

**MINUTES OF NORTON SUB HAMDON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2021**  
**AT 7.30 P.M.**

**21/1684      **PRESENT:****

Mrs S. More (Chairman), Mr. S. Maunder (Vice Chair), P. Biddle, Mr. B. Matraves, Mr. J Cole, Ms. R. Cumberbatch, Mike Hewitson (District Councillor), Mrs L. Brooks (Clerk), and 6 members of the public.

**21/1685      **APOLOGIES:****

Mr R.Middleton (Personal – agreed with Chairman)

Mark Keating (County Councillor) (Illness)

**21/1686      **PUBLIC TIME****

**21/1686/a      **Public Time****

Due to the meeting being held in the committee room, space was tight. The Chairman was conscious of social distancing being maintained and therefore reduced the number of available spaces for the public. Members of the public who were present had come to speak on items in matters arising, so the Chairman brought forward the items they wished to discuss to enable them to leave the meeting straight after they had spoken, if they so wished. All doors and windows were open for ventilation.

Please see matter arising for public comments.

**Creedy Bridge:** The Clerk informed the Parish Council that she had seen there had been fly tipping in the river at Creedy Bridge. She had reported this to the Environmental Agency. Their response was: *Dealing with littering or fly tipping on private land is the remit of the landowner, or on public land the Local Authority, regardless of whether the item(s) are in a watercourse.*

The Chairman will speak to the landowner first and if this is unsuccessful the Parish Council will write a letter.

**Action: The Chairman**

**21/1686/b      **P.C.S.O. Report:****

See matters Arising

**21/1686/c      **District Councillor:****

A report had been received and circulated to all Parish Councillors. Councillor Hewitson talked about the following:

A Full Council meeting was held on 19th August (hybrid meeting). They met to discuss the Structural Change Order (SCO) which will govern the next steps of the Unitarisation process. The Council agreed to delegate authority to the Chief Exec (Jane Portman) in consultation with the Leader & Monitoring Officer to submit responses and undertake negotiations regarding the content of the SCO. A working group has been established consisting of the Leader & Deputy Leader, Leader of the Conservative & Leader of the Independent Groups to consider the SCO.

- Decisions to be made under the SCO:
- Form of Unitary Council.
- Continuing or Shadow Authority.
- Form of governance.
- Number of votes for twin hatters.
- Number of Councillors for elections in May 2022.
- Abolition and winding up of Councils in 2023.
- Transfer of functions to continuing or shadow authority.
- Composition of implementation or shadow Executive.
- Who will be responsible for convening the first meeting.
- Electoral cycle.

**Recycle More:** Cllr Hewitson commented that he has been assisting residents who have had disruption to their collections. New service seems to be settling down, but residents can feel free to get in touch with him if they are experiencing problems or need further support.

Casework: District Councillor Hewitson reported that District Executive has ratified the £17k grant application for the Youth & Family Centre. He also reported that he had helped residents deal with antisocial behaviour, including drug paraphernalia fly-tipped on their property.

**21/1686/d County Councillor:**

A report from Councillor Keating was received. It included:

**Vaccination programme roll-out:** Somerset continues to have one of the highest vaccination rates in the country with the latest figures showing over 94.5% of the adult population having had one dose of vaccine and 84.6% having had both doses. Work continues to encourage further take up particularly amongst younger adults and a real focus on ensuring the second vaccine to this group.

**Local Government Reorganisation:** Following the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) decision to support the move to a single Unitary Council across Somerset work has now commenced to refine the transition and implementation programme. The four District Councils and Somerset County Council are working closely with MHCLG to implement the decision. A recent request from Government to look at a maximum of circa 85 Councillors on the new Council has also meant that a review of Divisional/Ward boundaries is now being undertaken. In addition, the impact of a May 2022 Unitary election on Town and Parish Councils who are not due to elect until 2023 is also under consideration with the views of these Councils being sought on the options available. It is expected that statutory orders will be laid before Parliament in the late Autumn and a vesting date of the new authority as April 2023.

**21/1686/e CLT Update:**

Nothing to report

**21/1686/g Hamdon Youth Group:**

Cllr Biddle reported that with regards to the bi-monthly reports that are produced by the youth worker, she was unable to forward them like they were to the Parish Council, as there was some sensitive information on there that could not be shared. The Chairman said that we only needed a really basic report which just mentioned number of attendees and a little bit about what the groups have been getting up to. As the Parish Council support the youth club financially it required just a basic update when available. Cllr Biddle also reported that the AGM was due later in the week. Cllr Maunder said he would be happy to attend and represent the Parish Council.

**21/1687 MINUTES**

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

Proposed: Cllr. Biddle

Seconded: Cllr. Maunder

Agreed unanimously.

