

## NEWTON-WITH-CLIFTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 7th January 2021 commencing at 7.15 p.m. (via Zoom)

Chair: Councillor Mrs. B. Duckworth (chairman)

Councillors: S. Baugh, Mrs. J. C. Benson, Mrs. G. Bevan, Mrs. J. McCormick, A. Metcalf, and Mrs. J. M. Stapleton.

Borough/County Councillor: None.

Police: None.

Members of the public: None.

The chairman explained that the convened meeting was an ordinary meeting of the council and via Zoom, advised that comments or observations from members of the public are invited to be made in the open forum session prior to the meeting and that it would be appropriate to restrict these comments and observations to a three minute time limit.

The chairman emphasised that questions or comments from the public area will not be permitted during the meeting.

### a) **FORUM.**

#### i) **Parishioner matters.**

No issues raised.

#### ii) **Police report.**

In the absence of any police representation the chairman referred members to the report for the month of December 2020, copies of which had previously been circulated to members.

## **1. PROCEDURAL MATTERS.**

### a) **Apologies for absence.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C. L. Bannister and Councillor P. Collins.

### b) **Chairman's communications.**

The chairman welcomed those who had joined the meeting and wished everyone a very Happy New Year.

### c) **Declarations of interest.**

The chairman reminded members at the commencement of the meeting that any direct or indirect pecuniary, prejudicial or other interest should be declared in accordance with the requirements of Council's Standing Orders and the revised Code of Conduct adopted on 9th November 2012 in compliance with The Localism Act 2011.

Councillor Mrs. G. Bevan formally Declared an Interest relating to the Friends of Newton Community Park (FoNCP) agenda items. Councillor Mrs. B. Duckworth (chairman) formally Declared an Interest relating to the Friends of Newton Community Park (FoNCP) agenda items. Councillor Mrs. J. McCormick formally Declared an Interest with regard to any finance related Friends of Newton Community Park (FoNCP) agenda items.

### d) **Signing of the minutes.**

#### i) **Council meeting 10th December 2020.**

The chairman put it to council that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 10th December 2020, as previously circulated, be approved and signed by the chairman as a correct record. It was Proposed, Seconded and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 10th December 2020 be approved and signed by the chairman as a correct record.

Signing of the minutes contd...

Following an enquiry by the chairman the clerk advised that; Agenda require to be signed for the 19th November 2020, 10th December 2020 and 7th January 2021 meetings. Minutes require to be signed for the 19th November 2020, 10th December 2020 and, in due course, the 7th January 2021 meetings.

e) **Matters arising from the minutes.**

No matters raised.

**2. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION.**

a) Ongoing Lancashire County Council (LCC) matters; including parish highway safety, Newton-with-Clifton.

i) Vehicle parking and waiting restrictions, School Lane, Newton-with-Scales.

The chairman referred to this matter and the clerk advised that, although LCC had not formally replied to council communications, it was likely the authority had attended on site and been involved with the issuing of “parked badly” tickets and that police had recently been deployed. Given the prevailing situation regarding school attendance only by children of critical workers, and vulnerable children, the parking problem had to some degree been mitigated.

b) New LCC matters.

i) Driving instruction.

A member referred to a perceived increase in learner driver instruction in Clifton Village that sometimes could be problematic to parishioners. It was considered that one reason might be the area is part of a driving test route, that the information should be received and that any enquiries or other action by the council was currently unnecessary.

c) Street scene matters; including the district/parish street cleansing agreement and grant.

i) Bus shelter A583/Blackpool Road (Bryning Lane/ westbound – vandalised bench, fly tipping &c.

Following an enquiry by the chairman the clerk explained that Fylde council’s (FBC) approach is to try and break the cycle of anti-social behaviour at this location and to leave repair/replacement bench work until sometime in January 2021, as earlier replacement encourages further vandalism. However, in the interim the shelter has been made safe for use. FBC had advised the replacement bench will be of composite material and bolted.

**3. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL.**

a) Planning applications.

