

# Minutes of the Annual and Ordinary Meetings of the Council Held on Monday 13th May 2024

Meetings are held at 7.00pm at the Village Hall unless stated otherwise - Nigel Ashton, Gordano Valley Ward Cllr, attends when possible

**Present:** Cllrs Brian Cannell (Chair), Claire Flower, Rachel Dickinson, Dave Wherrett

**In Attendance:** Don Hill (Clerk)

**Public Attendance:** 0

## ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

### 027/24 APOLOGIES

NSC Cllr Nigel Ashton

### 028/24 ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE CHAIR & ASSOCIATED PAPERWORK

The Chair raised the need to make appointments to these positions and it was agreed unanimously without a formal vote that Cllr Cannell would be reappointed as Chair of the Council and Cllr Dickinson would be reappointed as Vice Chair. Cllr Cannell completed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chair.

### 029/24 APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Similarly, without a formal vote, Cllr Dickinson was unanimously reappointed as the Council's representative on the Village Hall Management Committee and Cllr Cannell was reappointed as the Council's representative at the service of the North Somerset Council's Standards Sub-Committee.

### 030/24 AGREEMENT TO RE-CONFIRM RECENTLY APPROVED GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The Governance documents for 2024-25 were individually reviewed in detail at Minute 015/24 of the March meeting of the Council, in the context of the financial year 2024-25 and then duly posted to the website together with an index and signed Risk Assessment. The meeting agreed that this framework of Governance should remain in place for the coming political year from May 2024 to May 2025.

### 031/24 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT *(to be read via the Annual Parish' Meeting at 8pm).*

*Looking back over the reports I have given to these meetings in previous years, they are all much the same in content. Such is the reality of a small rural Parish Council, where for decades the main focus of issues involves traffic and road speed, buses and transport challenges, footpaths, verges, drainage issues, planning applications...*

*This year is little different from previous with a few exceptions. Full details are published on our website via the meeting minutes. Also on there is an archive of PC minutes dating back to the early 1970's and they make interesting reading. Thanks go to Don Hill the Clerk to the Parish Council for this work.*

*We have seen the passing of some long-standing stalwarts, including the deaths of Tony Barrow and Sue Betts. They both gave hugely to the life and community of Walton-in-Gordano over the years. We mourn their passing and support the remaining family members.*

*As of May 13th, 2024 - ie today - Walton-in-Gordano Parish Councillors are Mr Brian Cannell, Mrs Rachel Dickinson, Mr Dave Wherrett and Ms Claire Flower.*

*Cllr Dav Baulch resigned in October 2023 in order to devote more time to family and business. On Cllr Baulch's resignation Cllr Dickinson agreed to become Vice Chair.*

*Today the Annual Meeting of the Council was held. It is at this meeting that various posts are decided for the coming twelve months to the following May, ie to May 2025. After discussions, Councillor Brian Cannell was elected as Chair and Councillor Rachel Dickinson was elected as Vice Chair.*

*Councillor Dickinson will continue to represent the PC on the Village Hall management committee. We have no PCC representative. Councillor Brian Cannell will continue as representative on NSC Standards Sub committee.*

North Somerset Council was represented at the Parish Council meetings by Councillor Nigel Ashton, our Ward councillor with North Somerset Council. He has been a regular attendee and greatly valued advisor at Parish Council meetings throughout the year.

Fortunately, during this last year, reported crime in the parish has been very low. Neighbourhood watch schemes continue to operate in various parts of the Parish.

Planning applications have been steady in numbers this last year – not quite in double figures, being made up with a mix of redevelopment, conversions and tree orders.

Community Speedwatch is being enthusiastically led by John Jackson, who is leading a group of volunteers who are running the activity in the Parish. If you would like to be involved please contact John.

**The other main topics this year were:**

**Streetlight** – due to insurmountable problems with the wayleave, the light will now be located on the opposite side of the B3124 adjacent to the B3124 sign.

