North Newnton Parish Council (Virtual) Meeting

Monday 7th September 2020 at 7 p.m.

Minutes

Due to COVID-19 this was a virtual meeting. In accordance with the Local Government Act (LGA) 1972, Sch 12 paras 10 (2) (b) as amended by The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020 into force to allow local authorities to conduct meetings remotely.

Present: Chair of the meeting - Cllr Marcus Stoneham (MS), Cllr Olivia Campbell Slight (OCS), Cllr David Brisker (DB) (Vice -Chair), Cllr Mac McLean (MM) (Vice-Chair) and Cllr Tom Ellen (TE). In attendance: Gillian Tatum Clerk, Wiltshire Councillor Paul Oatway and 2 Parishioners.

The virtual meeting started at 7pm

1 **Absence apologies and Declaration of interests.** No Apologies. Members are bound by the provisions of the Code of Conduct and are required to declare either personal or prejudicial interests; None

2 **Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 6th July 2020.** The minutes were passed by all Councillors and signed by the Chair as a true record.

3 **Adjournment. Welcome to the Public.**
A parishioner on behalf of his wife (who was unable to attend) wanted to raise in pursuit of item 8(iii) Dog Fouling about the need for dog waste bins across the whole of the Parish and in particular covering North Newnton. He referred to the fact that other small parishes such as Manningford and Rushall has dog waste bins that appear to be emptied by Wiltshire Council. He acknowledged that they may cost £300-£400 pounds but that with new housing development there was a need to provide these facilities.
Councillors were sympathetic to the request, although not sure if Wiltshire Council would empty the bins without additional charge noting in the past posters had been put up reminding owners to clear up after their dogs (incidentally it was noted that dog faeces are regarded as "household waste" and can be put in these bins at home). A motion was proposed by the Chair (and agreed) to ask the Clerk to liaise with other parishes (Manningford and Rushall for example) to learn from their experience of putting up dog bins, costs and collections) and in the interim dog fouling signs to be put on the 4 main notice boards. It was additionally agreed to ask Woodbridge Public House for dog waste provision on their land for any campers' dog's use. **Action: Clerk to follow up with other Parishes and report back to Councillors.** **Clerk**
Wiltshire Councillor Paul Oatway reported that Wiltshire Council still operating as normal although most staff working from home and would continue to do so; Agreed until January 2021 (but under review in case of a second wave). Area Board and CATG meetings still virtual and he was looking any larger venues such as Bouverie Hall for future larger space COVID-19 assessed that might allow physical meetings soon.

4 **Planning Applications Planning; To obtain the statutory view of the Parish Council**
None

5 **Village Hall.**
A written update report from Hilcott Village Hall was read out by the Clerk (having been previously distributed to Councillors along with an updated budget (Carolyn Whistler had given apologies to attending).
A personal statement was also read out by Cllr Mac Mclean and is published here in

full;

PERSONAL STATEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR MAC McLean TO FELLOW COUNCILLORS MADE AT NNPC MEETING 7TH SEPTEMBER 2020

I have read the written update from the Trustees of the Village Hall along with the accompanying forecast of draw downs from the ring fenced £5000 allocated in the 2020/2021 budget; and as the longest serving Councillor on the PC I would like to add the following and would be obliged if this could be added to the minutes of the meeting (Gill I will email you a copy after the meeting).

Village Halls often provide the only place to meet within a rural community; they can offer vital and diverse support to improve the quality of life for all and in particular those least able to travel to more distant centres of support. It is for these very reasons that Lord Normanton gave to the Parish a plot of land in the early 1900's and on it was built the first Parish Meeting Place.

Village Halls are normally charitable community facilities that are held in trust for the purposes set out by the Recreational Charities Act 1958 and fulfil the needs for community-related activities.

As the local statutory body NNPC, in keeping with the majority of Parish Councils throughout England, are proactive in providing financial support for their local Village Hall by providing regular funding through the local precept. This in itself recognises the importance of Village Halls within the community.

In 2019 the Trustees of the Hilcott Village Hall, after the hall was deemed unfit for purpose, determined that it was necessary to rebuild a new one and thereby maintain the legacy left to the Parish by Lord Normanton. The PC raised a £5000 sum through the 2020/21 precept allocated to the Village Hall Project.