The chairman referred to the planning applications consultation details of which had previously circulated to members for observations.

**20/0806** First floor rear extension including installation of external flue on west facing elevation and insertion of enlarged first floor window on east facing elevation of dwelling at “Manor Lodge”, Preston Old Road, Clifton, Preston, PR4 0ZA. Proposed, Seconded and **RESOLVED** that it be recommended the application is granted planning permission and that the local planning authority be advised accordingly.

**\*20/0878** Single storey side/rear extension to link dwelling house with detached outbuilding at Salwick Hall, Station Road, Salwick, Clifton, Preston PR4 OYJ. Proposed, Seconded and **RESOLVED** that it be recommended the application is granted planning permission and that the local planning authority be advised accordingly.

**\*20/0880** Single storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory at No 3 Rowan Close, Clifton, Preston, PR4 0YQ. Proposed, Seconded and **RESOLVED** that it be recommended the application is granted planning permission and that the local planning authority be advised accordingly.

\*The chairman referred to the above applications.

Planning contd...

The two applications had been submitted at a meeting held on Thursday 10th December 2020 and members considered that in view of the late notifications insufficient time had been made available to submit recommendations.

Subsequently it had been agreed that members would consider the applications and advise the clerk by Friday 18th December 2020 and that the local planning authority will then be advised of the majority view of the council and recommendations will be formally submitted for retrospective approval, as above, at the meeting scheduled for Thursday 7th January 2021.\*

b) Fylde Borough Council Planning Committee (FBC) planning decisions/notifications/parish recommendations.

i) None reported.

#### **4. PARKS AND OPEN SPACES.**

a) Parks, open spaces, rural area grass verges, grass-cutting contract, receive report from authorised officer/liaison member in respect of the parks and open spaces maintenance contract.

In the absence of the authorised officer/liaison member in respect of the contract the clerk reported maintenance is ongoing, subject to prevailing weather conditions, in accordance with the contract conditions and specifications.

b) Flower/Shrub beds maintenance contract - receive report from authorised officer/liaison member in respect of the flower/shrub beds maintenance contract.

The authorised officer/liaison member in respect of the contract reported maintenance is ongoing, subject to prevailing weather conditions, in accordance with the contract conditions and specifications.

i) Half barrels.

The contractor had arranged for planting of pansies in the half barrels.

ii) Flower bed(s), Bryning Lane, Newton-with-Scales.

The authorised officer/liaison member reported the wood surround is rotten and requires to be replaced, preferably with a more durable recycled plastic product. It was agreed that the authorised officer/liaison member obtain further advice from the contractor and obtain estimates as to the repair costs.

iii) Flower bed(s), Clifton.

The authorised officer/liaison member reported the wood surrounds of a number of the Clifton flower beds are rotten and require to be replaced, preferably with a more durable recycled plastic product.

It was agreed that the authorised officer/liaison member obtain further advice from the contractor and obtain estimates as to the repair costs.

c) Friends of Newton Community Park (FoNCP) receive report, if any, from member.

The clerk referred to the previously circulated report by the council representative member on FoNCP which was taken as read. As an update the liaison member referred to the Champion Grant from County Councillor Rigby, the Lancashire County Champion for Parishes (LCC).

FoNCP is required to submit a monitoring form detailing the project and financial evidence within four weeks of the project completing or by 31st March 2021, whichever is earliest.

If FoNCP is unable to complete the project or meet the project outcomes as detailed in the application, or if there is a delay in commencing the project, LCC must be notified. It was agreed that the liaison member should contact LCC to discuss the reasons for the delay e.g. prevailing COVID-19 pandemic together with other complications and how matters may be resolved.

The liaison member also reported that the Duchy of Lancaster had awarded FoNCP a £500 Benevolent Fund grant towards additional picnic benches.

Parks contd...

