

KINGSTON SEYMOUR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Kingston Seymour Parish Council held on

Thursday 9th March 2023 at 19.30

At All Saints Church, Ham Lane, Kingston Seymour

Councillors Present:

Mike Sewell, Chair

Paul Cox (PC)

Richard Barber (RB), Vice Chair

Ian Wariner (IW)

Bryony Cole (BC)

In attendance:

Steve Dixon (SD) Clerk & RFO

2 Members of the Public

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Councillors Bartlett and Malton and from District Councillor Griggs

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

None

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

A parishioner commented that the Active Travel Plans drawn by NSC were discriminatory against older and infirm members of the community. These comments had been seen by Councillors in advance and the clerk confirmed that they had been sent – anonymously – to NSC.

As this will be the last regular meeting undertaken by the current members of the parish council, MS recorded his thanks to all councillors and the clerk for their work and contributions over their four years of office. The COVID pandemic had made this period particularly challenging for all and he felt that the council had adapted to the changing circumstances to ensure the business of the parish could continue. He hoped that many of the current councillors would stand for re-election.

4. To confirm the minutes of the following meeting

- Meeting of the Parish Council – 11th January 2023

The minutes were confirmed as a true record. Proposed by RB, seconded by PC and supported by those who were present.

5. Police & Neighbourhood Watch update

PC Rochford reported that a white van had been observed “cruising” around the lanes looking for opportunities and he urged residents to make sure that smaller – easily portable – items were not left on show outside their properties. All residents should also check the security of their homes and outbuildings.

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

6.1 Tutshill Route

The Project Manager had given a verbal update to the clerk.

Construction of the new farm bridge had been completed but the approaches on either side need to be finished. The cycleway contractors will be invited back to finish off in April/May and plans for the changes in Yeo Bank Lane are being discussed directly with residents.

The proposals regarding signage which the parish council had submitted after consultation with parishioners, are said to be accepted and will be worked into the plans which will be sent back to the parish council for approval this month. New trees and hedgerows are likely to now be planted in September.

KINGSTON SEYMOUR PARISH COUNCIL

The route is likely to “quietly” open when it is completed – possibly in June – and an official opening is being targeted for the middle of July.

The clerk advised that the NSC Project Manager, David Fish, who had been involved in the project for some 11 of the 13 years he has worked at NSC was leaving at the end of March. The finishing work on this project will be carried through by his manager, Katharin Diver. The clerk had expressed the thanks of the council for his work on this project.

6.2 Village Railings

RB and the clerk had met with Bedrock Civil Engineering and had received a detailed quotation for the work to repair/replace the run of 30 posts alongside the rhyne outside the church. In total, the quotation had been for a total of £9.2k and, after discussion, it was felt that this was too large a sum for the current council to commit to as it would use up most of the parish’ reserves.

The newly elected members of the parish council will be in post on the 9th May (with their first meeting on the 10th) and it was agreed that this investment opportunity would be presented to parishioners at the Village Assembly which is already booked for 24th May. Other calls on the parish funds – such as the bus shelter – would also be discussed and views taken to inform a decision by the council, probably at the July meeting.

*Action: Clerk to incorporate in the presentation for the Village Assembly
Clerk to inform NSC Highways that we are considering undertaking this work to ensure that they do not have any objections.*

6.3 Roads

The New Cut Bow wooden railings have now been completely destroyed and the NSC officer responsible has advised that he has not made any progress on replacements. There are orange temporary barriers in place at present.

Research into weight limits in the area has indicated that the signage at the Clevedon entrance to Lower Strode Road could be enhanced for benefit. After discussion, it was agreed that the clerk would work with RB to create a statement to NSC highways urging that this issue should be incorporated in their thinking over safety along the nascent cycle route.

Action: Clerk and RB to formulate a communication.

The clerk had also referred the situation at the junction with the Cycle Route and Lower Strode Road to NSC highways. To date, no decision has been taken by them.

RB and the clerk had met with an NSC Highways Engineer and had reviewed the state of Yew Tree Lane. We have been assured that a proposal to resurface the entire stretch would be put forward to NSC’s “Asset Management Group” for a decision on funding for the 2023-24 financial year. This decision has yet to be made.

The subsidence on Back Lane had been referred to NSC who have stated that the road has been examined and that nothing needs to be done at present but that it will be kept under review.

Action: Clerk to write again to express parish council concern that the situation is being exacerbated by the heavy lorries which use this lane particularly Wessex Water.

6.4 Village Maintenance Spring/Summer 2023

Following the decision at the last meeting that our programme of machine and manual cuts should continue, quotes have been received from the contractors concerned. The two machine cuts will cost £110 (+VAT) each and the three manual cuts will cost 1x £365 and 2x£265.

