



## Minutes of the Newton and Biggin Parish Council (PC) Meeting Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Ref	Minute	Record and Resolution	Action by
1	NPC22/01/0353	<p><b>Present</b> - Ian Davis (Chair,) (ID,) Councillors (Cllrs) Bob Threadgold (BT), Anne Davis (AD), Rick Crane (RC) and Warwickshire County Councillor (WCC) Adrian Warwick (AW)</p> <p><b>In attendance</b> - Rebecca Barry (RB), Clerk. Gordon Coates (GC), Village Hall Committee</p> <p><b>Members of Public</b> - There were four members of the public present.</p>	
2	NPC22/01/0354	<b>Apologies</b> – Councillor Frank Preston (FP) and Rugby Borough Councillor (RBC) Eve Hassell (EH)	
3	NPC22/01/0355	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> - There were no Declarations of Interest expressed relating to any items on the agenda.	
4	NPC22/01/0356	<b>Agreement of minutes from the previous meeting</b> - Minutes of meeting held on 25 November 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.	

5	NPC22/01/0357	<p><b>Matters Arising and updates from previous minutes, not specifically on this agenda:</b></p> <p>I. <b>Playground signage and The Leys parking update</b> – The Chair reported that these works have been completed, with thanks to Cllr Warwick. Cllr Threadgold reported receiving positive feedback from the residents of The Leys and that an additional two parking spaces had been created.</p> <p>II. <b>Update on repair of benches</b> – In Cllr Preston’s absence, Cllr Crane agreed to take ownership of this and progress with the original contractors.</p> <p>III. <b>Update on St. Thomas Cross signage</b> – The Chair reported that the signage has been agreed and drawn up, but there had been an issue with the contractor. An update will be received early February.</p> <p>IV. <b>Arrangements for the Platinum Jubilee</b></p> <p>a. <b>Commemorations</b> – The Chair reported that a long-lasting commemoration was planned which will complete the improvement works to the Village Hall. The UPVC door will be replaced with a bespoke oak door, with a window with an etched commemorative design.</p> <p>b. <b>Celebration Working Party update</b> – The Chair explained that a provision had been made in the budget for celebrations in Newton and in Coton (with Coton events being arranged by the Coton Park Residents Association). Cllr Threadgold reported that an informal meeting was held on 26<sup>th</sup> January to discuss the Newton events, and was very well attended. Many ideas were discussed including a hog roast; baking competition and choir. The Chair reported that the Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire has been invited to officially unveil the commemoration, but that schedules need to be reviewed.</p> <p>V. <b>Street Light obstruction, Little London Lane update</b> – Cllr Davis reported that Western Power have removed the obstructing vegetation.</p> <p>VI. <b>Update on Christmas Celebrations</b> – The Chair reported that Christmas 2021 celebrations included a tree, lights, carols and refreshments. The turnout was slightly affected by Covid and poor weather.</p>	RC ID ID BT / ID
6	NPC22/01/0358	<p><b>Suspension of Standing/ Orders in order to let the Public raise any issues of concern:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A member of the public reported that a cherry tree was obstructing a street light in The Hollies. The Chair explained that the obstruction in Little London Lane was cleared because a power line was affected. It is the responsibility of the property owner to cut back the tree. The problem will be discussed by the residents of The Hollies and brought back to the next Parish Council meeting.</li> <li>• A request was made for an update on Ellis Gardens. The Chair reported that a meeting had recently been held on-site with Cllr Threadgold, Lioncourt (the developer), and RBC representatives. There are still a few minor issues to resolve before RBC will agree to commence the 12-month transition period before the Parish Council formally adopt. Failing trees have been replaced and some work on hedging has happened. There is a potential hazard where the Lioncourt flagpoles have been partially removed, but stumps left in the ground. The Chair agreed to review and mention to the developer.</li> </ul>	ID

