

Minutes of the Meeting of North Petherton Town Council held on Monday 14th December 2020 via Zoom commencing at 7:15 pm

Present. Cllr Alan Bradford Chairman
Councillors. Cllr W Revans, Cllr J Barham, Cllr J Taylor, Cllr Mrs L Hyde, Cllr L Pickersgill, Cllr R Ives, Cllr L Parchment, Cllr P Spencer, Cllr Mrs L Spelman-Ives, Cllr Ms C Woodford, Cllr Mrs D Bunce and Cllr B Sellick

In Attendance. Ms Jill Loader (Census 2021) and Mr R T Latham, Town Clerk.

170/2020. Apologies

There were no apologies

171/2020. Declarations of interests

There were no declarations of interests.

172/2020. Community time.

Ms Loader gave a brief presentation on the forthcoming national census. During the discussion it became clear that this was an important exercise, with the information obtained being used extensively to influence public policy.
Cllr Bradford thanked her for the presentation.

173/2020. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th November 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

174/2020. Matters arising.

Cllr Revans pointed out that bench by the library was in memory of Mrs Cathy Cooper.

175/2020. Mayor's report.

Cllr Bradford reported that he had attended the funeral of the Late Keith Barnard on the Council's behalf as well as a number of meetings and presentations.

176/2020. Members' reports.

Cllr Pickersgill reported on continuing parking problems in Stockmoor.

177/2020. Items for payment.

The following items were approved for payment:

N J Stevens	£1,380.00	Christmas trees
Greenslades	£499.74	Cemetery maintenance
British Gas	£93.41	Electricity Library
LocaliQ	£528.00	Readvertisement Asst. Clerk
Somerset CC	£185.82	Repairs to plumbing library
Somerset CC	£160.11	Water charges library
Somerset CC	£235.46	Covid screen library
Somerset CC	£4,805.28	Staffing charge library
		Insurance N. Newton Playing Field Ass.
Zurich Insurance	£265.80	
Structure Haus	£13,238.16	Wilstock Hub fees - grant
Services Design Solutions Ltd	£9,778.80	Wilstock Hub fees - grant
Rialtas Business Solutions	£148.80	Software Mtnce
Rialtas Business Solutions	£231.60	Software Mtnce
GWB Services	£3,141.00	Street cleaning/maintenance Sept
GWB Services	£2,061.00	Street cleaning/maintenance Oct

NPPFCT

GWB Services	£50.00	Equipt inspection
L Hyde	£156.28	Paint for wall - Memorial park

178/2020. Budget 2021-22.

Cllr Spencer presented the latest draft of the budget for 2021-22 and financial forecast for future years, following receipt of the tax base information from the billing authority. As anticipated in these difficult times, the base had remained virtually the same with the result that planned spending levels would require a 4% increase in the precept in 2021/22. Following the figures through a band D rate of £53 in year 4 was predicted, which Members still felt represented very good value compared to other authorities. Cllr Spencer, however, felt that possible reorganisation in the county could impact on the Council's finances and that balances would need to be maintained to cover this. He agreed to review the figures in the light of this and the ensuing discussions and taking into account issues at Wilstock Hub.

179/2020. 2019/20 Audit.

The Clerk reported that the external audit of the Council's accounts had been completed and that no matters had been raised.

180/2020. Wilstock Hub.

Members gave further consideration to amount of additional grant that might be required to ensure that the Wilstock Hub community project could proceed within a reasonable time scale. Cllr Spencer pointed out that around £50,000 of the Councils annual precept derived from the Wilstock/Stockmoor area, and that a substantial

element of CIL receipts was associated with the same area. Members felt that a significant increase in the grant might be needed to deliver the project. It was the Council's intention to seek a loan to fund its grant and the repayment term of such a loan could be varied to make an increased amount affordable on an annual basis.

Resolved: that the loan application process be delayed for the time being to ensure that an informed decision was made on how much was needed.

181/2020 Bus Shelters.

The Clerk presented a report on the Council's proposals to provide additional bus shelters in the North Petherton area. The working group had met via Zoom on a couple of occasions to progress the plans. Costings from alternative suppliers had been sought and two firms had responded. The most comprehensive proposals had been provided by Externiture who had suggested a two phased approach where they would undertake all aspects of the project. Cllr Spencer asked that the planned location of the Baymead Lane stop be reviewed. Members also discussed providing an improved hard standing at the Moon Lane bus stops following a request from a resident with disabilities, whose approaches to the County Council to do something had been unsuccessful.

Resolved: that

1. The quote for phase 1 from Externiture be accepted to provide new premium standard shelters at the Compass Inn (North and South bound), Kerland Clinic (N & S bound) and Huntworth Lane lay by at a cost of £37, 052 and ground works for these plus for Baymead Lane and Newton Road at a cost of £29,585. Total £66,637.
2. Their quote for phase 2 be accepted to provide shelters at Baymead Lane (N & S bound), Newton Road (N & S bound) and Shovel Lodge (N & S bound) at a cost of £42,417.
3. Their quote to undertake work at the Moon Lane stops, at a discounted sum of £2,000, be accepted.

182/2020. Library.

Members agreed that the option of promoting a Trust to run the library be examined, as a more cost effective way forward.

183/2020. Trees opposite the Ford garage

Cllr Revans had received concerns from a local resident about the state of the trees opposite the Ford fuels garage in North Petherton. It was agreed that he and Cllr Bradford contact the landowner.

184/2020. Dog and litter bins.

The Clerk reported on a number of requests for additional bins.

Resolved: that the following be provided:

Dog bins at North Newton, Tudor Way, North Street, High Street/Tappers Lane;
Litter bins at Wilstock Way and adjacent to Drs Surgery (large replacement).

185/2020. Climate crisis.

Cllr Revans reported that the bid for the County grant had been submitted

186/2020. Playing Fields Trust.

Resurfacing the footpath from Parkersfield to Broadlands Avenue was still proving problematic, with County Highways, who are responsible for the path, requiring a full scale improvement including drainage measures. It was agreed that Cllr Revans would continue to pursue a sensible solution.

Cllr Mrs Hyde gave a brief update on progress at the Memorial Field. It was agreed that the Mayor should present Peter Farnell with an appropriate gift to thank him for all of his work on the project.

187/2020. Correspondence

The Clerk reported that an election had not been claimed for the casual vacancy and that it could now be filled by cooption.

188/2020. Matters of report.

Cllr Pickersgill reported that the roll out of fibre optic cable in Stockmoor had been completed. He also said how well the VE Day trees and benches had been received. Cllr Rvans said that there had been renewed concerns about speeding in Old Road and that he was looking at getting repeater signs installed.

The Christmas light's competition was due to be judged shortly. The Clerk agreed to deliver the trophies to the Mayor's house for presentation to the winners. He had also arranged for certificates to be printed and these would be posted on.

The meeting then proceeded to consider a number of planning applications, recorded as separate minutes.

The Mayor wished everyone a Happy Christmas and the meeting closed at 9:25 pm

