

Minutes of the Priston Parish Council Meeting Held at 7 pm on Monday 13th November 2023 in the village hall

Present: Cllrs Peter Hopwood (Chair), Bruce Clarke, Helen Burns, Nick Keppel-Palmer, Guy Davies, John Lippiatt, Farah Downing, Jocelyn Nichols (Clerk) and B&NES Cllr Matt McCabe

1. **Matters raised by parish residents:** Included in matters arising.
2. **Apologies:**, B&NES Councillor Fiona Gourley
3. **Minutes:** The Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 4th September 2023 were approved and signed.
4. **Matters Arising:**
 - a) Helen and John Wilkinson attended the Community Resilience day and realised that we need to update the emergency plan which was published in 2008. A sub-committee of Peter Hopwood, Helen and John Wilkinson was set up to look into this, and they agreed to invite the Chew Valley emergency lead to attend to advise them. The PEG WhatsApp has 77 members and is very important for dealing with emergencies.
 - b) There is another Defibrillator course arranged for Saturday 25 November and several councillors are attending. This will increase the number of trained parishioners by 10.
 - c) Matt has asked Highways about what gritting will happen by B&NES for village roads now there is no bus, The council are very grateful for his support with this.
 - d) Gratitude was expressed that Councillor Fiona Gourley has supported our request for 20 mile an hour signs and road repeaters through the village.
5. **Chair's Report:** Already covered in Matters Arising.
6. **Financial Report for the year ending 31st March 2024:** The Parish Council had £12,935.11 in the bank on 31 October. The expenditure since the last report was £2,531.28 including paying for the defibrillator charge packs, insurance, plants for the horse trough and Web registration. We received our second precept payment of £3,728.50. The expected expenditure to the end of the financial year was discussed, and we should end the year with about £6,400 carry forward. If no claims are received for the Coronation celebrations then this item will be removed from the budget.
The NALC pay scales for this financial year beginning April 2023 have been received and this makes an increase of £32.07 a month to the clerk's salary. This is less than the inflation increase which was budgeted for, so there will be a saving on the next financial report.
7. **Roads and Highways:** The roads are coping as well as can be expected with the large volume of rain. John is reporting any potholes seen, and we are all encouraged to continue reporting these on 'Fix My Street'. **Action: John L to order a ton of grit for use by the gritter.**
8. **Planning:** Bruce listed the current ongoing planning issues:
 - a) Mill House – The large gym and office building being constructed is permitted by a certificate of

lawful use.

b) Upper Manor Farm have withdrawn their application.

c) Pottern House have had 3 conditions on the building agreed.

d) Church Farm have met proposals and conditions.

e) The shepherds huts on the Batch at Tunley are subject to an action by the B&NES Enforcement team.

f) Lights at New Farm – An objection has been raised by Tunley and Dunkerton Parish Council about the very bright lights which could be seen from Blind Lane. The planning application which was approved includes a condition that approval should be sought from B&NES for the installation of any lights, and this has not happened, so is now subject to an action by the B&NES Enforcement team. The Chair has discussed this issue with the landowner, who has realised that the lights in use were not correctly set up, and has recently realigned them to face downwards, which has reduced the light pollution. As the lights are on wheels the landowner was incorrectly advised that as they are temporary, they are therefore not subject to planning. Guy suggests the landowner writes to the enforcement officer to apologise and work out a way forward to enable the business to continue.

Action: Bruce will write to Tunley and Dunkerton Parish Council to ask if they are happy with the reduction to light pollution, and if they are not, to B&NES to support Tunley and Dunkerton Parish Council's complaint about the breach of planning conditions.

9. **Flooding:** The grid on Priston Lane to prevent blockages has still not been installed. Clerk has reminded B&NES about this, and Helen discussed it at the Community Resilience day, and it is on the list, but will need to wait until the new financial year for funds to complete the work.
10. **To report on the Climate and Ecological Emergency:** The Biodiversity workshop on 4th November was a great success and more than 25 people attended. Richard has listed all the suggestions and commitments on the website, and Penny has written a results document. We decided to focus on 3 topics:
- 1) Building ponds and helping to manage and surveying village ponds, which Guy agreed to lead.
 - 2) Creating dead hedges which Peter B will demonstrate.
 - 3) Promoting dark skies which Peter H and Doug agreed to lead – the village design statement states that 90% of villagers would like to live in a dark sky area, but lighting in the area has increased recently. **Action: the clerk will update the welcome pack to include encouragement to reduce light pollution, and villagers will be reminded about ways to reduce light spill with an article in the Link.**
- Nick asked if B&NES could offer help or advice on lighting to encourage dark skies. He has some ideas for using our CIL money which will be fed back to the council in the new year.
11. **To report on footpaths:** a) There is a problem with tree stumps creating a trip hazard on the green tunnel path by Woodlands. **Action: Helen will contact Eddie Proctor, B&NES footpaths officer about replacing the chippings.**
- b) The alley by the cricket pitch is uneven and slippery, and the hedges need trimming back. **Action: Helen will talk to Eddie about this path, but it may need to be a CIL project, and the clerk will contact the landowners about trimming the hedges.**
- c) The gates for horse access on the bridleway from Pottern House need replacing. **Action: Helen will talk to Eddie about this also.**
- d) A parishioner suggested improvements to the 300 metres of footpath by Wallmeadhouse Farm to enable safer cycling between Priston and Timsbury. Matt and the parish council support this idea in

principle, and Peter B will write to B&NES Councillors Shaun Stephenson – McGall and Sarah Warren to suggest this project, and they should be able to access Sustrans or WECA grants to complete the work.

12. **To report on external meetings and agree attendance at future meetings:** Guy attended the workshop on the future of rural affairs on 26 September. He will attend the workshop for shared prosperity if possible.
13. **Any other business:** The draft of B&NES options document about rural strategy will be published in February. They will be looking for ideas including energy schemes.
14. **Date of next Meeting** –Monday 15th January 2024 7pm in the village hall.

Signed:Date:

JN 14/11/23