**Traffic Speed** – Cllr Claire Flower is heading up this topic. To progress any changes, evidence is required. Speed Indicator Display Signs (SIDS) are being investigated and budget sought to purchase.

**Walton Bay Transport** – Cllr Dave Wherrett is leading this. Extensive work has been done and is continuing. Full details in the council minutes.

**Village Hall Car Park** – Cllr Rachel Dickinson is the Council representative on the Village Hall Committee, which is the body responsible for driving the car park negotiations forward. Having been involved at the start of this project in its earliest stages, the Council will obviously continue to play any part it can to help propel this vitally important project forward.

**The Council website** has had to be updated to align with the increasing complexity of the legal requirements surrounding its management, and to ensure its future-proofing.

**Parish maintenance:** general upkeep and new stiles for the Plum Tree to Common path are due, and ‘Welcome to Walton Bay’ signs have been erected this last year.

**As to finance,** the Budget for 2024/25 was set during the January 2024 Parish Council meeting at £6542. After including future capital expenditure (£1000) the amount of the precept from North Somerset Council was £7542.

We continue to be in the cheapest 1/3 of all parishes in North Somerset by precept.

I would like to thank those who have shown an interest in the Parish and its Council over the last year and encourage those who have yet to do so.

Finally, on behalf of the Parish, I would like to thank my fellow Councillors: Mrs Rachel Dickinson, Mr Dav Baulch, Mr Dave Wherrett and Ms Claire Flower - not forgetting the Clerk to the Parish Council, Mr Don Hill - for their hard work and support over the last year. Thanks are also due to Bob and Val Baldwin who, despite their retirement, continue to look after the Village notice board for us.

## ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

**032/24 APOLOGIES**

NSC Cllr Nigel Ashton

**033/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS**

(Dispensations apply to resident Cllrs re the setting of the precept, and to all Cllrs relating to Village Hall matters)

None

**034/24 LAST MEETING MINUTES + MATTERS ARISING**

Minutes of the meeting held on April 8th 2024 were agreed and signed.

**035/24 GOVERNANCE:** The Annual Governance Statement, being Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023-2024 was approved and signed.

**036/24 PLANNING** (The NSC website has full details. Applications notified on the meeting day will also be considered)

**Approved: 23/P/0648/FUH** Taggart Cabin.

**037/24 PARISH MATTERS**

i. **Street Light:** Awaiting new costings.

- ii. **Traffic Speed Issues:** This project was set out in the April minute 023/24ii, with Cllr Flower as the lead. The project will be looked at at the June meeting of the Council.
- iii. **Walton Bay Transport Update:** Cllr Wherrett  
Cllr Wherrett completed NSC's "BSIP refresh" consultation re buses and bus lanes but it would not accept his email address.  
Closing dates for BSIP WESTlocal funding for bus groups is now the end of May. 'All Aboard The Bus' (AATB) have a bid in but report that there is a lack of information and support about the process from NSC. They went public about this via social media, where NSC lead on the matter, Councillor Young, found it, explained that the bids were being worked on and that she would respond to AABT specific concerns via e mail by Friday 10th. That response is still awaited. The outcome of this, or some other bid is crucial to progress, but in the meantime AABT continues contact with potential service providers and will be represented at Portishead Town Councils Transport meeting on May 16th.  
The new closer Zones for WESTlink buses seem to be having some impact, drivers still say they drive miles to pick up individual passengers.
- iv. **NSC Car Parking and Waste consultations:** Our input to both consultations was acknowledged by NSC.
- v. **Footpaths: Plumtree to Common stiles:** The two kissing gates due to be installed on May 14th.
- vi. **Village Notice Board:** Door perspex purchase awaited.
- vii. **Government Issued Portrait of the King:** Delivered to the Hall by Clerk this evening.
- viii. **Parish Maintenance:** The appointment of a contractor to carry out a specified scheme of work for the parish to keep highways and street furniture in a good and welcoming condition was thought to be sound. A timetable and a precise scheme will need to be prepared, against which quotations from contractors insured to do work on the highway can be approached for quotes. The costs can then be put into the next budget under the Parish Maintenance head. A project lead will be needed to steer the establishment actions and to oversee the resultant contract. There may be a contractor able to provide the needed services. The project will be discussed further at the June meeting.
- ix. **The B3124:** The national speed limit sign re-erecting by NSC due. The similar signs on the Portishead entry to the village are illegible. **Clerk to report to NSC.**
- x. **Speed Limit Repeater Signs:** These signs are no longer a legal requirement, so them being kept visible is a matter of affordability rather than legality.
- xi. **Walton St Open Section of Brook:**
  - a. **Damaged retaining wall repair:** The initial damage was caused by a car; however, the topping stones are now loose over an extended length of the wall. Repair is the responsibility of NSC Structures, who appear to have given the work a low priority.
  - b. Detached gabion causing blockage in bed of brook. Reported to NSC, the responsible riparian agency.

