

MINUTES OF THE ST NEOT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 12th APRIL 2023 AT 7:30PM IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, ST NEOT INSTITUTE, ST NEOT

Present: Councillors H Bunt (Chair), C Smith, D Glanville, A Tamblyn, M Rowe, T Thrussell, H Webb, N Ball, T Hooper and G Rogers

Stephen Dennis, Tim Weaver, Derek Fairhall, Adrienne McCormick, David McCormick, PCSO S Edsar.

Sue Blaxley, Clerk and RFO.

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:30pm. He confirmed that no one was recording the meeting.

Public Participation

Tim Weaver explained that Cornwall Council has consulted the parish council and landowners on a proposed modification order (722) which relates to a bridleway across Carpuan. He said there is no historic evidence of this being used as a bridleway and that whilst two footpaths (6 and 7) go into Carpuan, access to them is via a permissive path. He said that part of the proposed modification for the bridleway would be along this permissive path. He said that the Applicant is reliant in the application on user evidence only. He said that the two landowners have never seen anyone using the route without permission. He said it is questionable, therefore, whether the user evidence is accurate. He explained that for the bridleway to be modified, it must be shown that the specific route has been used for 20 years or more. He said there is no defined route on the ground. He said that map evidence shows old farm tracks across this land which he thinks one of which must have been selected as a public bridleway. He said that the effect of allowing the modification is that it reduces the land value and with working farms, having more people crossing the farmland, especially with dogs, increases the burden on the landowner especially if there is stock on the land. He asked the parish council not to support the proposed modification on the basis that there is no historic evidence and no user evidence which is verified by the landowners.

PCSO S Edsar said that he has been serving the area for 3.5 years. He said that he circulates a monthly crime report which councillors receive but he is trying to get into the community more via surgeries and coffee mornings to understand the issues affecting the communities. The Chairman invited him to attend the monthly Farmers' Market. PCSO S Edsar said that he would be interested in attending this event.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cornwall Councillor P Seeva.

2. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 8th March 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 8th March 2023, having been previously circulated, were agreed as an accurate record.

3. Declaration of interest in items on the agenda

Councillor T Hooper declared an interest in items 8 and 15 on the agenda.

11. Bridleway at Carpuan

To receive and consider an Application for Modification of Definitive Map and Statement of Rights of Way to add a Bridleway, Carpuan, St Neot

Councillor T Hooper said there are plenty of opportunities to ride horses on open land and on bridleways in the parish. She said that she does not know of anyone who has ridden along the proposed bridleway. She questioned whether this is an appropriate location, across an open field, to have a bridleway, especially if the field contains stock. Councillor M Rowe said that if the bridleway is not shown on the 1905 map, it is not an historic route. Councillor C Smith said that, based on what Mr Weaver has said, it would be difficult to support this application.

It was noted that an application has also been made regarding footpath 723 in the same vicinity. The Clerk said that she had not received notification of this. There was some confusion over the plans submitted and it was decided to defer the matter until the next meeting of the parish council when both applications (722 and 723) will be discussed. It was agreed that members of the parish council will visit the sites in the meantime.

Tim Weaver and Stephen Dennis left the meeting.

Councillor T Hooper, having previously declared an interest, did not take part in the debate regarding the following agenda item but gave a presentation in her capacity as a member of the Shop Steering Group.

8. Village Shop

To receive and consider a report on any matters arising relating to a village shop

Tracey Hooper referred to the report circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting. She said that the Shop Steering Group has worked up an outline quotation for the cost of erecting a building in the playing field. She said that a planning application is being prepared. She said there are 3 possible sources of funding – grants, community fundraising and the parish council. She said that the steering group is currently devoid of funds. She explained that the shop could operate as a commercial venture with a tenant (the parish council would be landlord) or as a community venture operated by volunteers. Tracey Hooper said that the steering group had undertaken a survey asking whether a village shop is important, what support individuals could offer to support the facility, what opening times would be preferred and the products and services most wanted. She said that 92 responses had been received to date, of which 86 have said that a shop is important or very important to them.

Derek Fairhall outlined the building costs based on the best specification available now. He said these are estimated at £48,000 including VAT with a contingency sum included in this figure. The Clerk explained that she had sought advice from Cornwall Association of Local Councils (a professional body for which the parish council pays an annual subscription) regarding the possibility of the parish council lending money to the Shop Steering Group to fund some of the building costs. She advised that as the parish council do not have the power under The General Power of Competence (under which parish councils operate) to provide a shop, they do not have the power to lend money for this purpose. Councillor C Smith said that he had emailed to all councillors prior to the meeting, details of the principle of the type of building proposed. He said that whatever building is erected, the parish council will own it and if the shop is not successful, the parish council needs to ensure that the building is suitable for other uses as well as being able to afford to maintain the building and derive an income from its use. Some discussion took place about funding the building costs by the Shop Steering Group and the parish council as well as a discussion about possible grant funding. Tracey Hooper said that an application can be made to the Levelling Up Fund in May 2023. Councillor C Smith said that planning permission will take time to be granted and that whilst the application is being considered by Cornwall Council, applications for grant funding can be made and quotations sought. Tracey Hooper said the Expressions of Interests must be submitted by Friday 14th April 2023 and that so far, there have been 3 or 4 expressions of interest received.

