

NEWTON POPPLEFORD & HARPFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Finance Committee meeting on Thursday 23rd September 2021
at 8pm held at The Pavilion Building, Back Lane, Newton Poppleford

ACTION by:

	<p>Present:</p> <p>Cllrs Walker (Chair), Burhop (Vice-Chair), Tillotson and Tribble. (Q) Clerk. Cllr. Dalton (in attendance). 1 member of the public. Meeting began at 8.15pm due to previous meeting over-run.</p>	
Public Forum	<p>Fire Regulations and Covid Compliance guidance:</p> <p>Chair outlined both to those present.</p> <p>Public Questions</p> <p>Member of the public asked to speak on items FC21/29 b) and e). Chair proposed to suspend Standing Orders at that point to permit public representations. Chair closed the public forum at 8.20pm.</p>	
FC21/026	<p>Apologies for absence:</p> <p>None. All members in attendance.</p>	
FC21/027	<p>Declarations of Interest made:</p> <p>All members present are, by definition, members of the NPPFF Trustee Board and declared their interests as such.</p> <p>No other declarations made.</p> <p><i>Chair reminded all members of committee that they could, and should, declare any further interests during the meeting as they became apparent.</i></p>	
FC21/028	<p>To consider and, if thought fit, to approve the minutes of previous Finance Committee meeting 26th August 2021 as previously circulated to members:</p> <p>Cllr. Burhop proposed that the substantive corrected minutes be adopted as a true record of the meeting. Seconded by Cllr. Tribble. Resolved unanimously.</p> <p>Matters arising: <i>Clerk confirmed that new laptop had been purchased, and was operating extremely well. Clerk thanked Council for their contribution towards the costs of this (shared) IT equipment.</i></p>	

	Business to be considered:	
FC21/029a)	<p>a) To consider arrangements for Annual Firework Event in November 2021:</p> <p>i) Entrance Fee charges / ticket price. Cllr. Burhop reported that event costs had not yet been established and agreed to speak with contractor asap. Cllr. Burhop: <i>Please note and action accordingly.</i> It was felt by the Committee that a ticket price needed to be agreed to allow advertising / printing / promotion of the event to take place. It was proposed by Chair that price for an adult ticket rise of £7.50 to reflect the (anticipated) increase in event costs, but to retain the children's entrance price at £2.50, making £10 for a combined adult/child entry which was still considered to be exceptional good value for money. Resolved unanimously. It was suggested that a Press Release/Council Statement be drafted and issued to explain the need to increase the adult ticket price and for this to be published as soon as possible; certainly before tickets went on sale through the usual channels. Cllr. Burhop volunteered to draft such a statement and circulate to all members for review. Cllr. Burhop: <i>Please action accordingly.</i> It was further suggested that a Firework Event Working Party be established with immediate effect to co-ordinate and plan the event and administration involved. Cllrs. Burhop, Dalton, Tillotson and Walker agreed to participate and Clerk was asked to email all members to seek further volunteers to serve on this working party (noting that Cllrs. Chapman and Lipczynski had already offered to assist with the bonfire) Clerk: <i>Please action accordingly.</i></p> <p>ii) Marshalling and volunteers. Cllr. Burhop confirmed that the PTA had agreed in writing to provide 11 Marshalls on the evening and to assist with ticket sales before the event, as well as operating the hot food, soft drinks and glow-sticks concession (see below). Chair suggested that this matter be delegated to the W/Party to co-ordinate and arrange. <i>Chair proposed that Standing Orders be suspended to permit representations from attendees not on the committee. Seconded by Cllr. Burhop. Resolved unanimously.</i> Cllr. Dalton suggested that the access barriers/checkpoint on the Southern end of Back Lane be located to the north of the houses (adjacent to Tennis Court footpath entrance) to prevent "walk-throughs". Chair responded that this was a matter for the W/Party to discuss and agree upon.</p> <p>iii) Bar Concession. Clerk confirmed that a Temporary Events Notice (TEN) had been applied for to permit the sale of alcohol on the evening of the event. It was confirmed that the Cannon Inn had declined to operate the bar, as they were hoping to operate the hot food concession (for the PTA) and did not have sufficient staff to do both. It was felt that at least 4 volunteers were needed to run the bar (given the anticipated number of attendees).</p> <p><i>Continued overleaf</i></p>	