In accordance with the requirements of Council's Standing Orders and the revised Code of Conduct adopted on 9th November 2012 in compliance with The Localism Act 2011 Councillor Mrs. G. Bevan formally Declared an Interest in the matter and, other than presenting the report update, took no part in the discussion or voting thereon. In accordance with the requirements of Council's Standing Orders and the revised Code of Conduct adopted on 9th November 2012 in compliance with The Localism Act 2011 Councillor Mrs. B. Duckworth (chairman) formally Declared an Interest in the matter and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon. In accordance with the requirements of Council's Standing Orders and the revised Code of Conduct adopted on 9th November 2012 in compliance with The Localism Act 2011 Councillor Mrs. J. McCormick formally Declared an Interest in the matter and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

d) Footway resurfacing, William Pickles Park, Clifton.

The chairman referred to this item and a member reported that the council's grass cutting contractor, aware of the council's planned resurfacing, had introduced the member to a contractor who had subsequently conducted a site survey. A quote should be available for the next meeting. The recommended specification is for a wider footway, so as to comply with disabled access provisions, concrete edging on field side and replacement fencing as necessary. The contractor also suggested that the complete section of footway needs to be resurfaced i.e. up to entrance to the millennium garden. Two members explained that in due course additional quotes may also be provided by 2NO local contractors.

e) Use of playing field, and ancillary facilities, adjacent Newton-with-Clifton Village Hall (NWCVH) - consider request by Kirkham Juniors Football Club,(KJFC).

The chairman referred to this item and explained that NWCVH treasurer had not yet provided an update. Following the chairman's enquiry members acknowledged receiving NWCVH terms of reference, conveyance document, accounts for two financial years up to 31st December 2019 as previously circulated by the chairman.

f) Tree replacement arising from dieback disease that is affecting Ash trees.

The chairman referred to this item and a member explained; following discussion with a local tree surgeon packages of trees supplied by the Woodland Trust had been assessed and selections made as appropriate for both Newton Hall Park and William Pickles Park areas (mix of 105NO saplings for each area). However, Woodlands Trust was not currently accepting orders online due to some technical issues. Also the local contractor had explained a protocol that was not consistent with that recommended by Fylde council's arboriculture officer (FBC) i.e. conduct a parish wide assessment of the number and location of trees to ascertain the scale of the problem. towards the end of April 2021 when, with trees fully in leaf any diseased trees will be more readily identified. The local contractor suggested that this delay in assessment will likely be more expensive and will cause more tree surgery to be required involving the hire of hydraulic machinery as trees in a more advanced stage of disease may be unsafe to climb. A member suggested more accurate results would be achieved by conducting surveys when trees are both in leaf and not in leaf. It was agreed that; a member will continue to process, when possible, an order with the Woodlands Trust, two members will liaise with FBC and the local tree surgeon contractor in arranging a survey of Ash trees in the parish.

g) Provision of CCTV, Newton Hall Park, School Lane, Newton-with-Scales.

i) CCTV, Newton Hall Park, School Lane, Newton-with-Scales.

The chairman referred to this matter and the clerk reported that following an enquiry with Kirkham town council details had been provided relating to its CCTV contractor. Subsequently a site visit was arranged and the contractor was advised of the council requirements for the area. A number of technical issues required to be addressed, but it was agreed that the most suitable parish building to install a recording box is Newton-with-Clifton Village Hall.

Parks contd...

The contractor is to provide a detailed report in due course which will be circulated to members. For costing purposes, both capital and revenue, council may also consider it appropriate to obtain a second quotation. The clerk advised in due course it may be necessary to advise the Information Commissioners Office that the council registration should be amended to include CCTV operations and ensure compliance with General Data Protection regulations. The chairman explained an understanding that Blackpool council provide a CCTV monitoring service which council may want to consider at some point. The clerk confirmed that incidents requiring investigation should be downloaded and recordings delivered directly to the police

h) Provision of memorial bench for former council chairman, member and Clifton parishioner to be located at William Pickles Park, Clifton Lane, Clifton.

