

KINGSTON SEYMOUR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Kingston Seymour Parish Council held on
Thursday 11th March 2021 at 19.30
On the Zoom Video Communication System

Councillors Present:

Mike Sewell (MS) Chairman
Paul Cox (PC)
Bryony Cole (BC)

Fred Malton (Vice Chairman)
Richard Barber (RB)

Zoe Bartlett (ZB)
Ian Wariner (IW)

In attendance:

Steve Dixon (SD) Clerk & RFO

District Councillor Wendy Griggs
(WG)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from District Councillor Steve Bridger and the Police team.

2. To record declarations of interest in items on the agenda

IW noted a non-fiscal interest in item 10 and MS and WG noted non-fiscal interests in item 7.2

3. Members of the public are invited to address the council

There were no members of the public who wished to address the Council.

4. To confirm the minutes of the following meeting:

Meeting – 14th January 2021

Confirmed as a true record. Proposed by PC, seconded by ZB and supported unanimously.

5. Police and Neighbourhood Watch

The Clerk advised that the Police newsletter reported that in the local area there had been 4 incidents of criminal damage and 3 vehicle crimes. The Police also advised that catalytic converter thefts were still happening in the areas around KS and that residents should remain vigilant.

WG noted that the Police had been active on "County Lines" drug transport monitoring activity at Yatton Station and had had a positive day giving travellers and walkers crime prevention advice.

The team planned to recommence Beat Surgeries and Bike Marking events shortly and dates will be posted on the website.

Action: Clerk to post provisional dates on the website

There had been no incidents reported separately by the Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator.

6. Infrastructure. To receive updates and to agree the next actions.

6.1 National Grid Connection

The Clerk advised that he was in regular contact with the NG Comms team and that he has recently established a page on the village website to carry all of the latest information.

He had been asked by NG about distribution of a forthcoming information mailing and he advised them that he felt that because the Lampley Road was so important to the village, that all residents should be included in this mail drop. NG had agreed to incorporating that in their plans.

NG have offered a specific – remote – briefing to the Parish Council and after discussion, Councillors felt that it had been many years since the detail had been formally shared with villagers, that this might be a worthwhile exercise.

Action: Clerk to contact NG and establish what might be available to help Councillors decide on how and when to take advantage of this.

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6.2 Roads and Footpaths

Road Safety

The Council had been contacted by a “20 is Plenty” speed campaign being launched in Sandford and more widely across North Somerset, and a note had been sent by the Council advising of our recent improvements and ongoing monitoring and review with our community.

A public meeting had been held by this group on the 10th of March and IW had attended as an observer. He reported that the group had been keen to challenge North Somerset Council’s stated policy on blanket speed limits in towns and villages and the responsible District Councillor and a Highways Official had been present and offered to conduct a review of the NSC policy against national guidance.

After discussion, Councillors are satisfied that our ongoing work – e.g. with the repainting of the calming measures, observations and the ongoing discussions with farmers and delivery companies to respect the circumstances of the village – was appropriate at this time. A new set of traffic speed surveys may be appropriate later this year once COVID restrictions have been removed and traffic levels have found their new levels.

Councillors felt that it was important to be open with the community about the contact made and this will feature in the Parish Council’s section of the forthcoming Village Magazine

Action: Clerk to ensure this is included in the draft piece for approval by the Chairman.

Rights of Way

Following submission of the Rights of Way review information to NSC, the Council have been approached to consider providing funds for improvement project to selected routes. NSC have, historically, been very good in their reaction to maintenance issues raised on the existing network and this is expected to continue.

After discussion, Councillors agreed that funding will be considered for enhancements to the existing routes given appropriate proposals for routes in the Parish

Action: Clerk to write to NSC to indicate that shared funding of enhancements will be considered.

7. Services, Resilience & Community

7.1 Village Maintenance & Environment

Railings

The clerk reported that he had spoken to NSC and had added a section of railings in Middle Lane (which had been brought to his attention by a parishioner) for consideration.

NSC are awaiting detailed proposals from their contractor (Skanska) before submitting theses to us. At this stage, we are not being expected to contribute but this may change depending on available budgets at NSC and proposed costs from the contractor.

Hedge and Verge Contract 2021

The clerk explained how the specification for this – annual – contract had been expanded for 2021 to include the threshold areas around the gates. A copy of the specification had been sent to Councillors in advance.

It was agreed that the revised specification could be sent out for quotations to bring back to the next meeting.

Action: Clerk to invite contractors to quote for this work.

RB mentioned that Mr & Mrs Calderbank had been doing a great job collecting rubbish from verges in the village.

Action: Chairman to send a letter of thanks on behalf of the Parish Council and residents.

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7.2 Education Provision Consultation – Potential Implications

The Clerk had issued information about an NSC consultation to Councillors. WG advised that the information was rich in data and projections about school rolls in the future.

MS expressed concern that school transport from the village might be affected depending on the future choice of KS parents for the new primary at North End or the established Yatton schools but WG felt confident that the legal requirements to provide transport for unsafe travel routes would not change.

