

The following are the DRAFT minutes of an ordinary meeting of Priston Parish Council held on Monday 14 May 2007 in the Village Hall, Priston. These have not yet been approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

Councillor Hughes presided, Councillors Cross, Hopwood, Lippiatt, C Nokes, Whybrow, Wilkinson and Parish Clerk were present. Councillor Hughes welcomed Councillor Wilkinson to his first meeting as a Parish Councillor and village residents Mr Bottle, Mr Broomfield, Mr Hunt, Mrs Hunter-Jones and Miss M Nokes.

1. **Apologies** received from District Councillor Victor Clarke.
2. **The Minutes of the meeting** held on 2 April 2007 were read after which a change of wording to item 6, Footpaths and Bridleways was requested by Councillor Whybrow. The first sentence under this heading to read “Councillor Whybrow had been advised by a B&NES Enforcement Officer that a feasibility study would be carried out.” After this amendment was noted the minutes were signed by the Chairman.
3. **Matters Arising:**
 - Ash Tree, Church Farm** – Remedial work had been carried out but account not yet received.
 - Parked vehicles reducing width of road and visibility** – No further action to be taken.
 - Walnut Trees, Hill Farm** – The Senior Arboricultural Officer of B&NES had issued a tree preservation order.
 - Garden Store, Hill Farm** – The Enforcement Officer had visited and made the decision that a retrospective planning application should be submitted within a deadline of 28 days.
4. **Correspondence** – The Clerk advised that she had written on behalf of the Parish Council to inform the newly elected District Councillor of forthcoming meetings and also to a resident of Wilmington with similar information. Notice of amendments to the Local Plan had been received which did not apply refer to Priston Parish. This to be circulated to councillors for information.
5. **Financial Report** - The Clerk reported that the first instalment of the precept had been received (£1,450) which resulted in a balance at the bank of £1,736.80 with no cash in hand.
6. **Payments:** (i) **ALCA** – Agreed after discussion to renew annual membership in the sum of £54.48. (ii) **Village Hall** – The Clerk advised of charges which would be levied if the Parish Council made the decision to remit per meeting; and (iii) **The Link** – After lengthy discussion it was proposed by Councillor Hopwood, seconded Councillor Nokes and agreed to continue to make a donation of £75 to the Village Hall and £50 to The Link as in previous years.
7. **Internal Auditor’s Report** – The Clerk read the annual report from the Internal Auditor which again included the advice that a third signatory for Parish Council cheques be appointed and the recommendation that, where a planning application is complicated and protracted, a better means of filing the application papers and accompanying documentation be adopted.
8. **Internal Audit Plan** – The effectiveness of the internal audit plan for the current year, as requested by the External Auditors, was considered and approved.
9. **Annual Return to External Auditors** for the year ended 31st March 2007 – The Clerk advised of the year ended figures as shown on the Annual Return and which showed a year end balance of £286.80. Councillors formally approved the section “Statement of Assurance” and the document was signed and dated by the Chairman and Clerk. The Clerk confirmed she would prepare notices to comply with the requirements of the Return to advise electors of their statutory rights.

10. **Registers of Interest** – Councillors were advised that a new Code of Conduct and Register of Interest came into force on 3rd May. The relevant documentation to enable the Parish Council to comply with the new Code would be distributed before the next meeting.
It was agreed that re-elected Councillors check and confirm the Registers of Interests which comply with the Code of Conduct which came into force on 27th November 2001. Councillor Wilkinson was requested to also complete the Register currently in use and return to the Clerk within 28 days.
11. **Priston Website** – Mr Bottle gave a report on the current information available on the website, advising of a link to Timsbury doctors’ surgery and to information on roadworks. A new “Neighbourhood Fix-it” website has been set up which allows residents to report problems to the local authority.
12. **Footpaths and Bridleways - Footbridge: Priston Mill** - Councillor Whybrow reported that the bridge over the brook would be repaired in the summer months, permission for access had been given by adjacent land owners.
It was also reported that the culvert over the leat had been damaged and Councillor Hopwood was thanked for his assistance in arranging for repairs by the Duchy of Cornwall stonemason. The B&NES Public Rights of Way Officer is seeking approval for a weight restriction on the culvert which is of archaeological importance and is believed to date from the 18th or 19th century.
13. **Planning Applications:**
Hill Farm – Reserved matters application for single dwelling (Resubmission) Amended – Noted this application had been refused at the Planning Committee ‘B’ meeting held on 4 April.
The Old Skittle Alley – Erection of Garage to side – Application refused by Planning Services.
New Farm, Marksbury - Erection of silage clamp – Noted receipt of consent form.
Hill Farm House - Remove and rebuild boundary wall – Decision awaited from Planning Services.
Arum House – Alterations to existing window, relocation of door and new porch – Returned to Planning Services with no objections raised by Parish Council.
The Clerk reminded Councillors that 21 days is allowed by Planning Services for consideration of applications and requested that documentation is returned to her by the date which she indicates on the application.
14. **Date of next meeting** - Monday 2 July commencing 7.00pm.
15. **Any other business:**
(i) **Local hedges** – Councillor Nokes commented that the local hedges had been trimmed very neatly in recent weeks.
(ii) Councillor Hopwood commented he had heard a report that the B&NES **Employees’ Pension Fund** had an unusually high percentage (10%) invested in Hedge Funds. If true, it could be construed a ‘high risk’ position. He suggested that councillors may wish to ask our new District Councillor to comment at the next meeting.
(iii) In reply to a question from Councillor Wilkinson regarding comments made by Councillor Rosemary Todd at the last meeting on a **Local Government Bill** Councillor Hughes advised that he had no further information on this.

There being no further business for consideration Councillor Hughes declared the meeting closed at 8.50pm thanking Councillors and residents for their attendance and participation.