The chairman referred to this matter details of which had previously been circulated to members. A member reported an informal discussion with the family and a preferred location on the park had been agreed. Discussion ensued and it was agreed that council will require any additional bench to be similar to some already in situ on the park i.e. recycled brown plastic "Reston" or similar seat as provided by its previous suppliers. The clerk explained the family had been advised of the types of benches, prices including delivery and installation, is willing to proceed on this basis and council therefore unanimously agreed to the request for a memorial bench.

i) William Pickles Park, Clifton Lane, Clifton - reinstatement grounds and sewer work following collapsed drain.

A member referred to this matter and advised that the contracted work had commenced today 7th January 2021. On completion of the work a member agreed to contact Fylde parks requesting the swings be replaced.

j) Lancashire Wildlife Trust(LWT)/Natural England - great crested newt ponds within the Fylde borough.

The chairman referred to this matter explaining that a Fylde borough council conservation ranger is to contact the two parish council representatives and arrange a mutually convenient meeting to determine how the matter may be progressed.

## **5. FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS.**

a) Approve invoices for payment.

i) List 1.

Proposed, Seconded and **RESOLVED** that the following invoices be paid.

T. A. Pawson T/A PDQ Garden Services.	Litter bin operations, Newton and Clifton 8th, 15th, 20th, 22nd and 29th November 2020.	£263.55 Vat £52.71	£316.26
Pete Marquis	Street sweeping operations, Newton and Clifton 9th,10th, & 11th December 2020.	£520.00 Vat £104.00	£624.00
Paul Gregory T/a Acer Contracts.	Flower & shrub beds and floral displays December 2020.	£976.58 Vat £195.32	£1171.90
T. Pawson T/A PDQ Garden Services.	Grass cutting contract maintenance December 2020.	£1722.17 Vat £344.43	£2066.60
T. A. Pawson T/A PDQ Garden Services.	SpID operations, Newton. December 2020.	£25.00 Vat 5.00	£30.00
			£4208.76

Finance contd...

ii) Invoices submitted at meeting.

None received.

iii) Amenity cleansing invoices.

The clerk referred to the anticipated invoice from PDQ for amenity cleansing in December 2020. Following discussion it was agreed that on receiving the invoice, it be circulated to members, payment can be processed and retrospectively approved at the meeting scheduled for Thursday 4th February 2021. The clerk referred to invoicing from CLB Cleaning Services (CLB) . It was explained that following discussion with CLB it had been agreed that once all the non-contract amenity cleansing invoices are received a position be determined as at 31st December 2020 and CLB will invoice accordingly. Subsequent invoicing for January, February and March 2021 will be similarly determined once all the non-contract amenity cleansing invoices are received for those periods and a position determined as at 31st March 2021 i.e. end of the contract period, CLB will invoice accordingly. This protocol is in accordance with the decision of the council at its 19th November 2020 meeting

b) Consider for approval budget 2021/22.

The chairman referred to the above item and then invited comments and observations from members.

i) Following enquiries and observations by the chairman relating to the provision for dealing with Ash dieback the clerk explained it is in anticipation of expenditure on William Pickles Park and open space areas for both villages. Open space areas include for example land off Silver Street, Clifton (“Clifton Triangle”) and Hill Crescent, Newton-with-Scales although this area had not previously been identified as having any Ash dieback issues. Similarly Newton Hall Park, School Lane Newton-with-Scales had not previously been identified as having any Ash dieback issues, however both these areas may subsequently be assessed as warranting additional/replacement tree planting. At this stage in the assessment of the problem the budget provision is very much an approximation in terms of cost and affected areas.

ii) Following enquiries and observations by the chairman relating to Newton-with-Clifton village hall expenditure the clerk explained this includes funding the insurance premium and provision for repairs and maintenance expenditure usually of a non-routine type e.g. central heating boiler, ancillary equipment, roof repairs &c. Council is not committed to the expenditure and the £2500 is a contingency item only. Discussion ensued relating to the desirability of the Newton-with-Clifton village hall management committee (NWCVHC) being totally independent of the council and how this might best be achieved. Concern was also expressed relating to the reported reserves of the NWCVHC. The chairman agreed to liaise with the NWCVHC treasurer relating to this matter and the council NWCVHC representative member provided an opinion that the council is not at risk of any significant exposure in the event of NWCVHC becoming other than self-sufficient financially.

