

MINUTES OF THE ST NEOT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 17th JULY 2024 AT 7:30PM IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, ST NEOT INSTITUTE, ST NEOT

Present: Councillors T Hooper (Chair), H Bunt, C Smith, N Ball, L Jones and G Rogers, M Rowe

Heather Taylor, Harry Bennett and Josie Williams
Sue Blaxley, Clerk and RFO.

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

Public Participation

Heather Taylor said that clarification is needed for the costs of advertising in St Neot News. She explained that, prior to the changes in the pricing structure, businesses paid to advertise and everyone else advertised free of charge. She said there are now a lot of grey areas in this respect especially relating to community events, charities and local organisations. She said the criteria for charging needs simplifying. Harry Bennett said the rules for advertising in the newsletter have become over complicated and advertisers need to be made aware of any changes in the cost of advertising. He said that the increase in advertising costs has led to a reduction in the number of advertisements. Councillor G Rogers asked how many advertisers have been lost due to the increase in costs. Harry Bennett said that he was not sure but he is aware of at least two advertisers who have ceased using the newsletter.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors D Glanville, H Webb, T Thrussell, A Tamblyn and Cornwall Councillor P Seeva.

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

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 12th June 2024, having been previously circulated, were agreed as an accurate record.

3. Declaration of interest in items on the agenda

Councillors H Bunt declared an interest in item 13 on the agenda.

13. St Neot News

To receive and consider the policy for the cost of advertising in St Neot News

It was noted that the advertising costs are as follows: £10 for a quarter of a page, £20 for half a page and £30 for a full page with businesses paying the full price, charities and community events paying 50% of the charge and not for profit events paying zero. So, if an organization (a charity or community organization) has money

going into a bank account, they pay 50% and if the organisation is just receiving donations, their advertising cost is zero. Heather Taylor and Harry Bennett said this policy is difficult to implement. Councillor C Smith said that the community needs the newsletter but the precept money has to be used sensibly and professionally so the parish council cannot afford to subsidise the newsletter too heavily. It was estimated that the newsletter costs approximately £2,500 pa to print plus postage costs of approximately £200/month. It was agreed that the parish council is mindful that they do not want the editor or treasurer to be challenged on the advertising cost policy as they are volunteers. Some discussion took place as to how the policy for advertising could be simplified so it is easier to implement. It was agreed that the costs and revenue need to be examined in detail before an informed decision can be made. It was proposed by Councillor M Rowe and seconded by Councillor N Ball that, for August 2024, as a gift from the parish council, businesses will still be charged the full cost of advertising and everyone else will advertise free of charge. All councillors voted in favour of the proposal. It was agreed that the matter will be discussed again at the next meeting of the parish council.

Harry Bennett and Heather Taylor left the meeting.

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

The Chair said that she had met with Heather and Judith Taylor regarding the hedge overhanging Cott wall and they said they would cut it as soon as possible. The Chair said that her and Councillor D Glanville will inspect the parish council's assets in due course.

In respect of the alterations which have been made to land owned by the parish council adjacent to the house under construction at the top of Tripp Hill, the Clerk reported that she has not yet received any documents delineating ownership of the land. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to the owner of the property and request the documents. It was noted that the landowner has removed the fallen trees on the Two Valleys walk but since then, two further trees have fallen which require removal.

The Chair said that Andy James has responded to the Clerk's email regarding substandard work being carried out by Cormac. He said that until recently, three annual inspections of the gullies were undertaken but this has been reduced to one and the operatives must use hand tools to clear the gullies. He said that operatives had been sent to rectify the issues raised. Councillor G Rogers said that some of the works have still not been undertaken to a satisfactory standard and that the owners of Water Meadow Cottage have been waiting for 6 months for Cormac to undertake a survey. Andy James said that if additional funding is available next year, some of this could be used to use machinery to undertake the gully cleaning.

It was noted that a new projector has been purchased but that a white screen is required on which to project the images. It was also noted that the Post Office was relocated to St Neot Social Club during works in the playing field to divert the HV cable.

