

Minutes of the Meeting Held on Monday 8th September 2025

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

There is a vacancy for a Councillor - contact a Councillor or the Clerk if you would like to apply

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

In Attendance: Don Hill (Clerk)

Public Attendance: 1

Before the start of the meeting Cllr Cannell reminded Members that our Summer break saw major losses to the parish - John Flower and also Bob and Val Baldwin. John passed away on July 16th, while Bob and Val have moved to care accommodation in Worle. All three will be sorely missed by our community.

John arrived in the parish, at the age of four, in May 1942, when his father took over the tenancy of Cross Tree Farm. Between there and Home farm he spent the rest of his life farming in the parish. As a significant parish character, John had a big personality, and under a sometimes formidable exterior lay a gentle and kind neighbour and friend within the village. He is probably the last of that historic estate core who gave the village community its very particular style and energy. May his family continue to contribute to that for many years to come.

Bob and Val settled at Home Farm Cottage in 1967. They were already familiar with the Village and immersed themselves in Parish life. Significant amongst their many contributions was the management of the Village noticeboard, the cleaning and general upkeep of the Village Hall and grounds and maintenance of various footpaths - including the Cliff Path - over many years. Bob joined the Parish Council in November 1980 and became Chair in May 1983; a post he retained until October 2004, retiring from the Council in May 2007.

050/25 APOLOGIES

NSC Ward Cllr Nigel Ashton

051/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST *(Dispensations apply to Cllrs re the setting of the precept, and to Village Hall matters)*

Cllr Flower re Minute 054/25i below - her partner is the probable parish maintenance contractor.

052/25 LAST MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on June 9th 2025 were agreed and signed.

053/25 PLANNING *(The NSC website has full details. Applications notified on the meeting day will also be considered)*

- i. **New:** none
- ii. **Decision Due:** 25/P/1198/LBC 2 Manor Cottages temporary removal of listed boundary wall to allow access for building works - reviewed by email and comment submitted to NSC planners.
- iii. **Other for information:** 25/P/1311/TEN - 25/P/1312/TEN - Two notifications from Open Reach that they are putting up two telephone poles to carry broadband equipment; one opposite Beckside in Moor Lane, and one in Walton Street on the boundary of Springhead Cottage and Taggart House in Walton Street.
- iv. **Approved:** 25/P/1079/TRCA Manor House tree work - Reviewed via email; non-objections.

054/25 PARISH MATTERS

- i. **Parish Maintenance:** Cllrs Flower and Cannell to develop the working and cost arrangements for the parish maintenance work.
- ii. **Walton Bay Bus Stop erosion:** Still no feedback from NSC. Cllr Wherrett reports the erosion as getting worse.
- iii. **Highway Signage:** B3124 derestriction sign to Clevedon: 20mph sign at Walton Street/B3124 junction REPAIRED; The sign outside Brookside Cottage in Moor Lane (horses and road narrows) has not been repaired, but in fact there is not enough room for it in its current position.
- iv. **Defibrillator:** Payment for service charge has to be via 'donation' **Clerk will sort how this can happen via the team managing the defibrillator.**
- v. **Drainage pipe from the Coast Road to Walton Bay:** appears to be damaged and taking in sewage. **Cllr Wherrett reporting this to NSC again.**
- vi. **Traffic Along Coast Road:** Advice remains that a 30mph limit is not possible because there are not enough entrances onto the highway. The high usage of the few exits there are from the Park Home sites is not - ridiculous at it may seem - taken into consideration. Cllr Wherrett looked at the possibility of rumble strips but these were not deemed acceptable by the other Members because of the noise outside the adjacent properties. There was also the problem that their introduction on the B3124 would renew NSC insistence that they draw the current positions of the 30mph signs further into the Village, which would mean that the highly valued SpeedWatch would have to cease operating due to not having enough 'distance' within which to record their evidence.
- vii. **Police Data Collection Box (DCB):** This collects number recognition data leading to prosecutions. Police have advised that the pressure on more needy sites means the B3124 cannot be serviced.
- viii. **Public Session:** The wording in red at the head of this agenda is per June Minute 045/25viii and was approved. It can be amended if and as needed in the future.
- ix. **Blocked Gullies from Springhead to the Cross Tree:** this section of Walton Street will be closed for 5 days from drainage work, which it is expected to include clearing the open section of Walton Brook. **Clerk will flag NSC's riparian responsibilities for the brook to our Area Engineer.**
- x. **Hedge cutting along B3124:** Work not yet done. **Clerk to re-approach the owner.**
- xi. **Faded Road Markings at Walton Street/B3124 junction:** This work has been completed, but raised two other points:
 - a) **Traffic Lights:** Further work is being done at this junction, which is being controlled by three way traffic lights. It has been suggested that permanent traffic lights would slow traffic effectively. Discussion exposed several critical reasons why NSC would not countenance such a solution to the B3124 speed issues. Lights are used for traffic control, not speed control : Such use would not be allowed within the national guideline regulations : The expense of design build and installation would be prohibitive and, notwithstanding other reasons, would be way beyond current NSC budgets.
 - b) **Highway Improvements:** So many improvement ideas have come forward over the years - roundabouts included. The idea of this Council engaging highway consultants to develop a solution that could be put to NSC was steered by Cllr Flower but put aside during the most critical period of the NSC financial crisis. Members would like to resurrect the idea, which would cost some £2-3000 in consultancy fees. The Clerk advised that an expenditure commitment of this level should not be made without prior consultation with NSC highways, not least because if they dismissed the ideas out of hand the Parish Council could risk Members being personally surcharged to recover the consultancy costs. The meeting agreed that the **Clerk will contact Cllr Ashton to find out how to make appropriate contact with NSC highways to discuss the issue.**

055/25 COUNCILLORS REPORTS

Cllr Wherrett

Bus Service Issues

- a) **WestLink:** The recently published details of WestLink Town Hubs in Clevedon and Portishead will be of benefit to Walton Bay residents because it will mean they can still chose to go to either town to visit or to link up with onward transport services.