Subsequent realisation of a time lag whilst a New Village Hall is being created, has led to some parishioners suggesting alternatives and as a responsible Parish Council, NNPC allowed exploration of these ideas. This has resulted in a current situation where it is deemed desirable for a Public non virtual meeting to take place involving all interested parties NNPC, PCC, The Village Hall Committee and the community to discuss the way forward. It is now likely that such a meeting may not take place this year. And the final outcome could result in two community orientated facilities.

In the meantime the Parish Council has suspended release of any monies to support the ongoing Village Hall project, probably not expecting such a lengthy pause in proceedings.

With this in mind, taking the content of the V H Trustees report into consideration and to demonstrate the moral obligation to the community as a Responsible Parish Council I strongly recommend the matter be re-examined and that the ring fenced funds should be released thereby maintaining the Parish Council's standing as a proactive local statutory body.

The rebuilding of the Hilcott Village Hall will continue – and I believe there is no reason why NNPC could not support TWO facilities if required.

Councillor Mac McLean

Councillors digested the update regarding the Village Hall and discussed the request to confirm the costs presented for the ongoing project. It was agreed to continue to pause the funding until phase 2 has been completed with Parishioner consultation. The reply is published here in full;

Dear Carolyn,

Hilcott Village Hall

Thank you for your update produced for the Parish Council meeting on the 7th

September 2020 which was read out in full to Councillors along with sight of the financial sheet you sent us.

Councillors considered the information you supplied about the Village Hall.

At the last Parish Council Meeting on the 6th July it was resolved to "pay the invoice submitted and no further until a detailed meeting has been had (an extraordinary meeting to cover the village hall, other options, alternatives and "in conjunction projects") and the Parish Councils' view has not changed.

With the updated timetable you have now presented Stage 2 is ongoing with submission of the concept design for public comment in September. The Parish Council has already agreed to host this design (and 3-D picture) on the Parish Website (Minutes 6th July 2020) after sight of the concept design. Your next projected spend is for Stage 3 (part 1) in October – "Develop design with project team".

The Parish Council therefore respectfully asks that the public consultation take place on the Village Hall Plans giving time for feedback before you proceed to Stage 3 and therefore will still pause any consideration of further funding until this has taken place. This may mean a little delay on your subsequent timetable as the next Parish Council meeting is 2nd November 2020.

To summarise the Parish Council continues to pause any further funding until we have received feedback from the parish on the current draft plans/concept, scheduled for this month and early October.

As you are aware we are fully committed to getting all parties together but COVID-19 requirements make arranging an open public meeting at this time still difficult. We will continue to monitor this and hope to support the arrangement of a meeting as soon as practicable.

Cllrs asked for time to reflect on the statement by Cllr MM and the subsequent reply is published here in full;

Response to the Personal STATEMENT TO NNPC MEETING 7TH SEPTEMBER 2020 of Councillor Mac McClean

1. **We are all in full agreement that rural village halls offer support and improve quality of life to parishioners.**
2. **Agree that Parish Councils have an obligation to financially support meeting places in the parish to fulfil the above requirement.**
3. **Extract from the statement; "The Village Hall Committee and the community to discuss the way forward. It is now likely that such a meeting may not take place this year. And the final outcome could result in two community orientated facilities".**
4. **Agree with these comments. We would also add that some parishioners have approached the Parish Council requesting exploration of other ideas to fulfil the need for village hall space as they believe the current village hall plans/concept does not meet their requirements of a modern village hall space.**
5. **It is our opinion that the Parish Council also has a moral obligation and responsibility to ensure that any ring fenced funds are spent on a village hall space that meets the demands of the modern world/parishioner views and achieves financial sustainability through the creation of revenue and support from the Parish Council. It is also our opinion that the current draft plans and concept for the rebuilding of the village hall does not meet these requirements. As stated last night in the Parish Council meeting it is our opinion that we pause any further funding until we have received feedback from the parish on the current draft plans/concept, scheduled for this month**

and early October.

