

MINUTES OF THE ST NEOT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 14TH JULY 2021 AT 7:30PM IN ST NEOT VILLAGE HALL, ST NEOT

Present: Councillors H Bunt, C Smith, O Burrows, T Hooper, H Webb, G Rogers, D Lucas, M Rowe and T Thrussell.

Jenny Hart
Cornwall Councillor P Seeva.
Sue Blaxley (Parish Clerk)

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:45pm.

Public Participation

Jenny Hart explained that she and Martin Eddy have become Cormac volunteers. She said that she has up-righted the fallen signs on Goonzion but a few more posts are required and a wooden bar to repair the gate at the Luna cattlegrid is required. The Chairman said that farmers have granite posts on which it is intended to mount the way markers so he will liaise with them and take the matter forward. Councillor G Rogers said that he thought that Cornwall Council supplied new signs and posts and stiles in kit form. Jenny Hart asked how she could claim some of the £5,000 which had been earmarked by the parish council for PROW. The Clerk said that payment would be made for items for PROW on production of an invoice.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors N O'Neill and S Stevenson. The Chair said that Owain Burrows had resigned from the parish council due to family commitments. He said this included his role as co-ordinator of the Doorstep Green Working Party. It was noted that he is still happy to assist with tasks in the parish.

2. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 9th June 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th June 2021, having been previously circulated, were agreed as an accurate record. Councillor C Smith asked the Clerk to clarify the amount of £7,014.51 that was paid to the parish council as a VAT repayment. The Clerk explained that this figure represents VAT which she had re-claimed for 2018/19 and 2019/20. She said that parish councils do not have to re-claim VAT on a quarterly basis and can re-claim up to 3 years in arrears.

3. Declaration of interest in items on the agenda

None

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

The Clerk said that she had asked Julie Dowton for a copy of the email she had sent regarding the number of animals that could be grazed on Goonzion and the length of time they could be grazed on the moor but had not received a response. It was agreed that the Clerk would email Rupert Hanbury-Tennison as she had not heard from Julie Dowton.

The Chairman said that he had advertised the recent working party for Doorstep Green on Facebook and, as a result, four additional households volunteered their services. The Chairman reported that Janet Haley has repaired her father's memorial bench in Doorstep Green. In addition, he reported that the door closer on the door to the public toilet had been replaced. He thanked Councillor C Smith for undertaking this work. He also thanked Councillor C Smith for organizing the replacement fencing around Jane William's garden. Councillor C Smith said that the fence posts around Mr and Mrs Wilton's garden need replacing in the Autumn when the hedge can be trimmed. He said that Mr Barberry has quoted £300 plus materials for this work. It was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor M Rowe that Mr Barberry be authorized to undertake these works. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

The Chairman said that, as a result of Owain Burrow's resignation, a new councillor will be co-opted onto the parish council as the September meeting.

5. To receive the Chairman's Communications

The Chairman said that he had had received a report of fly tipping on Goonzion. As the deposited rubbish contained an envelope with a name and address on it, he and Councillor C Smith visited the addressee. They were informed that the fly tipping had been undertaken by a third party. The rubbish was removed within 24 hours. Councillor T Thrussell thanked Councillors H Bunt and C Smith for attending to this matter.

The Chairman said that he had received a report of a lame foal on Goonzion which had been reported to Julie Dowton. He also said that he had received a complaint that the Royal Mail post box outside Cott Yard is in a poor state of repair. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Royal Mail and ask them to re-paint the post box. It was noted that the 20mph speed limit outside the school and the 30mph speed limit on Tripp Hill is work in hand.

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

None.