Further discussion took place about whether the parish council will take responsibility for this project including applying for grant funding, funding the project (part or all), the tendering process and responsibility for the tenants. The Clerk emphasized that if the parish council is to take responsibility for this project, all procedures will have to be conducted in accordance with the parish council's standing orders and financial regulations.

Councillor N Ball commented that the response rate to the survey is very low and questioned what the rest of the parishioners think about the proposed shop. Tracey Hooper said that the response rate is representative of the parishioners.

Under The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Sec 1 (2), members of the public were excluded from the meeting at this point due to the sensitive financial and commercial business to be discussed.

It was noted that a request has been received on the afternoon of 12th April 2023 by the tenants of Suites 2 and 3 in Cott Yard to release them from the commitments of their lease before it ends on 1st July 2024. It was proposed by Councillor H Bunt and seconded by Councillor C Smith that the tenants be released from the commitments of their lease on 25th July 2023 and that after this date, the suites be offered to the Shop Steering Group to enable the site to be used as a temporary shop which would be charged at a commercial rent of £150/sqm/pa. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

Members of the public, apart from PCSO S Edsar, returned to the meeting

The Chairman advised the Shop Steering Group of the decision made regarding Cott Yard. It was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor T Thrussell that the parish council will pay £500 for the planning application for the proposed shop building, that Councillors A Tamblyn and M Rowe will be part of the group who select a suitable commercial tenant for the shop and that the parish council will not, at this stage, bear the costs of the project. All Councillors voted in favour of the proposal.

Derek Fairhall, David Mc Cormick and Adrienne Mc Cormick left the meeting and Tracey Hooper returned to the meeting in her capacity as a parish councillor.

The Clerk said that at the AGM next month, a Village Shop Committee should be formed, consisting of some or all parish councillors, who will make decisions regarding the village shop at a separate meeting. She said that the decisions will have to be ratified by the parish council at the meeting following the committee meeting. She said this will avoid lengthy debate about this matter at parish council meetings and enable other matters to be considered in more detail.

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

The Chairman said that there has been a delay in sending out St Neot News this month and that there may be an increase in the printing costs of the newsletter in due course. He said that the wedding party who are using the pavilion and Doorstep Green over the weekend of 14th – 16th April 2023, have asked if they can erect some gazebos in Doorstep Green and the playing field. It was agreed that this would be allowed subject to them undertaking an appropriate risk assessment. The Chairman said that a parishioner has asked him where the CIL funding goes. It was agreed that the Clerk would ask Cornwall Councillor P Seeva.

5. To receive the Chairman's Communications

The Chairman said that the bus service to the village is now running again. He said that Julie Ball will liaise with the parish council to find a suitable position in the playing field or Doorstep Green for the tree in memory of Nick Hinchcliffe. He said the wall adjacent to the car park and the step by the public toilet has been repaired. It was noted that there is a large pothole at the entrance to the car park.

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

None

7. To receive a report from the Clerk

None

9. Village Shop Auction of Promises

To consider donating to the village shop auction of promises

Councillor C Smith said there are 2 piles of firewood which resulted from the tree felling on Tripp Hill. It was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor N Ball that they be donated to the village shop auction of promises and are to be collected by the successful bidder(s) at their own risk. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

10. Parish Map

To receive and consider an update on the parish map

Councillor T Thrussell said that the map will be approximately A0 in size. There was some discussion about which businesses to include on the map and an agreement that the text and numbers need to be slightly larger in size. It was agreed that the settlements of Ley, Drayes, St Neot, Drawbridge and Bolventor will be marked on the map. It was noted that in the bottom right-hand corner of the map, there will be a map of St Neot village. It was agreed that the costs of printing the map will be discussed at the next meeting of the parish council.

12. Highways and Speeding Vehicles

To receive and consider matters arising relating to highways and to speeding vehicles

Councillor G Rogers said that the 20mph speed limit outside the school is being ignored. It was agreed that a reminder of the speed limit would be made in St Neot News and that the Clerk would ask for a reminder to be put in the school newsletter. In addition, it was suggested that PCSO S Edsar attend the site with a speed checking device.

13. Doorstep Green and Playing Field

To consider which replacement table tennis table to purchase

This matter was deferred until the next meeting of the parish council.

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 report had been received. Councillor C Smith said there were a few minor issues identified to which he will attend. Councillor C Smith said that the high tea to celebrate the King's coronation will take place at 4pm on Sunday 7th May 2023 in the playing field. He said the high tea – sandwiches, cream teas, cakes, pasties and drinks – will be supplied by the parish council and other organisations. He said they expect about 150 people to attend the event.