6. **We agree that the NNPC could support two facilities if required, as long as these facilities could achieve an expected level of financial sustainability and meet the needs of the parish.**
7. **For clarity we are committed to creating a parish space that fulfils the current and long term needs of the North Newnton Parish and believe the Parish Council should offer current and ongoing financial support to achieve this objective. It is also our opinion that further cost effective options could be provided by the current appointed architect and village hall project team that may allow us to achieve sustainability and the above objective in a more reasonably financed solution than the current proposal.**
8. **We appreciate that the current Coronavirus situation has delayed many timings but speed is not of the essence here. It is more important to make the correct decisions that have the full backing of the Parish, which in turn has been allowed time and opportunity to examine all the options.**

Councillors; Marcus Stoneham (Chair), Olivia Campbell Slight, David Brisker (Vice-Chair) and Tom Ellen

09/09/2020

6 **Neighbourhood Plan**

Due to COVID-19 councillors have not yet been able to meet with neither North Wessex Downs (NWD) nor Wiltshire Council (Sophie Davies). A new Planning White Paper has been published and NP's will need to be renewed every 2 yrs. which is very arduous. Agreed Joint Cllr meeting to be progressed and those with NWD**. Action: Clerk to support setting up meetings** **Clerk**

7 **COVID -19 Volunteer Update & Exit Strategy**

Clerk reported that our volunteer group are still willing to continue supporting residents if the need increases again and also are aware of the Pewsey Group who can assist as required.

8 **Correspondence – For Information and discussion as appropriate**

1. Bottlesford Bench; Cllr MM had spoken with the parishioner who had informed the PC of the history of the bench and that its cost had already been written off. Agreed no further action required; Clerk has removed from Asset Register.

2. Complaint about blockage of footpath at Wilds Farm; 2 complaints have been received about the inaccessibility of footpath 16, Hilcott as its interaction with Wilds Farm (gates are locked and barbed wire over stile. Parishioners to be reminded they can report issues directly using the Wiltshire App tool. **Action: Clerk to raise with Wiltshire Council.**

3. Dog Fouling; see section 3**. Action: Cllr MM to forward Posters to Clerk to put up on the Parish Council notice boards.**

4. Bottlesford Post Box; Cllr DB reported that the front of the post box had been stolen along with the contents. A new front has now been put up by the Post Office but not yet operational.

5. Relaunch Great British September Clean 12th September 2020; the Clerk presented the revised guidance from Tidy Britain; small groups not exceeding 6 people and to invite volunteers directly, litter picking alone or in pairs with COVID-19 measures including spraying of equipment by volunteers. It was therefore decided that the "normal social litter cleaning event could not take place Saturday 12th as originally planned. **Action; Clerk to meet with Cllr DB to talk though measures and how we can undertake some small group clean ups.** **Clerk** **Clerk**

6. Abandoned caravan North Newnton and complaint to Parish Council and the Police; Cllr MS reported that a couple of parishioners had approached him telling him they had reported to the police intruders using the abandoned caravan on the green plot (next to the Bungalow) who were following up the complaint. **Cllr DB &**

7. Caravan on ex-garage site, North Newnton; Cllr MS reported parishioners had remarked about the caravan on the site and in particular the gas bottles (concern they are not stored adequately). Wiltshire Council have been informed directly by the Parishioners. **Clerk**

9 **Governance and Procedures**

1. **Councillor Vacancies; We still have 2 vacancies and welcome interest from anyone living or working in North Newnton (for 2 yrs.) to contact the Clerk or any Councillor for more information .**

1 **Finance**

0 **(1) Bank Reconciliation (April – July 2021);** Clerk reported balance of £4520.92 with unpresented cheques (Treasures Account).

(2) 20/21 Budget review & changes; Cllrs MS & OCS had met with the Clerk to review the budget. Changes made to budget lines covering AGM/Meetings (as no AGM £100 reduced. Looking at combining headings covering grass cutting at 7 starts, highway verges and St James Cemetery to improve management.

(3) **Cheques to be signed/ratified;** Ch. No. 680 £748.90 Hilcott Village Hall, Ch. No. 681 £8.67 Clerk home working allowance, Ch. No. 682 £90 Gent grass cutting Bottlesford, 683 Ch. No. 683 Clerk expenses £53.67, Ch. No. 684 £231.60 Community Heartbeat Trust, Ch. No. 685 £230 Parish Council Websites. All agreed.

(4) **S106; Cllr PO reported back positive news from Acorn that they were the landowner at the time of drafting the S106 and so should be the signatory of the Deed of Variation. He also confirmed that the Director Mark Baker would be happy for it to be varied to cover the footpath at North Newnton particularly as school children use the route to gain access to the bus stop on Upavon road. Action: Clerk & Cllr MM to follow up to get the new Deed of Variation drafted and signed.** **Cllr MM/ Clerk**

1 **Future Items**

1 **Village Hall, Neighbourhood Plan.**

The virtual meeting closed at 8.35 pm

Gillian Tatum Clerk to NNPC Clerk@nnpc.org.uk Tel 07979866387 14/09/2020