

KINGSTON SEYMOUR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Kingston Seymour Parish Council held on
Wednesday 9th March 2022 at 19.30
At Kingston Seymour Village Hall, Ham Lane, Kingston Seymour

Councillors Present:

Mike Sewell (MS) Chairman
Zoe Bartlett (ZB)
Ian Wariner (IW)

Fred Malton (FM)
Bryony Cole (BC)

Richard Barber (RB)
Paul Cox (PC)

In attendance:

Steve Dixon (SD) Clerk & RFO

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from District Councillors Bridger & Griggs & from the Police team

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

None

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

No members of the public were present.

4. To confirm the minutes of the following meeting

Regular Council Meeting – 12th January 2022

The minutes were confirmed as a true record. Proposed by FM, seconded by RB and supported unanimously by all.

5. Police and Neighbourhood Watch

Unfortunately, and due to operational commitments, a monthly newsletter had not been produced and members of the Police team had been unable to attend. The Neighbourhood Watch coordinator had reported no incidents.

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

6.1 Tutshill Route

The clerk explained that the Environment Agency was yet to issue the licence to allow building of the viaduct on this occasion. The PM had advised that work continued on other aspects of the route and that when the licence was received, a period of around one month of significant lorry movements through the village as stone is brought in. Contractors have agreed that these movements would only take place after 09.00 and cease before 15.00.

The Project Manager will attend the next Council meeting in May.

Action: Clerk to invite David Fish to the 12th May meeting.

6.2 Village Railings

The clerk advised that NSC had placed the order with their contractors, and they are awaiting a delivery of the bespoke items needed. Funding for the work by NSC will be carried over into their new financial year.

6.3 Refurbishment of assets.

IW & RB had undertaken an examination of the bus shelter which was generally sound but where some timbers needed replacement. After discussion, it was agreed that the Council should seek quotes from contractors to undertake this work.

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Action: IW & RB to agree the specification of the work and RB & the clerk to approach suitable contractors.

The clerk had obtained prices for a range of noticeboards for outside and inside the bus shelter and it was agreed that nothing new would be installed until the shelter itself had been refurbished. It was considered that some of the prices obtained were too high and IW offered to discuss the matter with a parishioner who he knew did this type of work.

Action: IW to discuss possibilities with his contact and report back to the next meeting.

6.4 Waste Bins

The clerk advised that he was yet to find a source for the required waste bin inserts but that his search continues.

A parishioner had suggested that dog bins be installed at the northern end of the two most popular footpaths in the village to perhaps limit the incidence of mess being left on paths and in hedgerows. The clerk had done some initial investigation and advised that the installation of a bin would cost around £250 but that emptying would be a minimum of £5 per visit. Two bins, emptied twice a week could cost the Parish Council more than £1000 per annum.

A discussion ensued about whether the behaviour of those owners who habitually did not “pick up” would be changed by the presence of bins and it was felt that it probably would not. Therefore, this seemed to present a large – ongoing – expense which the Parish Council has little appetite to fund.

It was agreed that a decision would be deferred pending discussions with NSC about improved facilities for the village once the cycle and coastal footpath routes are in place.

6.5 Roads & Footpaths

The clerk advised that NSC had agreed to examine Yew Tree Lane and Bullocks Lane with a view to including this work in the programme for the 2022 – 23 financial year. The clerk had also chased the plan to improve the signage at the entrance to Bullocks Lane

The clerk had attended a site visit with the “Pier to Pier” project manager and a councillor from Clevedon at the dangerous corner on the Lower Strode Road. This matter had been escalated within NSC Highways by the “Pier to Pier” PM.

The metal railings at New Cut Bow had been struck – again and were now in a poor state.

Action: Clerk to raise the issue with NSC Highways

It was noted that many improvements had been made to our local footpath network and that some work was still scheduled to be done.

6.6 Christmas Tree

The Parish Council had been funding the Village Hall Christmas tree for the two years and RB had been approached by parishioners to seek permission to put a tree on the Triangle as a welcome to the village and at no expense to the Parish Council.

After discussion, Councillors were unable to support the request to place a tree in the War Memorial compound but would consider the placement of a tree in the area by the bus shelter. However, Councillors would need to understand the proposals for: size, how it is secured, how it will be lit and what insurance will be in place.

Action: RB to discuss with the proposers and revert.

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7. Services, Resilience & Community. To receive updates and agree any necessary actions

7.1 Defibrillator & Courses

Following the last meeting, the clerk has spoken to a parishioner who, with a paramedic colleague, has offered to lead the courses at no cost except for refreshments for the leaders and participants. Some putative dates had been identified but because the activity would be physical and produce aerosols, it is considered that this would be better done when the likelihood of spreading COVID has reduced.

Action: Clerk to maintain a dialogue with a view to running courses in the autumn.

7.2 Climate Emergency

The clerk is attending a workshop in late March focussed on what Councils can contribute and achieve as a contribution in this area. The clerk will report at the next meeting

8. Administration and Communication.

8.1 To review the Council's Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy and agree any changes

The clerk advised that he had checked the current version against the most up to date "model" provided by the professional bodies and there were some simplifications. He had incorporated our specifics and proposed their adoption.