iii) Following enquiries and observations by the chairman, relating to Newton Hall Park - Community Park Improvement Programme expenditure (CPIP) the clerk explained that the report relates to a revenue budget and the CPIP is of a capital nature. Council policy is clearly stated in the minutes relating to affording future finance from its reserves, as opposed to revenue, to support the CPIP and has been the rationalisation for setting the level of precept in recent years. In subsequent years the value of any new recreational equipment would appear on the balance sheet if accounting policies are consistently applied, however a large amount of CPIP expenditure will not enhance the asset value of the park itself, notwithstanding the anticipated visual amenity improvements.

iv) Following enquiries and observations by a member relating to Lancashire County Council highways authority verge areas (LCC) the clerk explained that the council has an arrangement with LCC to deliver grass cutting on highway grass verges in built-up areas. LCC continue to provide this service in non-built-up areas.

Historically council entered into this arrangement recognising the standard of highway verge maintenance can have a significant impact on the visual amenity of an area and arrangements at that time did not achieve this result.

Finance contd...

Over the years some of these verges, many small in area, may have been affected by development e.g. Beech Drive, frontage of semi derelict garages owned by Progress Housing Group Ltd (New Fylde Housing Ltd). This area is now mainly within the curtilage of private property. For a number of years the LCC grant (budget £2122) has been insufficient to fund the expenditure (budget £5462). The clerk explained that the grass cutting contract value is not reduced/increased when only minor modifications, as agreed between the contractor and the authorised officer, are effected. This includes ceasing to perform part of the services or to perform additional services.

Members accepted that when contracts are next reviewed currently specified areas will require to be updated to reflect the situation at the time of review.

v) Following enquiries and observations a member the clerk explained the movement in actual general reserves from £24869.66, 31st March 2020 to forecast general reserves of £41050.70 31st March 2021 is the budgeted excess income over expenditure in 2020/21 financial year of £16181.04.

vi) Following enquiries and observations by a member the clerk explained that the St John the Evangelist (Lund) church grounds expenditure relates to the grassed areas adjacent to the car park and Lund Community Hall. A member explained that council is not currently responsible for any burial grounds/churchyards, however in the past and in accordance with its statutory responsibility, the council has provided funds and worked in partnership with St. John the Evangelist (Lund) parochial church council in ensuring proper provision is made for all parishioners.

vii) Following enquiries and observations by a member the clerk explained that the amenity cleansing expenditure has been increased to £14500 in anticipation of new contractual arrangements in the 2021/22 financial year. Litterbins/signage expenditure has typically been an accounting transaction; e.g. initial cost of purchasing a number of additional/replacement bins £1500 is shown as a balance sheet item and the cost charged to the revenue account over the anticipated "life" of the equipment five years = £300. So in effect this equipment has now been fully written off with no revenue provision in the budget.

viii) Following enquiries and observations by a members the clerk explained that expenditure on the watercourse adjacent Newton-with-Clifton Village Hall is anticipated to be incurred in this financial year and so no provision has been made in the 2021/22 financial year.

ix) The chairman referred to this matter and it was agreed that grants to local organisations be made in accordance with previous financial years and the clerk advised that these will be listed for payment at the meeting scheduled for Thursday 4th February 2021.

x) The chairman referred to the allowance usually paid each year to the elected chairman. The chairman explained it was more appropriate to share the allowance to meet the general costs e.g. printing documents, of all members. Another option, offered by the chairman and considered more appropriate, is to use the allowance for the benefit of a charitable organisation e.g. the local foodbank. A member suggested making a donation to Newton Bluecoat School to assist those pupils without the technology to access distance/remote learning.

The clerk referred to the previously advised legislation relating to the chairmans allowance/members allowance and if council is to fully adhere to this legislation, it was difficult to effect any of the alternatives, however commendable the underlying intention. In concluding the discussion the chairman asked members to further consider the matter for determination at a future meeting.