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A member of the public asked if events could take place on the open space at Ellis Gardens. The Chair explained that such events would have to wait until the Parish Council have formally adopted the area.</li> <li>• A member of the public asked for an update on any budget for Ellis Gardens. The Chair explained that a provision for 'general enhancements to open spaces' had been made in the 2022/23 budget which would include Ellis Gardens. The Clerk reported that there was also an untouched 'Earmarked Reserve' for Ellis Gardens that will also carry into the next financial year.</li> </ul>	
7	NPC22/01/0359	<b>As there were no further issues raised by the public, the Standing Orders were resumed.</b>	
8	NPC22/01/0360	<p><b>Village Hall energy efficiency</b> – The Chair reported that an audit had been completed (at no cost) and the results included four recommendations to improve energy efficiency:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Add further insulation to the loft – estimated cost of £1000 with a 3 year pay-back.</li> <li>2. Insulate floor – not viable as the newly laid floor would have to be pulled up.</li> <li>3. Install an air source heat pump – estimated cost of £15000</li> <li>4. Install solar panels – estimated cost of £5000 with a 9 year pay-back</li> </ol> <p>It was agreed to progress with the loft insulation due to the low cost. Cllr Warwick gave some advice due to previous experiences - Air source pumps are not viable due to the expense and lac of energy savings, but solar panels are worth investigating and possibly coupling with electric heaters. He also advised that there could be an opportunity for a County Council Green Grant to fund such projects.</p> <p>The Chair and Cllr Warwick will review the findings and grant possibilities.</p>	ID/AW
9	NPC22/01/0361	<p><b>Village Hall aluminium ramp</b> – The Chair reported that there was a steep ramp outside the fire door, and someone had recently slipped on it, but were thankfully not badly injured. Advice has been sought from Building Control with regards to The Disability Discrimination Act and they have confirmed that the access at the front of the building is sufficient legally, and access to the garden can also be gained via the front of the building. They advised that the ramp be removed, leaving the steps, and a hand-rail to be installed. Cllr Crane will progress this.</p>	RC
10	NPC22/01/0362	<p><b>Village Hall Trustee Management</b> – The Chair re-capped that the Parish Council became Sole Trustee in 1965 and the existing Deed of Trust is outdated and requires re-writing and modernising. The Chair and the Clerk had a meeting with a solicitor who advised that we must now resolve this issue and that the Charities Commission (CC) need to be involved. They did, however, point out a clause in the 1965 deed that allowed decisions made by the committee to be valid, even if the deed of trust hadn't been followed in full. Potential cost of £2000 to £4000 in legal fees, but it could escalate beyond this depending on the complexities.</p> <p>The Chair sought advice from WALC and Quinton PC also have offered support as they resolved a similar issue directly with the CC. Cllr Warwick reported that Wolvey PC have also been through the same process and moved to</p>	ID/AW/ RB

		operating as a 'Charity Incorporated Organisation' (CIO). Cllr Warwick will discuss further with the Chair and the Clerk.	
11	NPC22/01/0363	<b>Consultation on Warwickshire's Vision for Bus Travel</b> – The Chair explained that feedback had been requested on this consultation, but the proposals were not very innovative and were lacking details around costs. The Chair requested usage data for the 'Dial a Ride' Minibus service, and it is not being used. The Chair will complete the consultation on behalf of the Parish Council.	ID
12	NPC22/01/0364	<b>Consultation on extension of RBC Dog Controls Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO)</b> – The Chair reported that three PSPOs were due for review / extension, but that only the Dog Controls PSPO was relevant to Newton. The Parish Council have no objections to the extension of this order.	
13	NPC22/01/0365	<b>Hedgerow security gaps concern – Great Central / Great Burnet Close (Coton)</b> – The Chair reported that a resident had raised issues about the gap in the hedgerow being used as a walkway. The Chair met Cllr Hassell onsite and discussed with the resident. Cllr Warwick reported that he had also been involved in this issue and that Persimmon, the developer, were to resolve. Cllr Hassell was going to review the approved plans. Cllrs Warwick and Hassell will discuss.	AW/EH
14	NPC22/01/0366	<b>Approve the replacement of Clerk's Laptop / MS365 Subscription</b> – The Clerk summarised the age and problems of the current laptop. A paper was sent to Councillors with a proposal for the purchase of a new laptop and a subscription to MS365. This proposal was approved.	
15	NPC22/01/0367	<b>Planning Applications</b> – It was noted that the PC had received and responded to the following applications / consultations: I. R21 0926 Land on west side of A5 (Europark) seeking planning permission to vary three conditions attached to planning permission R20 0918 – <i>Planning permission has been granted.</i> II. R21 1149 3 Great Burnet Close, Rugby, CV23 0LF (Coton) for a single storey rear extension Unit 8 Europark – <i>The Parish Council have no objections.</i>	
16	NPC22/01/0368	<b>Approve the proposed 2022/23 Budget and Precept</b> – The Chair reported that informal discussions about the budget had taken place over the past few months. The Clerk explained the budgeting process, and the proposed budget was reviewed at Cost Centre and Cost Code level. The Clerk reported that the Tax Base (number of Band D equivalent properties) was increasing by 11% next year due to developments at Coton. The average Band D property charge will be raised by 1%. This results in a Precept request of £21,105.57. <b>The Council approved the budget and precept for 2022/23.</b>	
17	NPC22/01/0369	<b>Parish Council Financial Report</b> (I) Financial position and bank reconciliation - The Council reviewed the financial report for November & December.	