It was noted that the unveiling of the Jubilee plaque will take place at the celebrations and it was agreed that the Clerk would ask Sam Bowden, Headteacher at St Neot Primary School, to unveil the plaque. The planting of a silver birch tree to celebrate the coronation will also be planted. It was agreed that the Clerk would ask Fernley and Karen Rowe to plant the tree. Councillor C Smith said there will be

entertainment at the event which will comprise a ukulele band and the community choir.

Councillor T Thrussell said that Monday 8th May 2023 is the Big Help Out Day.

14. Pavillion

To receive and consider a report on any matters arising relating to the Pavilion

None

15. Cott Yard

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

None

16. Toilets and Car Park

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

None

16. St Neot Orchard

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

None

17. Farmers Market

To receive and consider a report from the councillor who attended the farmers market on 1st April 2023 and appoint a representative to attend the farmers market on 6th May 2023

There was no report. Councillor T Thrussell said that he would attend the farmers' market on 6th May 2023 which will be held in the Church.

18. To receive reports from -

a) Cornwall Councillor P Seeva

Cornwall Councillor P Seeva had submitted a report which was circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting and read as follows:

Good evening everyone.

Unfortunately, I can't be with you this evening as I'm away overnight. Please accept my apologies for not being there this evening and I have explained in a bit more detail with the Chair and the Clerk.

I guess the main issue in hand is the Mayor for Cornwall issue that's been reported on in local media. As you probably know all plans for the Mayor for Cornwall and the associated so called 'Devolution Deal' have now been shelved. I think I've made clear in recent months that although I personally never favoured a mayor I equally didn't want to say 'no' to the £290m that could have come with it.

It's my understanding that the reason for the decision was linked to the results of the consultation period where there was little support for the devolution deal and a change on governance structure in Cornwall. Having spent a fair amount of time since Christmas at various Parish Council meetings across the division, I have to say that I've not come across one council meeting that has been supportive in anyway and that's clearly been reflected in the public consultation.

It's true, we could have chosen to have a referendum in Cornwall to get a definitive answer but the starting price for that was £0.5m and even then that would have been an online voting process.

Although I'm pleased that the idea has been dropped, I'm now much more interested in what happens next. I still want the council to pressure our current Government in to making sure that we get what we need to help run the county effectively. I'm sure that the details will start to filter out at next week's Full Council meeting.

Closer to home you will not be surprised to hear that the issue at Golitha Falls has once again cropped up with parking issues being raised outside of the car park. The Easter weekend created a significant issue and I am liaising with Highways and the Police to see if a solution can be found. This is of course an ongoing issue that neither myself or my predecessor managed to solve. We clearly need to think again which we are now in the process of doing.

I will update you more when we next meet in May, but in the meantime, please relay any questions or casework to Sue who I'm sure will pass them on to me.

b) Goonzion Commoners

None

c) Liskeard Looe Community Network Panel

None

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

Cornwall Pension Fund (Pension for Clerk) - £169.30

Julie Ball (Toilet, Pavilion and Cott Yard cleaning) - £311.17

Diana Smith (Toilet, Pavilion and Cott Yard cleaning) - £80.00
Diana Smith (Acting Clerk Services) - £527.40
St Neot News (Expenses February and March 2023) - £373.00
Natalie O'Neill (Expressions of Interest Advertisement) - £72.00
Cornwall ALC (2023/24 Subscription) - £460.46
Eager Beaver Tree Services (Tree Surgery) - £900.00
Natalie O'Neill (Website domain renewal) - £13.31
Lanhydrock Gardening Services (Grass Cutting February 2023) - £258.00
EDF Energy (Electricity for Pavilion December 2022 – March 2023) - £152.55
James Hallam (Insurance Premium for 2023/24) - £412.69
James Hallam (insurance Premium for 2023/24) - £3975.75
EDF Energy (Parish Lighting) - £234.36
Playsafety Ltd (ROSPA inspection) - £140.40
Christian Smith (Wheelbarrow Tyre) - £15.36

Councillor C Smith said that the electricity costs for the pavilion seem high compared to the amount of coins in the meter. The Clerk said she would ask the Postmaster at Menheniot Post Office about their electricity usage in the pavilion.

It was proposed by Councillor H Bunt and seconded by Councillor T Hooper that all the above orders be authorized for payment. All Councillors voted in favour, except for Councillor N Ball who abstained from voting.

20. Finance Report

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

The Clerk reported that the accounts balance at the end of the financial year at £59,784.64.

21. Co-option

To receive and consider applications for co-option onto the parish council

None

22. Date of next meeting

To confirm the date of the next Parish Council meeting which will be on Wednesday 3rd May 2023.

The next meeting of the parish council, which will be the AGM, will be on Wednesday 3rd May 2023 commencing at 7:30pm in St Neot Institute.

There was no further business and the meeting was closed at 10.15 pm.