

**MINUTES OF THE ST NEOT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 21st FEBRUARY 2024 AT 7:30PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL SOCIAL CLUB MEETING ROOM, ST NEOT**

**Present:** Councillors H Bunt (Chair), C Smith, A Tamblyn, M Rowe, T Hooper, T Thrussell, D Glanville, G Rogers and L Jones.

Sue Blaxley, Clerk and RFO.

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

**Public Participation**

None

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor H Webb.

**2. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 10th January 2024**

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024, having been previously circulated, were agreed as an accurate record.

**3. Declaration of interest in items on the agenda**

Councillors H Bunt and G Rogers declared an interest in item 8 on the agenda and Councillor G Rogers declared an interest in item 18 on the agenda.

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

The Clerk reported that she had written to Golden Tree Productions regarding the Kerdroya project but had not received a response. Councillor T Thrussell said that the works are progressing on the site and it is anticipated that the project will be complete by June 2024. The Clerk confirmed that she had notified the tenants in Cott Yard of the increase in heating and service charges from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. Councillor C Smith reported that he had obtained the deeds for Cott Yard. The Chairman confirmed that councillors will meet at the orchard on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 1:30pm to discuss ideas for the newly acquired piece of land at the orchard.

It was noted that the hedge belonging to Cott is overhanging the pavement and needs cutting. It was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor M Rowe that the Clerk writes to Heather and Judith Taylor and request permission to cut back the parts of the hedge overhanging the pavement for the safety of pedestrians. All Councillors voted in favour of the proposal apart from Councillors L Jones and T Hooper who abstained from voting.

## **5. To receive the Chairman's Communications**

The Chairman said that a parishioner has complained about the amount of dog faeces in the layby on Goonzion on the road leading to Luna. He said that the parishioner had asked if a bin could be installed in that location. The Chairman said that the Social Club committee has requested that the meeting room be referred to as the Village Hall Social Club meeting room as opposed to the Committee room of St Neot Institute. It was noted that the monthly report from PCSO S Edsner had been circulated to all councillors and that a response from Sandra Rowe had been received following last month's discussion about defibrillators. The Chairman said that Councillor C Smith had repaired the rope on the train bell. He said the Pizza van will be operating from the car park in St Neot on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February. Councillor C Smith said that he had responded to National Grid's query regarding the ownership of the land between Loveny Road and Liskeard Hill.

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

Councillor G Rogers asked if the parish council was going to organize some celebrations for D Day on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024. It was agreed that this matter would be discussed at the next meeting of the parish council. Councillor G Rogers said that parishioners are concerned about the flooded state of the Carnglaze Caverns Road. In addition, he said that parishioners are concerned that the 20mph speed limit outside the school is not being adhered to by drivers. He also said that rubble and plasterboard can no longer be taken to the recycling centres at Lanlivet or Connon Bridge.

## **7. To receive a report from the Clerk**

None

Councillors H Bunt and G Rogers, having previously declared an interest, left the meeting during discussion of the following item.

## **8. Village Shop Project**

### **To receive and consider a report on any matters arising relating to the Village Shop Project**

Councillor T Hooper said that the building regulations application was submitted three weeks ago. She explained that the plans were amended to incorporate plastic coated box profile roofing which will look like tiles as this is a cheaper option and will more easily accommodate solar panels. She said the grant application has been submitted to Cornwall Council for feedback prior to its final submission at the end of the week. She said that a decision on the application is anticipated to be made by the beginning of April 2024. Councillor T Hooper said that the cost of the project as submitted in the grant application is £170,000 gross and that she does not anticipate that match funding of 10% will be a problem with contributions being made from the parish council, fundraising and the shop keeper.

In respect of the procurement process, Councillor T Hooper explained that the parish council has signed up to Contract Finder which makes it easy for contractors to tender. She said that the parish council can invite local contractors to tender via this process. She said that a Quantity Surveyor/Project Manager will be required for the build and the appointed person(s) must have the correct insurance in place. She said that the next public meeting to discuss the shop will in in mid-April 2024.

Councillor T Hooper said that the costs incurred for diverting the HV cable are not eligible to be reclaimed as part of the grant. Councillor C Smith said that capital has had to be used to fund these works. Councillor L Jones said that when the parish council voted to have the HV cable diverted, it was on the understanding that these costs could be reclaimed. Councillor T Thrussell said that some of these costs will be recouped from the rental of the shop in the long term. Councillor C Smith said that Cornwall Council will assist in managing the cash flow by advancing grant money to the parish council. He said that the parish council could borrow money from the PWLB to facilitate the cash flow if it was necessary.

Councillor M Rowe asked what solar panels will be installed. Councillor C Smith said that 6kw of solar panels will be installed with 9-10kw battery storage. Councillor T Hooper said that wildlife initiatives will be included in the project, such as bug hotels and tree planting.

Councillors H Bunt and G Rogers returned to the meeting.

## **9. Doorstep Green and Playing Field**

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

Councillor C Smith said that the WI want to plant an oak tree in the playing field to support their national campaign of planting a tree. It was agreed that this would be acceptable provided the WI liaise with the parish council regarding the tree's location. Councillor C Smith said that the table tennis table will be collected and taken away for repair in the next week or so. It was agreed that Doorstep Green is looking very tidy although there is a lot of surface water. It was noted that the legs appear to be splayed on the plastic picnic table outside the Pavilion. It was agreed that the table legs would be inspected and repaired if possible.