It was proposed by IW, seconded by RB and supported unanimously that the new version be adopted.

Action: Clerk to place adopted policy on the website.

8.2 To agree the date for an Annual Parish Meeting

The clerk advised that by law, the APM should be scheduled between 1st March and 1st June every year but that due to COVID, we hadn't been able to hold one in 2020 or 2021. Six Wednesday dates across April and May had been provisionally earmarked in the Village Hall.

After discussion, it was agreed that a joint event with the Kingston Seymour Trust and the Friends groups may be beneficial to all parties.

Action: MS to contact the leaders of these groups to establish whether they would be interested in sharing one of the dates.

8.3 Data Protection

The clerk reminded Councillors of their responsibilities towards the protection of personal data that they may acquire whilst undertaking their Councillor role. The clerk will continue to ensure that the Council is compliant and will keep Councillors informed.

9. Finance.

9.1 To receive the current Financial Report

The clerk reported that the Parish finances were sound with a total of £16.4k available overall and with scope in the budget principally for investment in the Parish, refurbishment of assets, and training.

Other than the clerk's monthly salary (£348), No cheques had been issued for over £100 since the last meeting.

9.2 To agree Clerk remuneration 2022 – 23

The clerk had provided a paper in advance to Councillors setting out details from his contract and of the nationally agreed pay award.

It was proposed by FM, seconded by RB and supported unanimously that:

1) the clerk would move to "Point 16" on the national pay scales for FY 2022-23

2) that his pay scale would continue to be aligned to the nationally agreed scale for Council employees

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3) that the back pay for 2021 – 22 would be paid now that an agreed increase has been implemented and that should an agreement be reached for 2022-23 at some point in the future, back pay for the due period will be paid as earned from April 2022.

9.3 To agree a 2022-23 budget

The clerk had issued a draft budget in advance to Councillors and stated that the figures were as accurate as they could be at this stage. He said the budget provided a framework for spending but that every item was signed off by two councillors as it became due/spent.

After discussion, the draft budget was agreed and noted.

10. Queen's Jubilee Celebrations

10.1 Queen's Platinum Jubilee – Latest Position

On behalf of the organising group, MS advised that events were being planned for each of the four days of celebration, starting with beacon lighting on Thursday 2nd June. There will then be a Village Hall event on the Friday, Champagne and Cream Teas on Saturday and a village picnic and photograph on Sunday afternoon, followed by a Church service.

The Church will be decorated and there will be a history display covering the years of Her Majesty's reign.

10.2 Commemorative items

MS reported that on previous Jubilee occasions, the Parish Council had funded the gift of a commemorative item for the young people of the village. The clerk had investigated the costing behind commemorative mugs, water bottles or a coin and these had been presented to Councillors.

After discussion, it was proposed by MS and seconded by PC and supported unanimously that the Council purchase 108 commemorative mugs with a view to gifting approximately half to the young people of the village and selling the remainder to others who are interested.

Action: Clerk to order the required items as specified.

11. External Meetings. To receive reports from external meetings attended by members and officers and agree any further action and to consider attendance at forthcoming external meetings and to nominate attendees

The clerk noted that he and RC had attended an NSC Preferred Options Plan meeting at which the consultation draft had been introduced. Since that date, a page on the NSC website leads to the executive draft copy that was agreed on the 2nd February. There was concern that the large piece of land between Wemberham Lane in Yatton and the M5 running alongside Kingston Bridge and Lampley Road was shown in the presentation.

The formal consultation commences on Monday and it was agreed that the Parish Council would add a note to that issued after the last meeting to update the village on the current position

Action: The clerk and FM to agree an additional section for the website which would be linked to from a village Facebook message.

Subject to what the actual draft consultation documents says, it could be that it would be prudent to hold a public meeting in advance of the 29th April deadline for comments so that the Parish Council can submit a formal response on behalf of the village.

Action: MS and the clerk to review options and present to Councillors.

The clerk had also attended a budget briefing from NSC and a fraud busting session led by the Police and had shared information with Councillors.

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RB reported that the recent PCAA meeting had discussed the next steps after the grant of the planning application and there was no appetite from members to pursue the possible judicial review. Further, the Chairman is looking for a successor.

PC reported that the Village Hall was pressing on with plans for events to “re-enliven” the village and, inter alia, there will be a village quiz in late April.

12. To receive information about very recent correspondence and to agree any further action

The clerk had received a notice from the Boundary Commission regarding their proposals for changes to constituency boundaries in late 2023. Essentially, the current proposals move Kingston Seymour into a Wells and Mendip Hills constituency. Comments are requested by the 4th April.

13. To agree any items that are to be placed on the next regular meeting Agenda, scheduled for Thursday 12th May 2022.

The regular meeting will be preceded by the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

In the regular meeting, there will be an update on the Tutshill project and existing outstandings. The draft Agenda will be circulated nearer the time for Councillors to add any additional items before formal issue.

14. Confidential item

A confidential item was discussed by Councillors.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 21.45

Steve Dixon

Steve Dixon,
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer,
12th March 2022