



Draft Minutes of Newton and Biggin Parish Council (PC) meeting held on Thursday 23 April 2020

Coronavirus - Here are the Minutes of the first virtual Parish Council meeting held on 23 April 2020.

In the present circumstances the Parish Council will not be able to meet again for the foreseeable future so arrangements have been put in place for decisions to be made and work to continue. All significant decisions will be made on the dates that the Council was due to meet and the Government has now agreed that decisions made at virtual meetings via electronic means are now legal and binding. Thus, the Parish Council will hold virtual meetings wherever possible as scheduled.

Advance notice will be given by the publishing of an 'Agenda' in the normal way and all decisions will be recorded in Minutes that will also be published.

If you have any issues that you'd like to bring to the Parish Council's attention please let one of the Councillors know or send them to: clerk@newtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Ref	Minute	Text	Action
1	NPC20/04/0056	Attendance - Ian Davis (ID) Chair, Parish Councillors Anne Davis (ADa), Vanessa Goulborn (VG), Rick Crane (RC), and PC Clerk Allyson Downes (ADo).	
2	NPC20/04/0057	Apologies - Councillor Frank Preston, County Councillor Adrian Warwick and Borough Councillor Leigh Hunt.	
3	NPC20/04/0058	Declarations of Interest - Councillor Crane declared an interest in Item 5. I. (Village Hall decoration).	
4	NPC20/04/0059	Previous Minutes - the minutes from the 19 March 2020 were taken as read, agreed as a correct record and would be signed by the Chair when next the Clerk and he meet.	

5	NPC20/04/0060	<p>Matters Arising:</p> <p>I. Village Hall - Payment of £589.57 was agreed for decorating the VH interior by Councillor Crane. As Councillor Crane had declared an interest in this item, he took no part in the discussion. The rationale for choosing Councillor Crane to undertake the work was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hall is now closed so it would make sense to decorate it now rather than waiting for it to open and then closing it again. • Given the lockdown the Parish Council is unlikely to be able to find another painter/decorator at short notice. • Even if an alternative decorator was found, it is likely that he/she would need to travel to get here and would need to meet one or more Parish Councillors to be instructed in requirements. Neither of these are within the spirit of Government instructions. • Councillor Crane will undertake the work for £500 (plus materials) representing a discount on his normal rate. <p>II. The Chair agreed to measure the windows of the Village Hall to enable quotations for new curtains and/or blinds to be sought by the Clerk and costs would be presented to the Parish Council.</p> <p>III. The Chair presented the status of the new Village Hall porch and repointing for which the Parish Council had accounted for in the 2020/21 budget. However, it was noted that the work is dependent upon a grant from Rugby Borough Council (RBC) and that the RBC grant process is currently suspended in which case the work will need to be postponed.</p>	<p>ADo</p> <p>RC</p> <p>ID</p>
6	NPC20/04/0061	<p>Financial Report:</p> <p>I. It was noted that the end of year financial report was complete and the report and records were currently with the Parish Council Internal Auditor for assessment. Once these are finalised, they will be presented to the Parish Council by the Auditor.</p> <p>II. It was also noted that the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer had signed up the Parish Council to Internet Banking via Lloyds Bank. This would enable more efficient payments to be made and provide greater transparency to financial procedures. A further report on progress and process would be made at the next meeting once confirmation is received from the bank.</p> <p>III. Payments - It was agreed to pay a reduced rate of honorarium (£50 rather than £83.33) for locking and unlocking the Five Arches Nature Reserve as the operator continues to oversee the reserve.</p> <p>IV. Payment to EON for street lighting in the sum of £38.57 for March was agreed.</p> <p>V. Payment to Warwickshire Association of Local Councils (WALC) for the annual subscription of £326.00 was agreed.</p> <p>VI. Members of the Parish Council agreed that formal thanks were to be shared with Councillor Frank Preston for his renovation work on the wooden planter at the entrance to the village.</p>	<p>ADo</p> <p>ADo</p> <p>ADo</p> <p>ADo</p>

		VII. The Parish Council agreed the sum of £500 for replacement or repair to the Clerk's laptop which was becoming obsolete and unreliable.	ADo
7	NPC20/04/0062	<p>Planning Application R20/0272 - It was resolved that the following response would be sent to Rugby Borough Council in relation to the planning application consultation on behalf of the Parish Council.</p> <p>Newton and Biggin Parish Council is grateful for the opportunity to comment on the application. It is noted that the proposal accords with the provisions of the Adopted Rugby Local Plan and the Master Plan for Coton East. Consequently, the Parish Council has no objection to the principal of the development but would make the following observations.</p> <p>1. The application seeks outline planning permission for industrial, storage and distribution use and includes an indicative layout. Whilst it is appreciated that these plans are illustrative only, it is suggested that RBC considers the imposition of appropriate conditions to ensure that (a) the development as built includes a range of relatively small units as shown on the submitted plans (and that these are maintained as smaller units thereafter) and (b) a proportion of the overall floorspace be secured, now and into the future for industrial use. The reason for suggesting these Conditions is that the Borough is well-served by large, logistics sheds but the market is less efficient in providing smaller units, particularly for industrial uses. The opportunity presents itself here to provide such units which will be of value to local, grow-on businesses.</p> <p>2. The Ecological Survey reveals the existence of bats on the site. The applicant commits to retaining this tree in which the bats live. The Survey also confirms the rich habitat that exists at the nearby Five Arches Wildlife Site (northern end of the Great Central Way) owned by RBC but managed and funded by Newton and Biggin Parish Council in partnership with Butterfly Conservation. Despite the best endeavours of the applicant it is inevitable that species, including the above-mentioned bats, will be displaced from the application site. It is therefore suggested that the applicant be required to make a financial contribution of £10,000 towards further habitat enhancement at the Five Arches Site. This would include a bat hibernaculum to provide additional over-wintering facilities for these protected species.</p> <p>The Clerk was asked to submit this response to RBC.</p>	ADo
8	NPC20/04/0063	Five Arches Bridges - It was noted that the Chair had contacted Chris Worman of RBC regarding three damaged bridges in the wetland area of the Five Arches Nature Reserve and where insurance/public liability obligations lie. Chris Worman is arranging for an assessment to determine what can be done to clarify the position and mitigate the risk.	
9	NPC20/04/0064	Grant for Covid-19 related initiatives - An opportunity to apply for a WCC Councillors Grant was shared, although after discussion, it was noted that there were no initiatives that met the criteria. However, it was resolved that the Parish Council would provide small grants to villagers to support smaller local initiatives. The availability of this local grant would be shared via the Newton Village Events Facebook page by the Chair.	ID
10	NPC20/04/0065	The next scheduled meeting is on Thursday 21 May 2020 and dependent on lockdown status, will likely be a virtual meeting. Residents are asked to contact a Parish Councillor or the Clerk if there are items they would like to raise.	
11	NPC20/04/0066	The meeting closed at 18.29.	