## **10. Pavillion**

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

Councillor G Rogers said that one of the downpipes is blocked so water is pouring over the gutter. It was agreed that this would be looked at on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2024 after the meeting in the orchard.

## **11. Cott Yard**

### **To receive and consider the heating and other charges for the tenants in Cott Yard**

Councillor C Smith explained that the heat pump and water circulation costs amount to £2,800pa in electricity costs and that the three tenants currently pay £824pa in total towards these costs which means that the parish council is paying £1976pa. He said that if the cost was divided equally between the four tenants, the cost would be £700pa for each tenant (the parish council pays for the archive). He said that if the cost was divided by three, to exclude the archive, the cost would be £933 pa for each tenant. It was noted that these costs do not include any servicing or maintenance of the heat pump. He said that the cost could be reduced by installing fixed thermostats. Another option would be to turn off the heat pump and to install panel heaters, at the expense of the parish council, in each of the suites. This would necessitate the tenants paying for the electricity they use.

In terms of service charges for the tenants, Councillor C Smith said that the tenants contribute a total of £250.80 pa but the cost of the wages to clean the communal areas is £600pa. It was noted that the standing charge for electricity is paid for by the tenants and that they also pay for water and sewerage. Councillor C Smith said the parish council receives approximately £6,250 income from the building pa.

Some discussion took place as to how the necessary increases in heating costs and service charge should be passed onto the tenants. It was noted that electricity prices have increased significantly, and that the parish council no longer receives payments under the RHI scheme. In terms of the service charge, it was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor A Tamblyn that the tenants be charged £200 each pa from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. All Councillors voted in favour of the proposal. In terms of the heating charges, it was proposed by Councillor M Rowe and seconded by Councillor D Glanville that the heating charges increase by £500 pa for each tenant from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

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

Councillor C Smith explained that he had acquired the deeds for Cott Yard. He confirmed that the parish council owns the building and four parking spaces. He said that the parish council can cross the courtyard but must not restrict access. In addition, no commercial vehicles are permitted to be parked in the courtyard. He said the area to the rear of Cott Yard is to be used for maintenance only. It was noted that the suites can be used for a wide variety of uses.

## **12. Toilets and Car Park**

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

The Chairman said that Gary Rogers had strimmed the bank to the rear of the car park.

### **13. St Neot Orchard**

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

It was agreed that the parish council should decide on how to progress the orchard and the newly acquired space next to the orchard. It was agreed that councillors will meet at the orchard on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 1:30pm to discuss this matter further.

### **14. Safeguarding Statement**

#### **To receive and consider a safeguarding statement**

It was noted that Councillor T Hooper had drafted a statement which had been circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting acknowledging what the parish council's safeguarding responsibilities are and to ensure that the parish council is working within the legislation. It was proposed by Councillor T Hooper and seconded by Councillor H Bunt that this statement be adopted and put on the parish council's website. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

### **15. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement**

#### **To receive and consider an equality, diversity and inclusion statement**

It was noted that Councillor T Hooper had drafted a statement which had been circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting acknowledging what the parish council's responsibilities are in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion and to ensure that the parish council is working within the legislation. It was proposed by Councillor T Thrussell and seconded by Councillor G Rogers that this statement be adopted and put on the parish council's website. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

### **16. Farmer's Market**

#### **To receive a report from the councillor who attended the farmer's market on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2024 and to appoint a representative to attend the farmer's market on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2024**

Councillor T Thrussell attended the farmer's market on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2024. He said that the market was very quiet. He said that a parishioner suggested that a town crier attend the village on Saturday mornings and that another parishioner had asked if the new footpath signpost had been erected on Goonzion. He said that concerns had been raised about the layby near the Colliford Dam carpark which contains a burnt-out caravan and a vast amount of debris and litter, as well as being a venue for unsociable activities. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to S W Water and ask them to close this layby. Councillor M Rowe said that he will attend the market on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2024.

## **17. To receive reports from -**

### **a) Cornwall Councillor**

None

### **b) Goonzion Commoners**

Councillor C Smith said the directional signs need bleaching and cleaning.  
Councillor M Rowe said that he would undertake this task.

### **c) SE Cornwall CAP**

Councillor T Thrussell said there had not been a meeting since December but he will be attending a Transport Connectivity Working Group next week.

## **18. To authorise the signing of orders for payment, including –**

Cornwall Pension Fund (Pension for Clerk) - £177.79  
Julie Ball (Toilet, Pavilion and Cott Yard cleaning) - £311.17  
EDF Energy (Electricity for Pavilion) - £245.19  
St Neot News (Expenses October, November and December 2023) - £623.00  
South West Water (Water for Cott Yard) - £29.72  
Source for Business (Water for Toilet) - £145.96  
Source for Business (Water for Pavilion) - £24.02  
Sue Blaxley (Laptop) - £727.99  
Ray Clarke (Professional fees for Building Regulations) - £950.00  
Gary Rogers (Strimming bank to rear of car park) - £100.00

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

## **19. Finance Report**

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

The Clerk reported that income has been received this month as follows: Country Lane Enterprises - £717.86 (electricity for Cott Yard), £126 from Menheniot Post Office (rent for Pavilion), £165 (Rent for Goonzion), Heather Taylor - £517.50 (Rent for Cott Yard), £134.04 (Interest) and Pertemps - £598.61 (Rent for Cott Yard). She said that the accounts balance at £57,629.79.

## **20. Date of next meeting**

### **To confirm the date of the next Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

The next meeting of the parish council will be on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024 commencing at 7:30pm in the Village Hall Social Club meeting room.