**21/1688 MATTERS ARISING**

**1. Increase in crime and other related issues.**

The Clerk reported that The Chairman, District Councillor Mike Hewitson, and herself, attended a recent meeting that she had organised to meet the new PCSO, Abby Linaker and the new Beat Manager Andy Stuart, for Norton sub Hamdon. It was a very successful meeting, discussing the recent spate of crime and vandalism within the village, plus the drug paraphernalia that was recently found. The continuing reports of the eco-scooters being ridden on public roads and pavements was also discussed, with the Beat manager confirming that the Police can and will confiscate any e-scooter that is being ridden on public roads or pavements. The Police are going to increase their patrols throughout the village and they are aware of particular areas which are being worse affected. They also emphasised how important it is for anyone to report any issue they see as soon as possible. If it's not reported then they cannot follow it up. Clerk to include a piece in the newsletter. **Action: Clerk**

The Chairman also reported that she had received complaints regarding the parking of a certain vehicle in Rectory Lane. The Police had been informed and were going to monitor it. Rectory lane is very narrow especially in certain areas. There is a single white line along part of this lane which was installed by Highways to discourage people from parking there. The Chairman had spoken to County Councillor Mark Keating to get this line repainted as it had become faint. The Parish Council were concerned that if a large emergency vehicle (such as a fire engine) needed to get past in an emergency

situation, they would struggle. Inconsiderate parking can delay crews attending an incident and have potentially devastating consequences. Clerk to include a piece in the newsletter. **Action: Clerk**

#### **2. Update on speed calming measures on New Road/school entrance:**

The Parish Council was hoping for an update on this matter from County Councillor, Mark Keating. However, The Chairman reported that County Councillor Keating has recently not been well and the Parish Council requested that the Clerk send an email from them wishing him their best wishes.

**Action: Clerk**

The Chairman discussed the plan for pyramid signs and extending the zigzag lines outside the school and was waiting to hear from Highways. The Chairman also discussed concerns that this will actually push the parking problem further down the road and restrict access and visibility to Hamdon View and Barn Orchard – both Closes are already experiencing issues trying to exit them. One resident has emailed County Councillor Mark Keating and is still awaiting a response. The Chairman has emailed him as well regarding this issue and has received a reply that he will look into this further. The head teacher of Norton school, Jamie Caswell was supposed to get back to the Parish Council following the site meeting regarding his thoughts to a speed bump at the entrance to the car park. The Chairman also reported that a number of parents were planning to form a volunteer group to occasionally wear a fluorescent by the road/entrance to the school as this seemed to have a positive effect on slowing traffic down.

Clerk asked to email Mr Caswell to ask him for an update.

**Action: Clerk**

District Councillor, Mike Hewitson also said he had a school Governors meeting coming up and he would raise the problem again there, and ask if a letter could be sent out to parents asking them to park and drive with some care and consideration for others, and park where they would not be leaving an obstruction for others.

**Action: District Councillor Hewitson**

#### **3. Memorial garden**

Mrs E Maunder spoke on behalf of a group of people who would like to see the area of scrubland, owned by the church transformed into a community garden of thanksgiving and to mark the Queen's 70<sup>th</sup> jubilee. The area is currently an unsightly derelict space, overgrown with brambles and nettles. Although Mrs Maunder was well aware that the site is owned by the church and therefore the Parish Council have no say about the future of the piece of land, she attended the Parish meeting as she felt it courtesy to keep the Councillors informed regarding their idea to transform this area into something special for the village. She explained a little about their ideas and the Parish Council said they were in support of this. She asked that if they were successful with their plan, would the Parish Council consider donating a picnic table for the site? The Chairman said that if the church gives them the go-ahead to convert the area, then to come back with a proposal and the Parish Council would consider it then.

#### **4. Height of MUGA fence:**

A resident whose land backs onto the recreation field behind the MUGA attended the meeting. He spoke to the Parish Councillors about issues they are having with youths playing ball games on the MUGA and balls being kicked over into their field, plus the damage they were doing to his fence when they climbed over to retrieve the ball. His land is private property. They now have horses in the field and are concerned they will get hit. They felt that due to the MUGA being sunken into the ground the fence was not high enough. The retired Clerk to the Parish Council happened to be in attendance at the meeting. The Chairman asked for her input on the matter. She informed the Parish Council that even though the MUGA was sunken into the ground, the height of the fencing was at the standard height on the inside so therefore it didn't make any difference whether it had been built into the ground or not. When permission had first been granted to install the MUGA it was supposed to have flood lights with it. The Parish Council at the time fought not to have these installed as they would have been visible from Ham Hill due to the height of them, which would not have been allowed. She went onto say that children being children would always try and hit a ball over any height of fence. The MUGA has been installed for many years and the fence was at the standard height. No complaints have been

received before. It was commented on how well it's used and how nice it is to see children – both young and old, outside playing sport rather than stuck inside. The Clerk informed the Parish Council that the MUGA has recently passed its annual inspection. The Parish Council agreed that the height of the fence would not be increased as it was the standard height plus due to visibility restrictions with Ham Hill would not be allowed. It would also incur great costs to do so. The landowner had removed the old established high hedge that bordered the recreation field with their land and replaced it with a new hedge that was only just establishing. Once it had grown their protection will be improved from stray balls. The Chairman said she would speak to the youths that used it regularly and ask them to be more careful and respect that when they do need to retrieve a ball they are actually on private land. The Clerk was asked to include a piece in the newsletter also asking people to be more aware.