## 038/24 COUNCILLORS REPORTS Cllr Wherrett

**Blocked drains on the Coast Road by Coast Caravan Park (CCP) and from Squires Cottage to Two Acres Drive:** Reported by Cllr Wherrett. The Clerk raised the drains at CCP with NSC some years ago. They explained a few things. First, the gullies were put in a very long time ago. Second, since the gullies were put in, CCP appeared. Third, since the gully outlets are in the CCP field, any attempt to jet them was likely to damage anything - ie a Caravan - that may be pitched over the outlet. For this reason the gullies have been allowed to fall into disuse. After many years this has not, so far, caused any flooding along that section of Coast Road.

The water from Squires Cottage has traditionally run down the curb-side to the gullies at Two Acres Drive. Those gullies are piped down through The Bay and Sandbanks, and under the Cliff Path, where they outfall onto the beach below. A few years ago those Two Acre Drive gullies were not as

clear as they could have been and some really bad weather meant they overflowed down into properties in The Bay. The reasons for the situation may be the same as those at CCP, Cllr Wherrett has undertaken to let the Clerk know how many gullies are involved and which side of the highway they are. The Clerk will then marshal and map the facts, and seek the NSC position. Given the changing weather patterns we are facing, we will also ask if NSC are developing a long term drainage strategy to ensure optimum flood prevention for Walton Bay homes. Action: **Clerk to liaise with NSC and place this item on the June meeting agenda.**

**Soil Erosion Undermining the Walton Bay Bus Stop:** This problem was reported to the Parish Council yesterday, May 12th, by a resident who supplied Cllr Wherrett with pictures of soil erosion eating under the pavement around the bus stop. This small stretch of land between Sunny Bank and Two Acres Drive contains a notice board (belong to the Parish Council and positioned on the land of EMM Properties Ltd, owners of The Bay and Sandbanks), a mail box, a seat (belonging to NSC), a bus stop and a telegraph/electricity pole. This erosion could eventually start undermining the highway and cause danger to traffic. Any underpinning will need to be done on EMM land and will involve liaison with the various utility owners on the site. All this falls to NSC to manage and to repair, so the Clerk informed them of the position on Sunday 12 May, and provided the name and address of EMM. A response from NSC will be keenly awaited.

**039/24 FINANCE**

- i. **2024-25** Accounts to date were reviewed against the bank statement, and approved.
- ii. **2023-24 Accounts:**
  - a) The Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2023/24 Form 2 was approved and signed.
  - b) The 2023-24 internal auditor’s report was noted: it contained no adverse comments for action.
  - c) AGAR Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24: see Minute 041/24 above.
  - d) The AGAR Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 was approved and signed.
  - e) The 2023-2024 Bank Reconciliation was approved and signed.
  - f) The external auditor’s conflict of interest form revealed no conflicts of interest and was signed to confirm that situation.
- iii. **Cheques: 843** P Smith re internal audit £50.00. **844** ALCA replacement cheque. Ch 841 lost in post and to be cancelled. These two payments were approved and the cheques signed.

**040/24 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Monday June 10th at 7pm in the Village Hall

**The meeting closed at 7.50pm**