KINGSTON SEYMOUR PARISH COUNCIL

After discussion, it was proposed by RB seconded by PC and agreed unanimously that these quotations be accepted.

Action: Clerk to confirm to the chosen contractors.

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

7.1 Climate Emergency and Sustainable Travel

7.1.1 Active Travel Plans

A response had been prepared on behalf of the parish, agreed by councillors and submitted by the due date.

As part of the strategy, NSC have declared road classifications across the district. The parish council pushed back on two sections – Yew Tree Lane and part of Back Lane – but so far, our position has not been accepted. We are advised that some clearer definitions will be issued shortly which should assuage our concerns.

Action: Clerk to continue to monitor and update at the next meeting

7.1.2 Electric Vehicle Strategy

An Electric Vehicle Strategy has been drafted by NSC to point the way forward for the forthcoming years. After discussion, it was agreed that RB will review the document and submit a response on behalf of the parish.

Action: RB to prepare and send response by the due date of the 6th April.

7.1.3 Flood Risk Strategy

NSC have drafted a Flood Risk Strategy for the district. Prior to the meeting, ZB had agreed to review the strategy and would create and send the response on behalf of the parish.

Action: ZB to prepare and send response by the due date of the 6th April

7.2 Planning Department Issue

Blagdon Parish Council has experienced issues with the NSC Planning Department and is minded to raise a formal complaint to the ombudsman and suggested that other parishes may wish to join in with the complaint.

After discussion, it was agreed that this parish council had not experienced the issues being cited and would not submit evidence.

Action: Clerk to inform Blagdon PC.

8. Administration and Communication.

8.1 To review and adopt the Parish Councils' Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy

The clerk had reviewed the current policy with sources of professional advice and confirmed that there was no need to change. The proposal had been circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting and after discussion it was proposed by IW, seconded by RB and supported unanimously that the existing policy be re-adopted.

Action: Clerk to post the re-adopted version on the website

9. Finance.

9.1 To receive the current Financial Report

The clerk reported that the parish finances continued to be sound and that the forecast for the financial year end (31st March) is £16.7k available overall.

9.2 To agree clerk remuneration 2023 - 2024

The clerk had provided a paper in advance to Councillors setting out details from his contract. It was proposed by RB, seconded by BC and supported unanimously that:

- 1) the clerk would move to "Point 17" on the national pay scales for FY 2023-24

KINGSTON SEYMOUR PARISH COUNCIL

2) that should a national pay award be agreed during the financial year that any back pay due for 2023-24 will be paid as earned from April 2023.

10. King's Coronation and Queen's Commemoration

10.1 Latest Position

MS reported that a working party representing village groups had formulated a plan of events over the Coronation weekend to align with the national template. Events would run from Friday 5th May through to Monday 8th May and details are being finalised and published elsewhere.

10.2 Commemorative items

For the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, the council had committed to providing a commemorative mug to our young people and, with sales of additional mugs to other buyers, the overall net cost to the council will be in the order of £450 – less than the originally committed cost of £620.

MS asked if the council was prepared to fund a similar sum to mark the Coronation and this was agreed with a stipulation a mug would be most appropriate rather than a coin for a budget in the order of that agreed for the Platinum Jubilee of £621 (before any inflation increases)

A tree to commemorate the Queen's Reign is being considered for the churchyard and it was proposed by PC, seconded by IW that the parish council would fund the purchase

Action: MS to take forward

11. External Meetings. Reports and nominations

RB reported that at the last PCAA meeting there had been a request for funds to support an appeal to the Court of Appeal against the decision to grant the airport its planning permission. After discussion, it was agreed that the parish council had no appetite to support this as there appeared to be little grounds on which the appeal could be based.

Action: RB to convey our decision to the PCAA.

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

The clerk advised that he had contacted the NSC Footpath Access Officer about the decaying stile at the rear of the Village Hall. The officer had suggested that it might be possible to replace this with a kissing gate if the Village Hall were comfortable with that and with the other landowner's permission.

Action: Clerk to contact the Village Hall leadership and seek agreement.

13. Forthcoming Meetings

There will be local elections on the 4th May 2023.

The first meeting of the new Parish Council will be on Wednesday 10th May (in the Church and at which the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council will take place and a Chairman elected. This required meeting will be followed by a regular meeting and the draft agenda will be circulated nearer the time for Councillors to review before formal issue.

Whilst the 2023 meetings are booked, councillors expressed a preference for holding future meetings in the Village Hall, recognising that this is likely to limit meetings to Wednesdays due to current hall availability.

14. Confidential Item

A confidential item was discussed.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 21.30

Steve Dixon

Steve Dixon, Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer, 19th March 2023

KINGSTON SEYMOUR PARISH COUNCIL