**Action Cllr More/Clerk**

**5. BT Telephone Box:**

The Clerk reported that she had been in discussion with BT regarding the telephone box outside the shop with the intentions of the Parish Council adopting the box. The Clerk reported that the BT box was actually listed. This means that BT has no intentions of removing the box and would continue to maintain it. The Parish Council saw no point in adopting the box if BT will not be removing it. As it's listed, if the Parish Council did adopt it, they would have to get listed planning consent to change the use of it. The Parish Council decided that as the BT box was not in danger of being removed, there was no point in adopting it. Clerk to let BT know the decision of the Parish Council but to also state that if there was a danger at a later date of it being removed then to let the Parish Council know and they would start the procedure to adopt it then.

**Action: Clerk**

**6. New Internal Auditor**

The new internal auditor for the Parish Council is Lindsay Elliott. The Parish Council were extremely grateful to Lindsay for agreeing to take this job on.

**21/1689 PLANNING:**

**21/1689/a Matters for report:**

The Clerk reported that a suspected breach to a previous planning application that was approved had been submitted to SSDC planning, for them to investigate. District Councillor Hewitson is chasing a response.

**Action: District Councillor Hewitson**

**21/1689/b Decisions Notified:**

Nothing to report

**21/1689/c Applications for consideration.**

21/01208/HOU - Quinta Little Norton Norton Sub Hamdon. Single Story Extension. The Chairman declared an interest (neighbouring property). The remaining Parish Councillors had no objections to this planning application. Clerk to respond.

**Action: Clerk**

**21/1690 FINANCE:**

**21/1690/a Matters for report:**

Nothing to report

**21/1690b Matters for resolution**

Nothing to report

**21/1690/c Cheques Payable**

		£	Cheque no:
Louise Brooks	Salary –July 2021	445.53	1537
HMRC	PAYE & NIC - July 2021	34.60	1538
Louise Brooks	Expenses & home office Allowance – July	70.00	1539
Louise Brooks	Salary –August 2021	472.33	1540
HMRC	PAYE & NIC – August 2021	7.80	1541
Louise Brooks	Expenses & home office Allowance – August	70.00	1542
Play Inspections Company	Annual play equipment inspection in rec	102.00	1543
SALC & NALC	Affiliation Fee 2021/22	200.11	1544

Louise Brooks	Norton 360 Antivirus for Parish Council laptop 2021/22	34.99	1545
The Cumbria Clock Company Ltd	Annual service of church clock	200.11	1546
PFK Littlejohn LLP	External audit charges	240.00	1547

Proposed: Cllr. Matraves    Seconded: Cllr. Cole                          Agreed unanimously.

**21/1691                          VILLAGE HALL:**

Cllr Cole reported that the majority of its regular users were now back as normal. They have also had lots of successful wedding over the summer. He also reported that there will soon be a new sign to go above the front door of the main entrance to the hall.

**21/1692                          RECREATION GROUND:**

The Clerk reported that the recreation field looked in good order and the only issue has been the trees that were vandalised. One of the trees that was vandalised was a Liquid Amber that had been given to the Parish from SSDC. The Clerk will see if she can get them to donate a replacement. **Action: Clerk**  
Cllr Cumberbatch said she had a contact at a local garden centre and would also ask them if they would like to donate a tree. **Action: Cllr. Cumberbatch**

The Parish Council also suggested we put a piece in the newsletter regarding anyone who would like to donate a tree to contact the Clerk. **Action: Clerk**

**21/1693                          CORRESPONDENCE:**

All correspondence the clerk has received has been circulated to all Parish Councillors.

**21/1694                          FOOTPATHS:**

The Chairman reported that our Footpaths Liaison Officer, Mr Harding, was doing a really good job of reporting any issues and making sure the jobs had been completed. The Clerk reported that Mr Harding had also got the long grass cut on the footpath between the blackcurrant field and Broadmead Lane. Cllr. Cole said that there was still a deep rut in this path that when wet, was dangerous. He said he would speak to the landowner and organise some hardcore to fill the rut. **Action: Cllr. Cole**

**21/1695                          MEMBERS' REPORTS:**

Cllr Cumberbatch reported there was a wasps nest near Minchington Rec, owned by SSDC. Clerk to contact Pest Control at SSDC and put them in contact with Cllr. Cumberbatch. **Action: Clerk**  
She also asked if the swing seats that had been removed were coming back or whether this was permanent. The Clerk reported that she had chased this recently with SSDC after a resident of Minchington had asked the same question. She had been informed that they had been removed after failing an inspection. The Clerk had also been told that SSDC was due to come out last week to replace them. Clerk will chase. **Action: Clerk**

The Chairman discussed Cllr Middleton agreed absence and the need to increase it. All the Parish Councillors were in total agreement to extend Cllr Middleton's leave for another 6 months, due to ongoing medical treatment. Cllr Middleton is a well-respected member of the Parish Council and throughout the village. This will now run until March 2022.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.40pm

**The next meeting will be held on MONDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2021 at 7.30pm, in the committee room inside the village hall.**