After discussion, it was agreed that the Council would maintain a watching brief over this issue.

8. Administration

8.1 Review current and future fireworks communication

A Facebook post issued by the clerk immediately prior to New Year's Eve had caused a parishioner and a Councillor to be concerned about its tone. The basic message had been approved by MS and the clerk explained how he had tried to be assertive with the tone but accepted that the message had been seen by some as being instructional. It was adjusted immediately after the concern was received to try to mitigate this concern.

The clerk apologised to Councillors for the issue and confirmed he had apologised to the parishioner who raised the matter,

After discussion it was proposed by MS, seconded by PC and agreed unanimously that all future communication about Fireworks would remain informational only.

Action: Clerk to note for Autumn 2021 updates to information. These will be shared with all Councillors before issue.

8.2 Review Social Media and electronic communications policy

After discussion it was proposed by IW, seconded by RB and supported by a majority that the Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy would be re-adopted for a further year.

Action: Clerk to place renewed Policy on website and circulate to Councillors.

8.3 To discuss the position regarding an Annual Parish Meeting

The clerk explained how the law stated that an Annual Parish Meeting had to be held between the 1st March and 1st June every year but that emergency COVID legislation introduced in 2020 had suspended this requirement. This emergency legislation actually expires on the 7th May 2021 unless it is renewed by Government. Other COVID legislation in force would restrict the ability to hold an indoor meeting.

After discussion, it was proposed by MS, seconded by IW and supported unanimously that Council would wait and see what happened to this legislation and then decide when best to hold an Annual Parish Meeting to maximise the benefit and relevance for parishioners.

Action: Review at the next meeting

9. Finance

9.1 To receive the current Financial Report and agree fund movements

The clerk outlined the forecast financial position to the end of the financial year on the 31st March and explained that he expected the Council to have net funds amounting to £14.4k. This was now located in three accounts – the current, business reserve and a new War memorial reserve which Councillors had agreed to set up to clearly indicate where those funds were likely to be used.

The War Memorial fund had been opened with a transfer of £2500 and Councillors had agreed that an additional £500 would be added to it before year end. The clerk explained the savings that had been made elsewhere in the budget and after discussion, it was proposed by IW, seconded by PC and

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agreed unanimously that this additional sum be increased to £1500 so that the balance of the War Memorial Reserve would be £4000 at year end.

Action: Clerk to instruct the Bank accordingly.

9.2 To agree clerk remunerations for 2021/22

The Clerk had issued a summary document to Councillors which explained the contractual and national negotiations position.

After discussion it was proposed by IW, seconded by RB and supported unanimously that the clerk be moved to point 15 on the national pay scales and that he would receive any nationally agreed increment when one was awarded, all to come into effect from 1st April 2021.

9.3 To discuss and agree the draft budget for 2021/22

The clerk had submitted a draft budget for 2021/22 to Councillors which allowed for a potential overspend of £2.1k on the year provided that valid investment projects came forward. The overall net funds available to the Council at the end of 2021/22 financial year would reduce slightly to £12.3k.

A grant of £150 to the village hall for a village Christmas Tree (which was counted under Parish Plan Actions this year) is to be separated out for ongoing visibility.

Action: Clerk to make revision and reissue draft budget sheet to Councillors.

10. To discuss and agree the Parish Council's position on the following application:

Planning Application No 21/P/0250/FUL

This application is to authorise the restoration of an existing building and after discussion it was proposed by IW, seconded by RB and supported by a majority that the Council give its unequivocal support to the application.

Action: Clerk to lodge the Council's comments against the application.

11. Reports from External Meetings

There had not been a Village Hall meeting but PC reported that internal work was progressing well in readiness for potential re-opening after "Step 3" and that the facility would now be much more attractive to potential hirers.

RB noted that the PCAA were reporting that the Airport Appeal is going ahead (starts in July) and that Bristol Airport still has long term aspirations to move to 20m passengers per annum.

RB had attended an NSC "Green Infrastructure Meeting" led by the Natural Environment Manager John Flanagan. The meeting discussed, inter-alia, environmental land and water corridors, footpaths, rewilding and tree planting.

NSC are keen to receive Parish Council submissions to their considerations and RB offered to construct a paper which could be sent on behalf of KS.

Action: RB to create on behalf of the Council and circulate a draft submission from to Councillors for enhancement/approval

12. To consider attendance at forthcoming meetings

There is to be a PCAA meeting on the 25th March which RB will attend. No other meetings are in the diary.

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13. To receive information about recent correspondence

The clerk had today received a notice from NSC that a section of Middle Lane will be closed for up to five days from March 23rd for rhyme maintenance work.

Action: Clerk to post information on the website and Facebook nearer the time.

14. To agree any items to be placed on the next regular meeting Agenda - 10th May 2021

It is likely that the next meeting will also have to take place on Zoom.

The meeting will be in two parts. The first will be the formal Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and this will be followed by a full – regular – meeting where progress on the listed items will be reviewed

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 21.40.

Steve Dixon

Steve Dixon,

Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer, 12th March 2021