- b) **Community Bus Service:** The bus group at Walton Bay are continuing their initiatives to establish a Community Bus link for the Gordano Valley area. They have met with the local MP to gain his support for the initiative. Discussions are ongoing.

Cllr Cannell

Notice Boards: None of the attempts to refurbish the perspex windows of Cross Tree notice board have worked. Cllr Flower proposed that the 2022 decision not to replace the noticeboards be re-visited, and a ring-fenced capital provision be build up, starting with the 2026-27 budget, to fund the purchase of two new boards. The matter will be brought forward as an agenda item in the October meeting. In the meantime the **Clerk will get some costs.**

056/25 FINANCE

- v. **2025-26 Accounts to date:** were reviewed and reconciled with the bank statement.
vi. **Payments to be Authorised:** none

057/25 GOVERNANCE

- i. **Preparing for Assertion 10:** (AGAR 2025/26) **Clerk will research and brief Members.**
ii. **Community Governance Review** NSC's 2nd consultation has started. Members do not wish to alter their stance from the 1st consultation, ie that the Council boundaries remain the same and that 5 Members has proved a challenge to meet and that 7 Members would push the possibility of an election further from that event's democratic expectation.

058/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday October 13th 2025

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

Annexe to minutes for September 2025

WALTON-IN-GORDANO PARISH COUNCIL HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS

Village Gateways - SpeedWatch - Speed Indicator Devices - Highway Consultants

The idea of village gateways formally arrived on the Parish Council's meeting agenda in September 2017. By May 2020 the Chair's Annual report read on the subject:

Highways: *Our strategy for highways - Village Gates and speed limits is being hampered because the placing of some of our existing speed limit signs is at odds with current highway regulations. This means that any future works we propose will have to include the bringing of the speed limit signs much closer to our centres of population. As well as being so counter-intuitive, this will severely hamper the active and successful SpeedWatch work which volunteers in the community commit to on our behalf. We have not lost sight of our highway ambitions, but we need to find a way of achieving them without losing what took so long for the Parish to establish originally, in terms of speed limits.*

Much talking continued and focused on the desirability of traffic volume and speed data on a 24/7 basis, either as part of, or alongside the work of SpeedWatch. A Speed Indicator Device (SID) would cost some £6-7000 to purchase, so could only form part of the mix if enough volunteers came forward to manage it. No-one did come forward, so the initiative had to be shelved.

By April 2025 minute 023/25 ii. read:

Traffic Speed Issues: *Progress is inhibited by NSC financial and personnel constraints and their insistence on an alteration to the positioning of the 30mph signs on the B3124 in relation to works carried out. This is inevitably, at least for the immediate future, blocking effective progress on any scheme that emerges to improve the safety of this stretch of road.*

The matter was raised again and reported in the minutes above as repeated here:

054/25 vi: Traffic Along Coast Road: *Advice remains that a 30mph limit is not possible because there are not enough entrances onto the highway. The high usage of the few exits there are from the Park Home sites is not - ridiculous at it may seem - taken into consideration. Cllr Wherrett looked at the possibility of rumble strips but these were not deemed acceptable by the other Members because of the noise outside the adjacent properties. There was also the problem that their introduction on the B3124 would renew NSC insistence that they draw the current positions of the 30mph signs further into the Village, which would mean that the highly valued SpeedWatch would have to cease operating due to not having enough 'distance' within which to record their evidence.*

054/25 xib: Highway Improvements: *So many improvement ideas have come forward over the years - roundabouts included. The idea of this Council engaging highway consultants to develop a solution that could be put to NSC was steered by Cllr Flower but put aside during the most critical period of the NSC financial crisis. Members would like to resurrect the idea, which would cost some £2-3000 in consultancy fees. The Clerk advised that an expenditure commitment of this level should not be made without prior consultation with NSC highways, not least because if they dismissed the ideas out of hand the Parish Council could risk Members being personally surcharged to recover the consultancy costs. The meeting agreed that the Clerk will contact Cllr Ashton to find out how to make appropriate contact with NSC highways to discuss the issue.*

If a consultant is appointed, their objective will be to come up with solutions to control the management of traffic in the context of future volume expectations and the optimal safety of all highway users. They will investigate all possible solutions, including appropriate engineered solutions such as the humps bumps and road narrowing devices that we are becoming used to. They may suggest moving the 30mph limits (maybe 20mph limits?) further in to the Village but proceeded by a 40mph (or 30mph?) buffer within which, via SpeedWatch or via a speed indicator device (SID), approach speeds might be reduced. By not then being immediately outside properties, even rumble strips - which are by definition noisy but do seem to be judged by the professionals as being effective if one looks at the internet - might become less obtrusive as part of the solution. It is from the measures that the consultants come up with that an optimum mix of proposals can be developed to match our needs along the B3124 in particular, and along the other roads in our parish to the extent that we can afford to widen the consultation to include them. So, the employment of consultants rules nothing out any more than it rules everything in. Many initiatives are passing down from Principal Authorities (NSC in our case) to Parish and Town Councils. However, consultants or no consultants, large expenditures cannot be committed by such a small parish as ours without the agreement of NSC Highways to seriously consider the outcomes and how they can be funded and implemented.