, but not authorized to sign cheques. After May the Parish Council will look into moving all the bank accounts to the Unity Trust Bank and set up an online account where two Parish Councils authorize any payments. The Chairman to request relevant paperwork from Nat West.

Action: Cllr More

2. Extending Cllr Middleton's agreed leave – The Parish Council have received an application from Councillor Richard Middleton to extend his agreed leave for another 6 months. His original leave started in September 2020 and initially runs for a 6 month period (running out at the end of March 2021). Requests for leave of absence will normally be granted in cases of: serious illness for periods up to 12 months in total, or pregnancy. The Parish Councillors unanimously agreed to extend Councillor Middleton's leave for a further 6 months (finishing at the end of September). Councillor Middleton is a hard working Parish Councillor who is very well respected throughout the village.

Chairman to speak to Cllr Middleton to let him know the decision.

Action: Cllr. More

3. Attenuation Pond – Following images of two young lads recently spotted playing in the attenuation pond at Bramley Fields, District Cllr. Mike Hewitson has now written two letters to the developer to request that he helps in improving safety in this area. The Parish Council have always felt very strongly that a fence should be erected around the attenuation pond and would also wish to see at least one life saving device and a depth marker installed. The developer has yet to respond to either letter. The District Councillor has also updated the CEO of SSDC Val Keitch, over this matter to see if funding can be requested from Area North to make this area secure. Both the Parish Council and Councillor Hewitson are extremely concerned and are pushing for some immediate action, before there is a tragedy.

4. Replacement trees for the Rec: The Clerk reported that she has managed to secure 3 sapling trees from SSDC to replace the ones that were lost last Spring during the heatwave when we were in Lockdown. The Clerk confirmed that Down2Earth SW Ltd will plant them when they have arrived.

ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED AT THE NEXT PUBLIC MEETING TO BE HELD IN THE HALL:

1. Boules Court

21/1616 PLANNING:

21/1616/a Matters for report:

District Councillor Mike Hewitson reported that the District Executive have approved in principal a scheme of delegation in order to speed up the planning process. They're proposing that all householder applications and listed building applications go straight to the Officer for either approval or refusal. This would be delegated to Officers. All 2 starred applications (larger planning applications) would go straight to the regulatory committee bypassing the area committees. This proposal has yet to be passed. Cllr. Hewitson will keep the Parish Council informed.

21/1616/b Decisions Notified:

Nothing to report

21/1616/c Applications for consideration.

Nothing to report

21/1617 FINANCE:

21/1617/a Matters for report:

The Clerk reported that she had received a donation from the Village Hall Committee towards the pot holes in the village carpark which the Parish Council were very grateful for. The Clerk reported that the pothole repairs were showing signs of loose material on some of the patches. The Clerk had been in touch with the Tarmac Company who were coming back to sort the issue. It would seem the frost and extremely wet weather conditions may have contributed to this before the tarmac has fully cured. The Clerk will hold the cheque until the repairs have been completed.

Action: Clerk

21/1617/b Matters for resolution

S137 payments: Application letters were received from Yeovil Freewheelers Blood Bikes & Hamdon Youth Group. The Parish Council was in total agreement that this year, due to Covid, they would like to support Yeovil Freewheelers Blood Bikes with the full £200. The charity is run by 80 plus volunteers who provide their service entirely free of charge and it relies wholly on local donations. Their annual running costs are approx. £40-£50,000. They save the NHS over £200,000 a year by providing emergency courier services for blood platelets, blood and tissue samples, medication plus numerous other things.

The Parish Council made a resolution to donate the full £200.00 to The Yeovil Freewheelers

Proposed: Matraves

Seconded: Cllr. Cole

Agreed unanimously

Clerk to arrange payment.

Action: Clerk

21/1617/c Cheques Payable

Louise Brooks	Salary – January 2021	£	431.73 chq no: 1501
Louise Brooks	Expenses & home office Allowance – Jan ‘21	£	70.00 chq no: 1502
Louise Brooks	Zoom Account for Parish Council Meetings Jan	£	14.39 chq no: 1503
J Y Coles & Son Ltd	Repair potholes in village hall car park	£	840.00 chq no: 1504
SES Fire & Security	Annual CCTV maintenance 28.02.21- 27.02.22	£	96.00 chq no: 1505
Yeovil Freeweheelers	S137 payment	£	200.00 chq no: 1506
Proposed: Cllr. More	Seconded: Cllr. Maunder		Agreed unanimously.

21/1618 VILLAGE HALL:

Councillor Hewitson asked Cllr Cole (Chair of village hall committee) if they had received the third grant payment? Cllr. Cole would speak to the treasurer for confirmation.

21/1619 RECREATION GROUND:

Nothing to report

21/1620 CORRESPONDENCE:

All correspondence that the Clerk has received had been emailed to all Parish Councillors.

21/1621 FOOTPATHS:

The Chair reported that on the footpath that runs from Norton to Stoke (through the remaining fields of the fruit farm), the ‘bridge’ (that’s made from two sleepers) is falling apart. This needs reporting to the landowner, Mr Blackburn as the landowner is responsible for maintaining this. Clerk to email Mr. Blackburn. **Action: Clerk**
Cllr Cole reported that a deep rut had formed on the footpath known as ‘Split Filed’ that runs between The blackcurrant fields (Stoke) and Broadmead Lane.

****Update**** - Clerk has spoken to Matt Orchard who will take a spade and dig the rut out to make it safer.

The Clerk reported that she had been approached by a landowner who has a footpath that runs through her field. She asked for a piece to be included in the newsletter asking people to stick to footpaths rather than walking around the field.

Action: Clerk

21/1622 MEMBERS’ REPORTS:

Blocked Drains – reports of blocked drains in Little Street, Skinners Lane and Little Norton were reported. Clerk to email Highways. **Action: Clerk**

Reading Room – The Chairman reported that the Reading Room had just received another grant. Renovations have nearly been completed. The Chair also reported that the announcement has been made that Amanda will not be returning to the Reading Room with her café. The Parish Council were saddened by this as she was a very popular support to so many in the village with her fabulous food. The Reading Room is currently looking for a new person to run a café from there.

Rectory Lane: A resident in Rectory Lane asked for an article to be included in the newsletter regarding bins (both large and recycling) being left out after they’ve been emptied. The bins are then blowing into the road and are a danger. **Action: Clerk**

Pot Holes: There are many potholes appearing in Sandy Lane that need reporting as soon as the diversion has ceased.

Bus Shelter at Minchington – Cllr Cumberbatch reported that she is in the process of arranging for this to be painted.

Cllr Matraves reported that he would like to send thanks to John Forrest who is always picking up rubbish and generally and doing what he can to keep Norton looking tidy. Clerk to send an email of thanks. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr Matraves reported that there was a lot of bottles and cans that get thrown over into the field at the top of Ham Hill (at the viewing point where the ice cream van stays), and he was worried about the sheep in the field below. Cllr Hewitson will inform the Rangers. **Action: Cllr Hewitson**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.20pm

The next VIRTUAL meeting will be held on Monday 8th March 2021 at 7.30pm