



NORTHCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL
Clerk to the Council: Usha Kilich
116D High Street
Northchurch
HP4 3QN
Tel.01442 876911
www.northchurchparishcouncil.gov.uk
Email: clerk@northchurchparishcouncil.gov.uk

**MINUTES OF NORTHCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY
29th March 2021 AT 7 pm (HELD REMOTELY VIA ZOOM)**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jon Clarke	Chair
Mark Somervail	Vice Chair
Neil Pocock	
Beryl Edwards	
Susan Rees	
Lara Pringle	
Michela Capozzi	

ALSO, PRESENT

County Councillor	Douris and three members of the public
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Proper Officer	Mrs U Kilich
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73/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Pocock sent his apologies.

74/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There was no Declaration of Interest to report.

75/20 Public Participation allowed 15 minutes.

Two members of the public informed the Chair they were there to observe the meeting, the third member of the public had questions on the upper site allotment in particular the wood chipping supplied to one of the allotment holders. As the member is not an allotment holder, Cllr Clarke asked the member to liaise directly with Cllr Godfrey Chair of the Allotment Committee, the member agreed.

76/20 MINUTES To approve the minutes of the meeting of 15th February 2021 and Extra ordinary Meeting held on 23 November 2020 and report on matters arising that are not included as an agenda item below.

It was proposed by Cllr Edwards, seconded by Cllr Capozzi, and resolved to approve the minutes of the 15th of February 2021. Cllr Godfrey proposed and seconded by Cllr Somervail and resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd November 2020.

77/20 REPORT FROM BOROUGH/COUNTY COUNCILLORS

To receive a report from County and Borough Councillors

Cllr Clarke reported that he has been a Chair for the last 12 months and thanked Cllr Douris and Cllr Pringle for their professional manner at meetings.

Cllr Douris informed members that Herts Highways have proposed the following three options for the pedestrian barrier;

1. To leave as it is with no barriers
2. Replace barriers as before 2 meters on either side of the dropped curb (standard is 4 meters on either side)
3. Replace with 4meter either side
4. Whichever is chosen it will be done at no charge to NPC

Cllr Edwards asked if we have 4 meters will it go as far as the corner of New Road, to which Cllr Somervail replied it is 20m to the junction. Cllr Douris will confirm and report back. Cllr Pringle would like the barrier on the George and Dragon side, Cllr Somervail is also happy with 4 meters on both sides of the curb. Cllr Edwards proposed, seconded by Cllr Pringle and it was resolved unanimously to go for 4 meters on either side.

Other reports

- Cutting back the hedge at the crossing by Recreation Ground will take place
- Westfield Road footpath are being cleared in preparation for micro surfacing
- The Meads pavement which was not in good condition has been replaced
- Ashlyn's School has created additional bulge 30 spaces, those in Northchurch area will get a place at Ashlyn's School this year.

Cllr Pringle's Report

Road Safety Working Party

Cllr Pringle informed members that a meeting took place on the 22nd March to resolve and approve the following;

- Cllr Pringle informed members that she had written a response to Dacorum Borough Council to extend the Local Plan, the proposal was rejected.
- Cllr Pringle reported that a letter was sent to a bus company, as no response has been received, Cllr Pringle proposed to send another letter asking for a response to the original letter about the buses "idling" causing air pollution.
- Cllr Pringle informed members on a strategic approach to speed management in Northchurch that Working Group Party members have expressed a need for a more strategic approach to road safety. Cllr Pringle raised concerns in Northchurch including the Go20 petition and to view previous speed management strategy as it was too restrictive to all the changes that the residents wanted. The Go20 petition presentation at HCC in 2018 led to the rewriting of the Speed Management Strategy across Herts and a review of road safety between Pea Lane and billet Lane. It was anticipated that the New Road Safety Strategy for Herts will enable NPC to move forward with the strategy.
Cllr Pringle proposed that NPC write to Mike Jarrett to invite him to come to Northchurch and meet the member of the Road Safety Working Party to discuss further improvement strategy.
- Cllr Pringle informed members that a new Speed Indicator Device has been installed on Bridgewater Hill through the Police Commissioners grant.

- Cllr Pringle informed members that a new Police Commissioners Funding grant is now opened to be completed by 2nd April. Cllr Somervail and Cllr Capozzi will assist Go20 in completing the application.
- Cllr Pringle wanted to get a realistic quote on installing double yellow lines on Mandelyns and Darrs Lane and to ascertain how much NPC will contribute towards the project.
- Cllr Pringle advised that she had a meeting with Claire Hamilton (CEO at Dacorum Borough Council) Cllr Pringle proposed to invite DBC officers to come and visit Northchurch Parish Council, to highlight the identity of NPC is very different to that of Berkhamsted, to show the officers around NPC this will assist the officers on plans for NPC.

78/20 Clerk's Report

Re-opening of Social Centre – The Clerk circulated an email on the opening hours for the Social Centre.

PCC Road Safety Funding and update from last two applications – Cllr Pringle covered the item in her report.

HAPTC Unitary Survey – The Clerk circulated the email on the subject the closing date is May, Cllr Clarke informed members that this will be discussed the F&GP Committee.

Crime in Northchurch – Cllr Pringle reported on the increase in crime on Covert Road and Cover Close which is of great concern. Cllr Pringle reported that Berkhamsted Town Council have used their funding for extra PCSO with successful results. Cllr Pringle suggested NPC could contribute a certain percentage to get the share of the PCSO towards the patrolling. Cllr Clarke informed members that this will be discussed at the next Finance and General-Purpose Committee and report back to Full Council.

Meeting dates for 2021/22 – The Clerk circulated proposal meeting dates for 2021/22.

