

**MINUTES OF THE ST NEOT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY, 12TH MAY 2021 AT 7:30PM IN ST NEOT VILLAGE HALL, ST
NEOT**

Present: Councillors H Bunt, C Smith, O Burrows, T Hooper, H Webb, N O'Neill, G Rogers, D Lucas, T Thrussell and M Rowe.

Councillor Dr L Jones for items 1 and 2 of the meeting.
Jenny Hart for the public participation part of the meeting.
Sue Blaxley (Parish Clerk)

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:30pm.

Public Participation

Jenny Hart explained that new gates have been installed on the PROWs on Goonzion and new steps have been installed into Water Meadow at the bottom of Loveny Close. She said that she has walked the Two Valleys walk with Matthew Glencross and a representative from Cormac and a report will follow. She said that, so far, she has actioned 26 PROWs and asked how to proceed now in terms of involvement from the parish council. Councillor Dr L Jones said that clear lines of communication between Jenny Hart and the parish council are required as well as collaboration on the project. She urged the parish council to continue their support for this work. Councillor T Thrussell asked if any PROWs are to be potentially removed from the map. Jenny Hart said this is a matter for the individual landowners.

1. Apologies

None

2. Election of Chairperson

Councillor D Lucas thanked Councillor Dr L Jones for all she has done as Chair. He said that she will be hard to follow but he thinks that Councillor T Hooper would do it well. It was therefore proposed by Councillor D Lucas that Councillor T Hooper be elected as Chairperson. He said that the parish council is going to face fresh challenges soon in terms of guidance and legislation with which Councillor T Hooper can cope. He said that she has already given us good guidance on matters involving health and safety, safeguarding, equality and diversity and data protection. He said that she has served on public bodies for over 20 years and still maintains many contacts throughout the County which keeps her in touch with new issues and useful people. He said that she has already chaired a number of committees so has experience in this role and that she combines practicality with the intellectual approach. He said that as a local smallholder, she is studying issues in the farming community for her Phd so she can see local farming issues from both sides of the fence. He said that

Councillor T Hooper is well known in St Neot and involved in village activities including the Church. Also, he said that she is enthusiastic about the role of Chair and would really like to undertake the role. The proposal was seconded by Councillor T Thrussell. It was proposed by Councillor C Smith that Councillor H Bunt be elected as Chairman. He said that Councillor H Bunt has the time and commitment to give to this role. The proposal was seconded by Councillor G Rogers. No other nominations were received. Councillors H Bunt and T Hooper left the room. A secret ballot was held. Five councillors voted in favour of Councillor H Bunt being elected as Chairman and three voted in favour of Councillor T Hooper being elected as Chair. Councillor H Bunt was duly elected and took the Chair.

Councillor Dr L Jones left the meeting.

3. Election of Vice Chair

It was proposed by Councillor D Lucas and seconded by Councillor H Bunt that Councillor T Hooper be elected as Vice Chair. There were no other nominations and the proposal that Councillor T Hooper be elected as Vice Chair was carried unanimously.

4. Election of Planning Committee

It was agreed that Councillor H Bunt be elected as Chairperson and T Hooper Vice Chair of the Planning Committee and that the following councillors form the Planning Committee: Councillors C Smith, G Rogers, M Rowe and T Thrussell.

5. Election of Finance Committee

It was agreed that the following councillors would form the Finance Committee: Councillors C Smith (Chairman), H Bunt, T Hooper, T Thrussell and N O'Neill.

6. Election of Representatives

a) Goonzion Downs Commoners

It was proposed by Councillor H Bunt and seconded by Councillor C Smith that Councillor M Rowe be appointed as the representative for the following year. The proposal was carried unanimously.

b) Village Hall Management Committee

It was proposed by Councillor G Rogers and seconded by Councillor T Hooper that Councillor C Smith be appointed as the representative for the following year. The proposal was carried unanimously.

c) Liskeard Looe Community Network Panel

It was proposed by Councillor G Rogers and seconded by Councillor T Hooper that Councillor T Thrussell be appointed as the representative for the following year. The proposal was carried unanimously. The Chairman thanked Councillor D Lucas, on behalf of the parish council, for all his hard work with the LLCNP.

7. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 14th April 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th April 2021, having been previously circulated, were agreed as an accurate record.

8. Declaration of interest in items on the agenda

None

9. Code of Conduct

To approve the code of conduct

It was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor N O'Neill that the code of conduct be approved. The proposal was carried unanimously.

10. To receive a report on any matters arising from the previous meeting

The Clerk said that she would forward an email from Julie Downton relating to grazing regulations to all councillors. Councillor H Bunt said that he would be removing the shop fittings that were originally intended for Cott Yard from Martin Eddy's home in due course. The Clerk said that she had uploaded the asset register onto the website. Councillor C Smith confirmed that Cornwall Council's Planning Enforcement Officer is investigating the alleged unauthorized development at Berryfields Smallholding.