The Clerk reported that the accounts are in a healthy position with approximately £3,300 unallocated funds which will be rolled into 2022/23.

The General Reserve and Earmarked Reserves remain untouched and will also be rolled into 2022/23.

Lloyds bank account vs Scribe Accounts have been reconciled by the Clerk and will be signed off by the Chair at the end of the meeting.

The Clerk also explained that there was a VAT claim to be calculated and actioned.

(II) The Council approved the following payments:

Payments for approval	NET	VAT	TOTAL
Reimburse Cllr Davis for Xmas Celebration - cups, napkins, squash	£13.20	£0.00	£13.20
Reimburse Cllr Davis for Xmas Celebration - mulled wine, mince pies	£26.57	£0.00	£26.57
PKF Littlejohn external audit (review of AGAR)	£200.00	£40.00	£240.00
Reimburse Cllr Davis for gift voucher (Cleaver payroll services)	£100.00	£0.00	£100.00
Michelle Abrahall Illustration - 50% commencement fee Jubilee design	£45.00	£0.00	£45.00
Kelmarsh Young Farmers - removal of parish Christmas tree	£10.00	£0.00	£10.00
Reimburse R. Barry - stationery (folders)	£7.49	£0.00	£7.49
Reimburse R. Barry - stationery (2022 diary)	£12.99	£0.00	£12.99

(III) Direct Debits and routine payments (with pre-approval) were noted as follows:

Dec-21 / Jan-22			NET	VAT	TOTAL
DD - 21/12/21	NPC20/08/0133	Plusnet Village Hall Internet	£18.00	£3.60	£21.60
DD - 21/01/22	NPC20/08/0133	Plusnet Village Hall Internet	£18.00	£3.60	£21.60
FPO - 02/12/21	NPC20/06/0100	Honorarium - picnic area gates for November	£83.33	£0.00	£83.33
FPO - 03/12/21	NPC20/06/0100	Staffing for November	£368.69	£0.00	£368.69
FPO - 03/12/21	NPC20/06/0100	HMRC for November - Staffing PAYE	£87.80	£0.00	£87.80
FPO - 03/12/21	NPC20/06/0100	Server Invoice Nov & Dec (Webgrowth)	£60.00	£0.00	£60.00
FPO - 16/12/21	NPC20/06/0100	EON Street Lighting - November bill	£42.02	£2.10	£44.12
FPO - 04/01/22	NPC20/06/0100	Honorarium - picnic area gates for December	£83.33	£0.00	£83.33
FPO - 04/01/22	NPC20/06/0100	Staffing for December	£372.92	£0.00	£372.92
FPO - 04/01/22	NPC20/06/0100	HMRC for December - Staffing PAYE	£89.00	£0.00	£89.00
FPO - 21/01/22	NPC20/06/0100	Npower Street Lighting - December bill	£68.24	£3.41	£71.65

		FPO - 30/11/21	NPC21/07/0285	Village Hall outside tap	£80.00	£16.00	£96.00		
		FPO - 30/11/21	NPC21/08/0305	Honorarium – grass cutting for November	£30.00	£0.00	£30.00		
		FPO - 17/12/21	NPC21/06/0276	Path works at Newton	£3,760.00	£752.00	£4,512.00		
		FPO - 31/12/21	NPC21/08/0305	Honorarium – grass cutting for December	£30.00	£0.00	£30.00		
		FPO - 04/01/22	NPC21/10/0327	Village Hall electrics and light	£368.79	£73.76	£442.55		
		<p>(IV) Conclusion of the 2021/22 External Audit, including the apologies received from PKF Littlejohn LLP for the delay in sending the completion paperwork – The Clerk explained that the external auditors had sent the completion paperwork on 14<sup>th</sup> December, dated 29<sup>th</sup> September, with their apologies. The Notice of Conclusion of Audit has been published on the PC website and noticeboard. The auditors raised a point about the accuracy of the submission, which has been noted; and also pointed out some weaknesses with internal controls, which have since been addressed.</p> <p>(V) Transfer of street lighting from Eon to Npower Business and change of billing – The Clerk explained that the companies had merged and the account for street lighting has moved. Npower has a different billing method where they reflect seasonality in the monthly charges, whereas Eon billed at a flat daily rate. The Council approved a direct debit mandate being set up and signed.</p>							
<b>18</b>	NPC22/01/0370	The meeting concluded at 8.35pm. Next meeting - Thursday 24 February 2022 at 7.30pm in the Newton Village Memorial Hall.							