79/20 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSE

a. To investigate and report Financial Year to Date

The Clerk circulated the YTD Report, the Clerk reported that apart from YTD Summary another report on committee expenditure will be produced, this will allow Committees to monitor their budget.

b. To discuss O2 Mast.

Cllr Clarke informed members that the contract for O2 is up for renewal it has been indicated that the annual allowance will be reduced. Cllr Capozzi will be meeting the representative from Cluttons before finalising. Cllr Somervail said there is a new law that stipulates that the tenants only have to pay on the value of the land.

c. To consider St Mary's School Association

Cllr Clarke proposed to contribute towards a grant application of £585, seconded by Cllr Capozzi and resolved unanimously.

d. The following policies are due for their annual renewal.

It was reported that the policies have been updated and approved by F&GP Committee. All policies have been, Cllr Clarke asked for anything to be changed on from circulated and to anything changed from numbers 1 to 5 anything changed from 6 to 10 Cllr Somervail proposed and seconded by Cllr Capozzi and resolved unanimously to adopt the policies.

- (i) Standing Orders
- (ii) Financial Regulations
- (iii) Risk Assessment
- (iv) Code of Conduct
- (v) Complaints Procedure
- (vi) Health & Safety
- (vii) Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy
- (viii) Grievance Policy
- (ix) Dignity at Work Policy

e. **To consider recreation ground:**

Cllr Clarke informed members that Recreation Ground Committee has been working flat out, Cllr Clarke thanked Cllr Somervail for his contribution. The catchphrase is "something for everyone". Cllr Clarke reported that intense research has taken place, ie visiting other parks, speaking to councillors and representatives from companies that provide the equipment. Cllr Clarke stated that the plans will give a lot more value for money than other parish/town councils have managed to get. This is purely a presentation and not open for voting.

Activities to look at

1. Improving the football and basketball – all the equipment comes to just under £20k
2. Expanding the playground – NPC currently has two baby swings, a toddler slide and a climbing frame. A proposal is to install equipment in the area to challenge those under 10 years of age, outside the play area there will be some benches and a gate, cost £35k
3. Improving the skateboard equipment scooters and bikes skate parks need refurbishing removing the bollards, new smooth tarmac to be installed - cost £15k
4. Adult exercise equipment will be fixed at a cost of £15k. The barcode can be used with a smart phone to show how the equipment can be used.
5. Install zip wire, cost £10k, this is one item that has been requested by all ages.
6. Improving paths, benches and shrubs, Cllr Edwards informed it would be nice for the elderly community to enjoy somewhere to seat with some planting facing towards Tring - two benches there but not so close with some gap. SSRT has quoted at £6500 for benches and for the plants. Cllr Douris has offered £1,000 from his locality budget.

Time plan

April; NPC to send vision and specification to DBC Parks they will prepare the tenders out on NPC specification to play equipment providers
May; DBC Parks send tenders to the play equipment suppliers
June; suppliers will send NPC their designs
June; involve the residents to choose their preferred design asks residents to choose their favourite design
After summer holidays installation (2/3 weeks)

At the extraordinary meeting, Cllr Clarke will ask council members to this plan for NPC to invest up to £105k to improve the recreation ground.

f. To approve the recreation ground car park closing time as follows:

Option A

From 1st April 2021 close gate at 18:00 (7 months)

From 1st November 2021 close at 16:00 (5 months)

Option B

From 1st April 2021: close gate at 18:00

From 1st June 2021: close gate at 20:00

From 1st Oct 2021: close gate at 18:00

From 1st Nov 2021: close gate at 16:00

Cllr Somervail informed members that Trish Pocock would not agree to 8pm closing, there is some benefit to closing the car park at 6pm so that there is a quiet time for locals, especially seniors.

Cllr Somervail proposed approximately align with British Summer Time:

From 1st April 2021: close gate at 18:00 (no change)

From 1st November 2021: close gate at 16:00 (i.e., extended by 1 month)

Seconded by Cllr Clarke and resolved unanimously.

g. To review River Bulbourne Field and to consider awarding the Bainbridge Trophy

Cllr Clarke informed members that the River Bulbourne Field is closing to the public as the owner wants to preserve the land for the nature reserve. There is no public right of way.

Cllr Somervail proposed to award the Bainbridge Trophy to Trish Pocock for her 21 years contribution to NPC, Cllr Pringle seconded. Resolved unanimously.

Cllr Edwards proposed to award Trish Pocock £500 as a one-off payment for her contribution. Seconded by Cllr Pringle and resolved unanimously.

Cllr Edwards vote on Bainbridge financial award was not on the agenda so the vote was invalid and will be included in the next meeting.

h. To review rent agreement for the office

Cllr Clarke informed members that during the pandemic the Clerk has been working from home for the last year. If the Clerk continues to work from home, NPC can make savings of £2400 rent and a further £1000 for the office wi-fi. Storage space would be required and to hold meetings. Sunnyside Rural Trust has offered to store the filing cabinets and provide meeting rooms for free. Cllr Capozzi proposed seconded by Cllr Godfrey resolved that the Clerk would work from home.

Cllr Capozzi proposed that F&GP will deal with the mobile telephone and PO Box, seconded by Cllr Godfrey, and resolved unanimously.

i. To consider holding Annual Parish Meeting

Cllr Clarke asked for the item to be deferred to the Extraordinary Meeting on the 12th April 2021.

j. To review and vote on the Council's aims

Cllr Clarke proposed, seconded by Cllr Capozzi and resolved unanimously to update the NPC website with the Council's aims.

The meeting closed at 20.45 pm.

80/20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Monday 17th May 2021 @ 7.00pm via Zoom.

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Cllr Clarke Chair

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Date