7. To receive a report from the Clerk

None

8. Tender Specification Template

To receive and consider a tender specification template

Councillor T Hooper said that she had circulated a draft template for contractors when they are invited to undertake work for the parish councils which is a four page document detailing who the parish council is, what work is needed to be done, a detailed specification of the works to be undertaken and a contractual agreement. She said that the document is essentially a guide so that all those who are invited to tender are given the same information and a framework against which to operate. The Chairman thanked Councillors T Hooper, T Thrussell and D Lucas for collating this document. It was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor G Rogers that the tender specification template be used for a trial period of 12 months. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

9. Public Rights of Way

To receive and consider a report on Public Rights of Way

Councillor G Rogers said that there are a number of dilapidated stiles on the PROW. It was agreed that he would forward a list of these to Jenny Hart. Councillor G Rogers said that on the footpath from Treverbyn Bridge to Trenant, a beech limb has been cut into logs and are strewn onto a swampy area. It was agreed that the logs need removing and that the Clerk would contact the land owner, Matthew Glencross. Councillor C Smith said that as the PROW have now been cut, councillors should inspect them to ensure that the work is of a satisfactory standard. Councillor D Lucas said that he would co-ordinate the inspections and email councillors accordingly.

10. Crowpound Crossroads

To consider taking further action regarding the junction at Crowpound crossroads

It was noted that the Clerk had contacted Cormac and asked for the white lines to be re-painted at Crowpound crossroads as they are faded. The Area Steward inspected the site and agreed that the white lines are faded but said that sufficient give way signage is in place and that re-painting will be undertaken at some time in the future. Councillor G Rogers said that following a bad accident at the junction a few weeks ago, the Give Way sign was knocked over and removed but has not been replaced. He said the lines in the centre of the road

from St Neot to Mount have been re-whitened but not the markings at the junction. Councillor T Hooper said this is a Category 1 defect and that this matter should be given priority. It was agreed that Councillor T Hooper and the Clerk would contact Cormac again regarding this matter. The Chairman said that it would be a good idea to invite the Area Highways Officer to a parish council meeting. It was agreed that he would be invited to the October meeting of the parish council.

11. Facebook

To consider the parish council's presence on Facebook

The Chairman said that it would be beneficial for him to have more of a presence on Facebook on behalf of the parish council. He said that this would be on the existing St Neot Facebook page. Councillor T Hooper said that it would have to be monitored very carefully. Councillor T Thrussell said that Facebook lacks quality control and communication is often poor and flippant and could be inviting potential for abuse. He said that a copy of the item that is put into St Neot News could be posted on this Facebook page. The Chairman said that he would only post items that had previously been discussed at a parish council meeting and that it could result in a lot of positive feedback. Councillor H Webb said that it is positive to promote the parish council. It was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor T Hooper that the Chairman has a presence on Facebook on behalf of the parish council for a trial period of 6 months. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

12. Colliford Lake

To consider the erection of a parish map at Colliford Lake

Councillor T Thrussell said that South West Lakes Trust are going to erect a map in the car park at Colliford Lake identifying points of interest and location markers. He said that many who visit Colliford Lake do not realise they are in St Neot and that it may be a good idea to erect a parish map on the wall of the toilet block building detailing St Neot and points of interest therein. He said this may encourage tourist to visit the village and use its facilities. He said that South West Lakes Trust would allocate a space on the wall approximately 800 x 800 on which the map could be placed. It was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor T Hooper that agreement to this in principle be obtained in writing by South West Lakes Trust so that the matter could be discussed at the September meeting of the parish council. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

13. Internal Auditor's Report

To receive and consider the internal auditor's report for 2020/21

Councillor T Hooper extended thanks, on behalf of the parish council, to the Clerk, former Chair and Vice Chair of the parish council and the Chairman of the Finance Committee for their input into this document. Councillor D Lucas thanked the Clerk too. Councillor C Smith said that the report had highlighted that the parish council should have a procedure in place for dealing with bad debt. It was agreed that the Clerk would draft a procedure for discussion at the next meeting of the parish council. It was noted that the parish council does not have written off assets and does not operate a depreciation policy. It was proposed by Councillor T Hooper and seconded by Councillor G Rogers that the internal auditor's report for 2020/21 be accepted and the comments contained therein noted. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

14. Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements

To approve the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements for 2020/21

- (a) It was proposed by Councillor T Hooper and seconded by Councillor H Bunt that the annual governance statement for 2020/21 be approved. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.
- (b) It was proposed by Councillor M Rowe and seconded by Councillor D Lucas that the accounting statements for 2020/21 be approved. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

15. Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Internal Financial Controls and Financial Risk Assessment

To approve the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Internal Financial Controls and Financial Risk Assessment

It was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor D Lucas that the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Internal Financial Controls and Financial Risk Assessment be approved. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

16. Doorstep Green and Playing Field

To receive and consider quotations for a wet pour surface around the play equipment

Councillor C Smith said that the rubber matting around the swings needs replacing as it is wearing and lifting in places. He said that the area is 8 square metres and that he has obtained three quotations for replacing the matting with a wet pour surface. Playtime by Fawns have quoted £4,500 - £6,000 which does not include the removal and disposal of the existing rubber matting. Soft Surfaces have quoted £4,640 which does not include the removal and disposal of the existing rubber matting. Redlinch have quoted £4,999 including the removal

and disposal of the rubber matting. Councillor C Smith said that this amounts to an approximate removal charge of less than £400 which seems reasonable. It was noted that the wet pour surface will be 50mm thick and is guaranteed for 10 years and does not have a finite life. He said that the existing matting has been in situ for approximately 18 years. Councillor C Smith said that the wet pour surface can be repaired. He said the play equipment would be out of action for approximately 24-48 hours. It was proposed by Councillor H Bunt and seconded by Councillor G Rogers that Redlinch be contracted to undertake the works. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

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

Councillor C Smith said that a member of the public had re-instated a nut and bolt which had fallen off the underside of the climbing frame. He said that he had replaced the shock absorber on the junior air walker and had re-instated the arms on the fitness equipment that had been removed due to Covid 19. He said that the gym equipment needs cleaning with hot, soapy water. Councillor T Thrussell volunteered to undertake this task.

Councillor C Smith said that there is a product known as Easy Grass which would be suitable for the goal mouth in the playing field. He said that to lay it in front of the goal area would cost approximately £5,000 - £6,000. It was noted that Derek Fairhall is hoping to submit the grant application for the table tennis table by the end of July 2021. Councillor C Smith said that the wooden disabled picnic table is being delivered next week and that the old picnic table will need removing. Councillor T Thrussell said that the plastic octagonal picnic table will be delivered by the end of July 2021. It was suggested that this could be placed in the gazebo.

The Chairman said that Doorstep Green requires regular maintenance as does St Neot Orchard and the Holy Well. He said that he could possibly promote St Neot Friends on Facebook in an attempt to secure volunteers who would be willing to help with work such as this in the parish. It was agreed that, in the short term, Councillors C Smith, G Rogers and M Rowe will organize some working parties to keep Doorstep Green maintained with the first one on 28th July 2021. Councillor T Hooper said she would empty the bin in the playing field. The Chairman said that he would ask the Headteacher at St Neot Primary School if the caretaker would empty the litter bin in Doorstep Green. The Clerk said that there seems to be a problem with the lock on the main door to the pavilion. Councillor C Smith said that he would have a look at the lock.

17. Cott Yard

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

The Clerk said that she had received an email from Heather Taylor asking if she could put a window box and/or hanging basket on the building. Councillors agreed that, for health and safety reasons, this was not appropriate. In addition, Heather Taylor says that the Cott Yard signs are looking shabby and could be replaced together with a "No Parking" sign. It was agreed that the signs would be inspected.

18. Toilets and Car Park

To consider the frequency of the cleaning of the public toilet

Councillor C Smith said that the frequency of cleaning the public toilet was increased to 7 days a week due to Covid 19. He said that this could be reduced to 4 days a week without anyone noticing the difference in cleanliness. Councillor T Hooper said that the parish council should be mindful that Covid 19 is still prevalent. The Chairman questioned whether the stage of the pandemic is such that the parish council can justify reducing the frequency of cleaning. Councillor T Hooper said that the footfall does not warrant cleaning the public toilet on a daily basis. It was proposed by Councillor T Hooper and seconded by Councillor T Thrussell that the frequency of cleaning the public toilet be reduced to 4 times a week from 1st September 2021. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