Further discussion ensued and subsequently, it was Proposed, Seconded and **RESOLVED**

i) The Budget report is accepted.

ii) Council Precept in the sum of £70289 for 2021/22 financial year, from £69108 for 2020/21 financial year, which, based on currently available information, will achieve a local council tax Band D level freeze

c) **\*\*Workplace pensions - automatic enrolment.**

Exempt Item\*\*. In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, s.1.council may resolve to exclude the public (which includes the press) on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Finance contd...

The chairman advised that as members of the public were not attending the meeting, and the clerk had indicated no confidential issues were to be raised, council was not required to resolve to exclude the public (which includes the press) on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. The clerk reported that matters continue to be progressed as agreed with both the National Employment Savings Trust Corporation (NEST) and The Pensions Regulator.

d) Friends of Newton Community Park (FoNCP) - funding Community Parks Improvement Programme (CPIP).

The chairman referred to this item and the clerk advised no further update was required at the present time. In accordance with the requirements of Council's Standing Orders and the revised Code of Conduct adopted on 9th November 2012 in compliance with The Localism Act 2011 Councillor Mrs. G. Bevan formally Declared an Interest in the matter and, took no part in the discussion or voting thereon. In accordance with the requirements of Council's Standing Orders and the revised Code of Conduct adopted on 9th November 2012 in compliance with The Localism Act 2011 Councillor Mrs. B. Duckworth (chairman) formally Declared an Interest in the matter and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon. In accordance with the requirements of Council's Standing Orders and the revised Code of Conduct adopted on 9th November 2012 in compliance with The Localism Act 2011 Councillor Mrs. J. McCormick formally Declared an Interest in the matter and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

e) Management of contracts.

i) Consider chairman's report.

The chairman referred to the contract management sub-committee/working group explaining one meeting had been convened and another scheduled for early January 2021. Members were encouraged to submit suggestions or observations, within the next few weeks, for consideration by the group at its next meeting and a further update will be provided at the council meeting scheduled for Thursday 4th February 2021.

**6. PARISH COMMUNICATION, SOCIAL MEDIA, GOVERNANCE.**

i) Consider website development, receive report by chairman.

The chairman explained an intention to publicise the website on Facebook from 2021 but had some reservations because the post submission would require the chairman's name to be published. As a workaround the chairman suggested that publicising the launch might be arranged through the respective Newton and Clifton Facebook administrators. Members suggested noticeboard publication as an alternative or possibly in addition to submitting a Facebook post.

Recent updates included Lancashire County Council's latest consumer alerts. The chairman confirmed the website now has links to other local authorities which in turn will have information relating to matter of public interest e.g. COVID-19. The chairman suggested and it was agreed to publish the latest council budget report. The chairman referred to the timing of councillor responses to email communications. It was agreed that the clerk and members should specify response deadlines in circulated emails in an attempt to improve the efficacy of council communications. Following a member enquiry the chairman explained members that had requested a new council email address had been sent the details. Once set up and members confirm access, the new email address and contact details will be displayed on the website's councillors details.

ii) Parish constitution, standing orders &c.

The chairman referred to this item and it was agreed that the matter be deferred until the meeting scheduled for Thursday 4th February 2021 and that it be dealt with towards the beginning of the agenda.



**7. ANY OTHER MATTERS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY.**

a) Newton Hall Park/Friends of Newton Community Park (FoNCP).

Following a member enquiry the chairman confirmed that a parishioner written enquiry relating to FoNCP had received a written response from the clerk

b) Freckleton Library.

The chairman referred to a recent communication relating to the possible closure of the service due to Lancashire county council budgetary constraints. The chairman agreed to make enquiries with the borough/county councillor to ascertain if Kirkham Library might also be affected.

c) Date of next meeting.

It was agreed that the next council meeting be scheduled for Thursday 4th February 2021 via Zoom.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the Meeting closed at 21:25hrs.

Chairman