	<p>The arrangements for the bar operation (bottles/cans vs draught beer/cider etc) was to be discussed by the Working Party when they next met.</p> <p>iv) Catering Concessions. As mentioned above, the PTA had agreed to operate the hot food concession for a flat concessionary fee of £150 (to include the sale of hot food and glow-sticks (exclusively) with soft drinks also being available (which other concessions could also sell if they wished). Clerk confirmed that Harpford Hall Trustees had also been invited to provide the hot drink/mulled wine/cakes/biscuits concession as in previous years. Concession fee to be 15% of turnover.</p> <p>v) Other concessions / stalls to be considered. Cllr. Tribble confirmed that a Sweet/Candy concession had been invited at similar % concessionary terms.</p> <p>vi) Other matters relating to event. It was suggested that the local Fire Brigade could be invited to attend and bring an engine. Cllr. Burhop agreed to contact them and report back via the Working Party group. The first meeting of the WP was scheduled for Wednesday 29/9 at the Cannon Inn. 7.30pm start.</p>	
	<p><i>Chair proposed that item e) be considered next on the agenda. Agreed unanimously.</i></p>	
FC21/029e)	<p>e) To consider correspondence from The Charity Commission on the subject of the Permanent Endowment funds for the Venn Ottery Village Green (Fund) and to decide whether a resolution be passed to utilise Section 281 of the Charities Act 2021 ie to release the permanent endowment for the betterment of Venn Ottery Village Green:</p> <p>Clerk had prepared a report and circulated correspondence recently received from the Charity Commission which confirmed that this resolution could lawfully be passed by the current three trustees of the VOVG Fund; namely, Chair of the Council – Cllr. Burhop, Vice-Chair – Cllr. Carpenter and the EDDC Ward member, Cllr. Val Ranger at a meeting convened for that purpose.</p> <p><i>It was proposed from the Chair that the Finance Committee ask Cllr. Burhop (as Chair of the Parish Council) to arrange this meeting and to recommended that the resolution be passed, whereupon the Charity Commission would be advised and the fund wound up. The endowment funds (£5000) would then be donated to the Parish Council * for the betterment of the Village Green at Venn Ottery. Resolved unanimously.</i></p> <p><i>Clerk/Cllr. Burhop: Please liaise to convene this meeting (virtually if necessary).</i></p> <p><i>Clerk: Please prepare a briefing paper for the 3 attendees providing the legislative evidence for such a resolution.</i></p> <p><i>* It was noted that the £5000 was already held within the Council's earmarked reserves and funds could be vired.</i></p>	<p>Clerk Cllr. Burhop</p>

FC21/029b)	<p>b) To receive update on potential costs of replacement bridge at Venn Ottery Village Green:</p> <p>Representation received from member of public regarding potential build materials for a replacement bridge and to confirm that current structure was close to collapse.</p> <p>After discussion, it was proposed by Chair, seconded by Cllr. Tribble, that an urgent Risk Assessment of the existing bridge be carried out and if it was considered a risk to the public due to structural defects or instability, that the bridge was then to be closed to all public traffic with immediate effect under the delegated authority (and actions) of the Clerk to the Parish Council; this action to be notified to the Council immediately. Furthermore, signage to be placed at all entrance points to the Village Green advising of the bridge closure. Resolved unanimously.</p> <p>Clerk: Please note and action as a matter of extreme urgency.</p> <p>The options for the replacement bridge (which Cllr. Burhop suggested the endowment funds – see e) above – would be earmarked for) were considered and Chair invited further public representations on the subject.</p> <p>Cllr. Burhop proposed that a Bridge Advisory Working Party be established to bring together the Council, members of VOSRA, local residents, the PCC and our Parish Maintenance Contractor to discuss options, build types, materials and the principles of the engineering solution required for the matter to then be brought back to Finance Committee for further consideration and decision on progress. Seconded by Chair. Resolved unanimously.</p> <p>Clerk: Please note and contact all relevant parties to convene an inaugural meeting of this working party.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
	<p><i>Chair proposed that Standing Orders be resumed. Seconded by Cllr. Burhop. Resolved unanimously.</i></p>	
FC21/029c)	<p>c) To consider quotes for repair/improvement of entrance splay at Back Lane car park to provide better amenity and safer access into car park:</p> <p>It was proposed by the Chair that this matter be considered in committee session later in the meeting (FC21/33) in view of the commercial nature of the quotes to be considered. Resolved unanimously.</p>	
FC21/029d)	<p>d) To note receipt of External Auditor’s Unqualified Assurance for Audit Year 2020-21 and to note publication of the Notice of Conclusion of Audit as per legislative requirements:</p> <p>Clerk outlined assurance received and highlighted legislation involved. Noted by all members. No further action required.</p>	