Councillor G Rogers left the meeting during discussion of the following item

To consider cutting the vegetation to the rear of the car park

Councillor C Smith said that the vegetation to the rear of the car park, the orchard and the Holy Well need maintenance. He suggested that the parish council compile a list of contractors at agreed chargeable rates who the parish council could ask to undertake works such as this. Councillor T Hooper said the parish council would have to advertise the fact that they are compiling a preferred contractors list and ensure that the appropriate risk assessments are in place. It was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor T Hooper that, as an emergency measure, Gary Rogers, as the approved PROW contractor, be authorised to cut the vegetation at the rear of the car park, the Holy Well and the orchard. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

Councillor G Rogers returned to the meeting.

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

None

19. St Neot Orchard

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

Councillor C Smith reported that Colin Alford will install the footpath and steps in the orchard during August 2021.

20. To receive reports from -

a) Cornwall Councillor

Cornwall Councillor P Seeva said that the new Council has had its first meeting where three motions were put forward: Cornwall Council backs the government legislation going through Parliament regarding climate emergency; Cornwall Council backs the government legislation going through Parliament regarding the housing emergency; Cornwall Council will support the issues being experienced with the Boundary Commission. He said that he has been appointed as Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee. Cornwall Councillor P Seeva said that he has spoken to the Police regarding the illegal parking at Golitha Falls, As a result, the Police have issued many parking tickets in an attempt to break the cycle of illegal parking. He said that the Community Chest funding opens next week and he hopes to be able to assist St Neot with this fund.

b) Goonzion Commoners

The Chairman said that the cattle grid from Goonzion to Luna is damaged and that this has been reported to Cormac. He said that he had received an email saying that private open spaces are vulnerable to unauthorized campers so everyone should be aware of this and shut the gates to private land.

c) Liskeard Looe Community Network Panel

Councillor D Lucas said that he had circulated the minutes of the last meeting. He said that it is a new panel and they are establishing their terms of business.

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

Julie Ball (Toilet, Pavilion and Cott Yard Cleaning – July 2021) - £390.00
Cornwall Pension Fund (Pension for Clerk) - £131.99
Lanhydrock Gardening Services (Grass cutting 04/6/21 and 16/6/21) - £464.40
Gary Rogers (PROW maintenance) – £735.00

EDF Energy (Parish Lighting) - £127.58
Information Commissioner's Office (Data Protection Fee) - £40.00
EDF Energy (Electricity for Pavilion) - £56.31
South West M and E Services Ltd (Works and service to heat pump in Cott Yard)
- £585.28
Aalgaard Renshaw (Internal Audit 2020/21) - £300.00
St Neot Social Club (Cleaning materials for toilets) - £12.95
Christian Smith (Door Closer for Toilet/ Picnic Table) - £343.98

Councillor G Rogers said that he had reduced his invoice for PROW maintenance by £80 as one of the PROW did not require much maintenance as machinery had already been along the path. He said that he had to decontaminate himself and his machinery due to dog faeces when he was strimming PROW on Goonzion. It was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor H Bunt that all of the above orders be authorized for payment. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

22. Online Banking

To consider the options for online banking

The Clerk said that she has recently opened an online bank account with Unity Trust Bank for another parish council and it has been a straightforward experience, unlike previous attempts with Barclays. She said that they could not have been more helpful on the telephone and are clearly used to dealing with parish and town councils unlike some of the other banks, such as Lloyds or Barclays. She explained that Santander are not taking on new customers. It was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor D Lucas that the Clerk opens an online bank account with Unity Trust Bank with £10,000 from the Barclays account. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

23. 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 £136.00 had been received from Menheniot Post Office for rental of the pavilion, £571.50 from Heather Taylor for the rent of Cott Yard and £1,579.80 from HMRC as a VAT repayment. The Clerk said the accounts balance at £102,408.05.

24. Date of next meeting

To confirm the date of the next Parish Council meeting which will be on Wednesday 8th September 2021

The next meeting of the parish council will be on Wednesday 8th September 2021 commencing at 7:30pm in St Neot Village Hall.

There was no further business and the meeting was closed at 10:20pm.