The Chair thanked all councillors who helped with the village clean-up which has been noted by parishioners.

5. To receive the Chairman's Communications

It was noted that the monthly PCSO report had been circulated to all councillors. The Chair said that the road will be closed from Polmenna Hill to Two Waters Foot on 8th and 9th August 2024. It was agreed that Heather Taylor would order the poppy wreath for the parish council. Councillor T Thrussell has commented that the website needs updating with photographs of councillors. He also brought to the attention of the parish council that a parking meter has been placed next to the Kerdroya project at Colliford Lake where it is now £2.50/2 hours parking. It was agreed that this would be monitored to assess its impact and that the Clerk would write a letter to SWW saying that the parish council are totally displeased that a parking meter has been installed.

The Chair thanked Councillor C Smith for repairing the play tower.

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

Councillor N Ball asked if the parish council would be prepared to pay for the scouts to use the chapel room last week as they were not able to use the pavilion. It was agreed that this would not be paid as the upstairs suite in Cott Yard was made available for their use.

7. To receive a report from the Clerk

None

8. Doorstep Green and Playing Field

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

It was agreed that a working party would be held on Wednesday 7th August 2024 commencing at 6pm to undertake maintenance of the play equipment. Councillor C Smith said that he has informed Lanhydrock Gardening Services that building works will be being undertaken on part of the playing field and asked if they could cut the grass every 3 weeks to save costs. They responded saying they need to cut it every two weeks if they are to remove the grass otherwise the blower gets choked. He said that they will cut the grass prior to the Carnival and the Smite Championships. It was proposed by Councillor N Ball and seconded by Councillor G Rogers that Councillor C Smith be authorized to purchase steel post protectors to be installed around the bases of the play equipment to prevent strimmer damage. All councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

Councillor C Smith said that St Neot Carnival is on 24th August 2024. It was agreed that the parish council will enter a float.

It was agreed that Councillor C Smith would put the train back in situ until building works commence.

9. Pavillion

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

The Chair said that the CLUP grant application has passed all due diligence checks and has left the Central Team and is now with councillors for signature, so a decision is imminent. She said that three tenders were received via Contracts Finder but two were non-compliant. She said that the third tender was assessed, and they have been informed that they are the preferred contractor dependent on grant funding. She said the preferred contractor is Brad Bolitho Limited and they are confident they can start on schedule in the middle of August 2024. Councillor C Smith said that the trench has been dug for the HV cable diversion and the cable will be laid and connected on Thursday 18th July 2024 and the trench backfilled on Friday 19th July 2024. He said the trench for the 3-phase supply has been dug and ducting is in place but the installation of 3 phase electricity is subject to grant funding.

The Chair said that three quotations have been received for the role of PM/QS. It was agreed that these would be discussed under Part 2 of the agenda as they contain commercially sensitive information.

Josie Williams left the meeting.

The Chair reported that the Village shop Steering Group have committed a sum of £2,000 to the project and need to raise a further £700 towards this figure. She said that they are contacting local organisations and businesses to ask them for contributions.

It was noted that the parish council needs to obtain quotations for the following when building works start - fencing, landscaping, broadband, solar panels and signage.

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

None

10. Cott Yard

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

Councillor C Smith reported that Pertemps were paying business rates for both suites they occupied in Cott Yard. He said that Cornwall Council has now sent the parish council an invoice in the sum of £326/month. It was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor M Rowe that Country Lane Enterprises pay half the invoice and the parish council pays the other half. All councillors voted in favour of the proposal.

Councillor C Smith said that the lease on Cott yard for the shop expires on 26th July 2024 and that, to date, they have received rent relief of 50%, on the £1262/quarter rate. Some discussion took place as to whether this rent should continue to be subsidised from July 26th 2024. It was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor L Jones that the rent would be subsidised by 25% by the parish council from July 26th 2024 for a period of 6 months. All councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

It was agreed that suites 2 and 3 would be advertised for rent when the parish council is clear of the position regarding the shop.