FC21/029f)	<p>f) To consider report from the RFO regarding potential expenditure at the allotment site for the improvement of amenity and to minimise future costs/enhance rental income:</p> <p>RFO suggested to the Chair that this matter be deferred to the Full Council as this item had subsequently been scheduled for consideration at the Ordinary meeting as part of a wider allotment discussion.</p> <p>It was proposed by the Chair that this matter be deferred to Full Council and not discussed in this Finance Committee meeting. Resolved unanimously.</p>	
FC21/029g)	<p>g) To receive update on Cemetery Memorial and Plot Maintenance at St. Luke’s Cemetery and to receive update on correspondence with CWGC re: service personnel memorials:</p> <p>* Commonwealth War Graves Commission</p> <p>Clerk updated members of Fin.Comm. as to recent “tip-testing” exercise and outcomes and on further conversations with residents about the safeguarding of memorial plots in the cemetery. Clerk confirmed that – in accordance with the guidelines laid down – the testing has been completed and no memorials were found to be in any immediate risk of falling that might require remedial action at this time.</p> <p>Clerk also updated members as to correspondence with the CWGC to seek permission to add a plaque to the Cemetery gates to indicate the presence of Service Personnel Memorials within the cemetery. This was a matter which involved the Exeter Diocese (and their consent) and Clerk was taking this matter forwards accordingly.</p> <p>Clerk was asked by Chair to advise whether the four personnel buried after the two World Wars were recognised on the War Memorial on Church Green.</p> <p>Clerk: Please action accordingly and report back.</p> <p>Clerk also reported that he had been in touch with a specialist headstone cleaning contractor and that a quote had been received for the cleaning of the five headstones. Clerk was asked to circulate this to members, to seek further quotes and to ascertain what the advice for cleaning of CWG memorials was.</p> <p>Clerk: Please action accordingly and report back.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
FC21/029h)	<p>h) To consider update on provision and siting of planters around the parish in light of recent DCC Highways site visit:</p> <p>Clerk reported back to Fin.Comm. on quotes obtained for the 8 planters across the parish that have now been consented to by DCC Highways.</p> <p>Due to a technical problem, however, the quotes could not be displayed. Chair asked that these be sent to her for discussion at the next CCEWP meeting re: design, materials and cost. Item to be deferred to next FC meeting.</p> <p>Clerk: Please add to next F/Comm. agenda.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>

FC21/029i)	<p>i) To consider update Cemetery Wall Repair: Clerk reported his continued inability to find a contractor to assist with this specialist repair. Cllr. Burhop suggested a couple of leads (contractors working for church currently) and Cllr. Tribble suggested Dartmoor National Park Authority / English Heritage for points of contact. It was also suggested that Clerk could re-contact Diocese to see if they can suggest anyone (especially as it is essentially their wall that the PC is liable to repair). Chair asked for the matter to remain as a standing Fin.Comm. agenda item. Clerk: please note and follow up leads accordingly. Add onto agenda for forthcoming meetings.</p>	Clerk
	<i>Member of the public left the meeting at 9.25pm</i>	
FC21/030	<p>Matters considered as urgent by presiding Chair: Chair raised the issue of hall hire charges for the CCEWP meetings now that the weather was getting worse and the evenings much darker. RFO confirmed that as the CCEWP was an entity created by the Parish Council, any such meetings represented a legitimate expense of the Council for which a budget existed to meet such costs. RFO asked to be advised of any such room hires so a bill could be anticipated. No further action required. It was also mentioned by RFO that discussions on the 2022-23 budget should ideally begin (at Fin.Comm.) in October. Chair asked that this matter be added to the ORD agenda. Clerk: Please note and add to agenda accordingly.</p>	Clerk
FC21/031	<p>Date and time of next Finance Committee meeting: It was suggested that the next meeting of the Finance Committee be held on Wednesday 20th October 2021, 7pm provisional start time; the meeting to be held at Harpford Hall due to a prior booking at the Pavilion. Clerk: Please note and publicise accordingly. Please book venue.</p>	Clerk
FC21/032	<p>It was proposed by the Chair that, under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Local Government Act 1972, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed. Seconded by Cllr. Tillotson. Resolved unanimously. <i>No members of the public remained in the meeting venue.</i></p>	
FC21/033	<p>Matters to be considered in committee: i) To consider quotes for splay at Back Lane car park (see FC21/029c above). <i>This matter had been deferred to this section of the meeting due to the commercial nature of the quotes being considered. It was proposed by Cllr. Burhop, seconded by Chair, that the Parish Council enter into a contract with Contractor L for the sum of £8494 (net) to provide the surface repairs and improvements to the car park entrance splay to the standard specified by DCC Highways (see specification) to withstand the traffic of Heavy Goods Vehicles (referred to as Heavy Duty in the specification document), such funds as required to be taken from the Parish Council's established Amenity Repair Fund (currently standing at £14500) and subject to confirmation by the contractor that the works will be completed and ready for traffic by the date of the forthcoming Fireworks event (5/11). Resolved unanimously.</i> Clerk: Please note and liaise with contractor accordingly.</p>	Clerk

	<p>ii) To consider quotations for the deep-cleaning and routine daily cleaning of the WC amenity in Roberts Way.</p> <p>Clerk reported no progress as yet but that he had received two further suggestions for cleaners from Cllr. Tribble and was chasing these up. He had also been liaising with the Council's architect to prepare new plans for the single cubicle design for the WC refurbishment. These will be presented to Fin.Comm. as soon as possible as requested. Current challenging conditions re: builder availability and material acquisition may delay project further but Clerk will prepare a briefing report for members when next on agenda to be considered. Ongoing issues at EDDC with WC consultations and Asset Transfer possibilities will also be included. Noted.</p>	
	<p>With no further business to consider, the Chair closed the meeting of the Finance Committee at 9.40pm.</p>	

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Signed as a true record of the meeting above:

Chair: _____

Date: _____

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