11. To receive the Chairman's Communications

The Clerk said that she had received an email from a parishioner seeking permission to do moth recording and other wildlife surveying, such as butterflies and hoverflies, on Goonzion. It was agreed that as the land is common ground, permission is not required but that the Clerk would respond to him thanking him for notifying the parish council. Councillor T Hooper said that the diversity of species found will be indicative of the health of the moor. Councillor T Hooper said that as physical parish council meetings are now the only lawful way of conducting a parish council meeting, there is an option to reduce the number of meetings a year and put a scheme of delegation in place for the Clerk during times when physical meetings are not taking place. It was agreed that meetings should take place, once a month, in person.

12. To answer any questions from Councillors, previously notified to the Clerk

Councillor H Webb said that she had noticed some Japanese knotweed on the path to the Holy Well. It was agreed that this is a notifiable weed and there is a page on Cornwall Council's website to report such sightings. However, Councillor O Burrows said that he would attend to the matter.

Councillor G Rogers said that the white lines on the crossroads at Crowpound require re-painting. It was agreed that the Clerk would ask Cormac to attend to this as soon as possible in the interests of health and safety.

Councillor C Smith said that the cattle grid at Colliford at the junction with the A30 has collapsed and that sheep could stray onto the A30 through an open gate next to the cattle grid. He said that he reported it to Cormac on Wednesday 12th May 2021 at 15:42 (reference number 21/9066 (Gavin)). The Chairman thanked Councillor C Smith for his quick action in respect of this matter. Councillor C Smith reminded all councillors of the need to email the Clerk and Chairman if any parish council business is acted on or incidents reported. The Clerk said it was imperative to ask her if there was any doubt as to whether action, on behalf of the parish council, should be taken.

Councillor D Lucas said that Jenny Hart deserves thanks for her hard work and for keeping the parish council informed on progress with the PROW survey. However, he said that a parishioner has read in the latest issue of the St Neot News of: 'the collaboration between the Parish Council, Cornwall Council and Jenny Hart....' on the PROW survey' and that he read too that the completed surveys had already been forwarded to Cornwall Council. Councillor D Lucas said that the parishioner asked who on the parish council had seen them. After consulting Councillor Dr L Jones, Councillor D Lucas told the parishioner that none has. The parishioner thought that this was hardly the 'collaboration' claimed; the Parish Council should take the active role implied and have someone 'on the case'. Councillor D Lucas said that perhaps the parish council should take a more active role, and thus be seen by parishioners to be participating. Councillor D Lucas said there are two options. First, that the full parish council, having deliberated the issue, believes that the current 'light touch' is appropriate, and should remain on the sidelines until a later stage in the investigation of proposals. The second option is to take a more active role whereby a parish councillor should be nominated to co-ordinate with Chris Monk (the Cornwall representative) and Jenny Hart (the Re-imagine Kernow representative) on all matters relating to the PROW survey; this representative should have full view of the completed survey forms and any other relevant documents; he or she should be party to decisions on any actions resulting from the surveys, consulting the full parish council as necessary; he or she would be responsible for informing councillors on all matters relevant to the surveys; he or she would also be responsible for making sure that parishioners - particularly landowners with a legitimate interest - are informed of what was going on.

Finally, the Chairman should inform Mr Monk and Mrs Hart of the councillor nominated, his or her Terms of Reference (as above), that he or she acts on behalf, and with the authority, of the parish council, and that he or she should be accorded equal status in the tripartite arrangement.

Councillor C Smith said that the parish council agreed that they supported the principle of these surveys but did not want to get too involved. Therefore, he would favour continuing with “the light approach”. He said that Jenny Hart is doing a very good job and the parish council do not need to be involved. Councillor T Thrussell asked if the parish council is responsible for all the PROWs. The Chairman said that PROWs are principally the landowner’s responsibility although the parish council is responsible for maintaining the gold paths and those on Goonzion. Councillor G Rogers asked what authority would be delegated to the parish council representative. Councillor D Lucas said they would act on small issues with larger matters being referred to the parish council. Councillor T Hooper said that the parish council does not want to be involved in contentious issues regarding PROWs and landowners. Councillor C Smith said that the parish council does not own the PROWs and do not want to be involved. Councillor T Thrussell said that if £5,000 has been allocated for the project, the parish council should oversee the spending of this money. The Chairman said that landowners have a legal responsibility to maintain the footpaths and that perhaps the parish council should have a representative on the Re-Imagine Kernow group. It was noted that Councillor T Thrussell is part of this group. Councillor T Thrussell said that the survey has come about in part because unless the PROWs are surveyed within the next few years, those PROWs that are not surveyed, may be discontinued. Councillor H Webb said that Councillor T Thrussell should keep the parish council informed of the work of Re-Imagine Kernow. It was agreed that the parish council does not have any authoritative role over PROWs. It was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor N O’Neill that Councillor G Rogers, as the contractor for the PROWs, keeps the parish council informed of matters relating to the PROWs but the parish council would not have any official involvement in the project. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal except for Councillor D Lucas who abstained from voting. The proposal was therefore carried.