11. Toilets and Car Park

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

The Clerk reported that the parish council is now being charged by Cornwall Council for emptying the bin in the car park. It was agreed that at the end of the contract with Cornwall Council, a review of whether this bin is required will be undertaken. It was proposed by Councillor M Rowe and seconded by Councillor L Jones that Gary Rogers cuts the bank to the rear of the car park. All councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

Councillor H Bunt said that a parishioner has requested that a bottle bank be placed in the car park. It was agreed that there is insufficient room.

12. St Neot Orchard

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

The Chair said that Warleggan Young Farmers will trim the hedges on both sides of the entrance to the orchard on this occasion but cannot promise to do it in the future as they do not know whether the age profile of the group will enable the operation of the requisite machinery.

Councillor C Smith asked that an item be put in the next edition of St Neot News thanking the local farmers for cutting the hedges into and out of the village.

14. Signage on A38/Carnglaze Caverns Road Junction

To receive and consider the signage on the A38/Carnglaze Caverns Road junction

It was agreed that further thought would be given to this matter when the situation with the village shop is rectified.

15. Internal Audit Report

To approve the Internal Audit Report for 2023/24

It was proposed by Councillor N Ball and seconded by Councillor L Jones that the Internal Audit Report for 2023/24 be approved. 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 6th July 2024 and to appoint a representative to attend the farmer's market on 3rd August 2024

Councillor M Rowe said that the following issues had been raised at the market on 6th July 2024: speeding traffic through the village, thanks for tidying the village, potholes at the entrance to the car park and the untidy nature of Goonzion.

It was agreed that Councillor H Bunt would attend the market on 3rd August 2024.

17. To receive reports from -

a) Cornwall Councillor

Councillor G Rogers reported that Cornwall Councillor P Seeva had contacted Linda Taylor regarding the deposition of rubble at Connon Bridge. He said that at Saltash and St Austell, up to 8 bags of rubble can now be deposited/week.

b) Goonzion Commoners

It was noted that Goonzion is overgrown, and the options were noted: a controlled burn, cut the vegetation and burn it in a heap or cut the vegetation, shred it and spread it. It was agreed that no action would be taken at the present time.

Councillor M Rowe said the cattle grid near Moorsview is sinking and that a camera was erected on Goonzion by Cormac for a few days to monitor vehicle movements.

c) SE Cornwall CAP

None

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) - £279.62
Sue Blaxley (Projector and Printer Ink) - £99.98
LJC Bookkeeping Services (Internal Audit 2023/24) - £225.00
Lanhydrock Gardening Services (Grass Cutting 04/06/24 and 20/06/24) - £638.40
EDF Energy (Parish Lighting) - £325.25
Richards Builders Merchants (Plywood and Screws) - £57.74
St Neot News (Expenses February and March 2024) - £420.00
Ray Clarke (Professional Fees) - £500.00
Cornwall Council (Emptying bin in Car Park) - £406.48

Cornwall Council (Business Rates for Cott Yard) - £327.64
South West Water (Water for Pavilion) - £19.19
South West Water (Water for Toilet) - £107.26
St Neot Social Club (Cleaning Materials for Toilet) - £12.05

It was proposed by Councillor L Jones and seconded by Councillor M Rowe that all the above orders be authorized for payment. All Councillors voted in favour, except for Councillors G Rogers and N Ball 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: Menheniot Post Office (Pavilion rental) - £136.50 and Heather Taylor (Rent for Cott Yard) - £675.10. The Clerk reported that the accounts balance at £57,426.44.

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

20. Quotations for PM/QS Role for Village Shop Project

To receive and consider the quotations received for the PM/QS Role for the Village Shop Project

The quotations received were considered and discussed. It was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor N Ball that Councillor L Jones negotiates with the preferred PM/QS. All councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

21. Date of next meeting

To confirm the date of the next Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 14th August 2024.

The next meeting of the parish council will be on Wednesday 14th August 2024 commencing at 7:30pm in the Village Hall/Social Club meeting room.

There was no further business and the meeting was closed at 9:50 pm.