13. To receive a report from the Clerk

The Clerk reminded all councillors that the following forms must be returned to her this evening if they have not already been received: register of interests, election expenses and acceptance of office.

14. Doorstep Green and Playing Field

To consider the exterior decorating of the Pavilion

The Clerk reported that she has received an email from Jason Shaw saying that he is considering making an offer to the parish council to redecorate the pavilion,

free of charge, subject to all necessary materials being paid for and provided by the parish council with the condition that he does the work on an “as and when” basis throughout the year. He said that Lee Martin has offered to assist as well. Councillor T Hooper said this was a fantastic offer but would require a risk assessment to be in place as they would be volunteers. Councillor C Smith said that he and Councillor T Hooper would meet them on site to undertake a risk assessment and to agree a specification.

To receive and consider a report on any other matters arising relating to Doorstep Green and the Playing Field

It was noted that the ROSPA play inspection report has been received. It was agreed that Councillors O Burrows, C Smith and H Webb would look at the play equipment and decide on the action needed under the ROSPA play inspection report. Councillor H Webb agreed to undertake the weekly inspection of the play equipment. She said that she thinks that the balance beam on the wooden play equipment is dangerous for use by very young children as they cannot reach the hand rails. She said that a scramble net would make it safer. Councillor C Smith said that the equipment will need to be replaced in the next few years and for a modification to be made may lead to more problems. He said that the ROSPA report had not identified this part of the equipment as dangerous and that use of the equipment is the responsibility of the parents of the children who are using the equipment.

Councillor O Burrows said that he was looking forward to organising the working parties in Doorstep Green. He said that he has not yet removed the beam over the bridge into Doorstep Green.

15. Cott Yard

To receive and consider a report on any other matters arising relating to Cott Yard

None

16. Toilets and Car Park in St Neot

To receive and consider a report on any matters arising relating to the toilets and car park in St Neot

Councillor C Smith said that the frequency of the cleaning of the toilet should be discussed at the July meeting of the parish council. Councillor O Burrows said that he would follow up the British Heart Foundation regarding replacing the clothes donation bin with a new one. Councillors C Smith and O Burrows said they would spray the weeds around the car park.

17. St Neot Orchard

To consider the repair and installation of rails and gate to Water Meadow footpath

Councillor G Rogers said that it should be noted that the parish council did not pay for the new steps and handrail from Loveny Close into Water Meadow. He said that Cornwall Council paid for the works. He said that a day after it was completed, a parishioner got a splinter in their hand from the handrail. It was agreed that the Clerk would inform Cormac of this incident.

To receive and consider a report on any other matters arising relating to St Neot Orchard

Councillor C Smith said that Colin Alford is the appointed contractor for the installation of the steps and footpath in the orchard. He said that Colin Alford will be liaising with the owners of the neighbouring land to use part of their land to import the materials for the works. Councillor C Smith said that the works will be completed by September 2021.

18. To receive reports from -

a) Cornwall Councillor

None

b) Goonzion Commoners

It was noted that the recent fencing works on Goonzion had been undertaken at the landowner's expense. Councillor C Smith said that the fencing between Goonzion and the land that Jane Williams rents from the parish council will be undertaken in the next month.

c) Liskeard Looe Community Network Panel

The Chairman thanked Councillor D Lucas, on behalf of the parish council, for all his hard work with the LLCNP.

19. To authorise the signing of orders for payment, including –

Julie Ball (Toilet, Pavilion and Cott Yard Cleaning – May 2021) - £390.00
Sue Blaxley (Zoom subscription April and May 2021) - £28.78
Cornwall Pension Fund (Pension for Clerk) - £131.99
South West Water (Water for Cott Yard) - £36.46
Richards Builders Merchants (Broom and Handle) - £7.03
Lanhydrock Gardening Services (Grass cutting 4/3/21 and 29/3/21) - £464.40
Ben Symons (Hedge Cutting on Goonzion) £87.50

St Neot News (Expenses February, March and April 2021) £546.00

It was proposed by Councillor T Hooper and seconded by Councillor C Smith that all the above orders be authorized for payment. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal. Councillor C Smith asked the Clerk to undertake some research into online banking for the parish council.

20. Finance Report

To receive a current financial statement of the accounts and to review income and expenditure against budget

The Clerk reported that income of £18,417.16 had been received from Cornwall Council as the first half of the precept and £1,544.25 from Cornwall Council as the first half of the CTSG as well as £571.50 from Heather Taylor for rent for Cott Yard. The Clerk said the accounts balance at £96,127.92.

21. Date of next meeting

To confirm the date and venue of the next Parish Council meeting which will be on Wednesday 12th June 2019

The next meeting of the parish council will be on Wednesday 9th June 2021 commencing at 7:30pm in St Neot Village Hall.

There was no further business and the meeting was closed at 9:40pm.