

## **Minutes of St John Parish Council Meeting on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 7.30pm at St John Village Hall.**

**15.20 Those present :** Mr D Richards, Mr R Trick, Mr C Trevitt, Mrs J Hirst, Mr R Hoskin, Mr H Everard the Clerk to St John Parish Council and several parishioners and Mr Willoughby (observer).

**16.20 Apologies for absence.** Cllr Trubody

### **17.20 Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda.**

Cllr Richards informed the Council that as a Trustee of St John Village Hall he would recuse himself for any items relating to the hall. Cllr Trevitt is an employee of Cornwall Council and recused himself from the relating to Cornwall Traffic Enforcement Sla.

**18.20 Minutes of the previous meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> Aug were reviewed and approved by the full Council.**

### **19.20 Matters arising from the previous meeting.**

**19.20 a** 5.20 a 43.19 c 29.19 j 18.19 c Rut on Picture hill.

This issue will be addressed when Covid restrictions are lifted and Cllr Richards and Everard can arrange a physical meeting with Mr Trinnick from Antony Estates.

**19.20 b** 5.20 d 43.19 g 35.19. Benskins wood signage.

This issue is being deferred until the Covid 19 situation is resolved.

**19.20 c** 5.20 e 43.19 h 36.19. Freathy Bus shelter.

Awaiting confirmation from Mr Quinney from Cornwall Council when additional funding becomes available.

**19.20 d** 5.20 h 70.19 a Antony junction update.

Cornwall highways have recently undertaken a safety audit , the report was due in August but it is in final preparation now. Cllr Bulmer from Antony PC is liaising with Mr O Neill from Cornwall highways on this matter.

**19.20 e** 6.20 a **Military Road parking issues.**

Cllr Bulmer from Antony PC has expressed an interest in seeking funding from Phase 4 Cluster network fund to resolve the issues at Tregantle. This will be addressed at the Cluster meeting to be held on 9<sup>th</sup> Dec. Cllr Hoskin to represent St John Parish Council.

**19.20 f** 13.20 a **Gravestone repair in St Johns cemetery.**

Two gravestones have been repaired by a village working party. The remaining grave will be repaired in the new year by HG Stacey Ltd who quoted £ 250 for the work.

**19.20 g** 13.20 c Request from Parishioners for additional signage in St John.

The St John Councillors considered the request for Children warning signs and decided that it was not necessary given the small numbers of children in the village.

## **20.20 Correspondence.**

Various items correspondence has been received from Mr and Mrs Berry all of which have been replied to by the clerk.

Mr and Mrs Berry were invited to the meeting.

A leaflet was also circulated to members of the parish via the village shop, maligning the integrity of the St John village parish councillors causing them much personal upset.

A formal response from the Parish Council was read to the members and parishioners present.

“In their e mail of 2nd September Mr and Mrs Berry accused Councillors of unprofessional conduct, animosity towards them, sharing unfounded criticism of them, being bias towards the Village Hall, being hostile to them and not treating our positions with respect and dignity.

The purpose of the following statement is to clarify the past and present relationship between the PC and Mr and Mrs Berry.

When Mr and Mrs Berry took over the Inn, the PC offered access to the PC website, this has continued at PC's cost ever since. Access has included documentation, photographs and details of upcoming events at the Inn. Mr and Mrs Berry have now withdrawn from the village website.

## **Planning applications**

The PC discussed with Mr and Mrs Berry their proposal for a camp site, and emphasised neighbours' concerns, with maintaining the promised limits on numbers, vehicles etc. The PC took no other action.

The PC supported a planning application for a new air source heating for the Inn.

The PC supported the planning application for a new mobile cabin with a recommendation that they discuss overall loading on the septic tank with the Environment Agency.

The PC did not enter into any discussions with the Inn regarding the first VH planning application as Mr and Mrs Berry had already refused to discuss the matter with the VH, and that they had already determined their objection. The PC supported the VH application including removal of three trees. The PC Chair recused himself from the St John planning committee for this application, as he was a trustee of the VH.

The PC supported the second VH application, which was approved without any comment from the Inn. The PC Chair again recused himself from the planning vote.

## **The “flyer”**

The criticisms of the PC in this flyer (apparently distributed to visitors to the shop, but not forwarded to the PC) is that we failed to agree with the Forestry Officer's opinion on the removal of the trees, and showed animosity to Mr and Mrs Berry in the village newsletter.

Our position on the removal of the trees was made clear in our comment. We disagreed (and continue to do so) that the removal of the trees, (mitigated by screening, offered by the VH) would materially damage the Conservation Area. We are completely aware of the status of the Conservation Area with respect to trees and heritage, and we did not ignore any "legislation" relating to the removal of trees, which can be allowed providing the planning officer accepts the proposals. In this case we decided that removal of these trees was reasonable. We are completely entitled to express our view, even if it does not accord with the views of any planning professionals, we have done so before, (on several occasions) and we are entitled to do so again. The PC has no powers over planning but as a statutory consultee we must make whatever comments we deem fit.

The flyer and recent correspondence to the PC claims that we have shown animosity towards the Inn in our Newsletter posts to the community. We wrote an article to tell residents that we had cleared the footpath to Gallows Park and said that it was worth the walk to get a pasty there. This has been taken as animosity towards the Inn, because they also provide pasties. It is unbelievably disappointing that they could interpret our statement in this way.

The newsletter following the need to withdraw the first planning application mentioned our "disappointment" that the withdrawal was on account of objections from the Inn, whilst in the same article we expressed our support for the efforts made to open the shop. We stand by these comments as we continue to believe that the first VH planning application should have been successful, given that it would have improved access to, and facilities at, the village hall, for the benefit of the community.

The flyer was not addressed to the PC and we did not feel that a reply had been requested by the Inn. When its existence became known to us, we believed that, in the interests of community harmony, it would be better to refrain from commenting. However, the latest correspondence necessitates this response.

## **Developments at the Inn**

During the current occupancy of the Inn, the PC has been made aware of concern from neighbours relating to several aspects of activity at the Inn, relating to the garden and boundaries. The PC endeavours not to become involved in disagreements between neighbours, and we have stood back from involvement with any such issues relating to the Inn, and we therefore find it totally unreasonable to be accused of bias towards any neighbours of the Inn, including the VH.

Three Councillors have been accused of bias towards the VH and the respect and dignity for their positions has been questioned. The entire PC unanimously rejects the criticism from Mr and Mrs Berry and will continue to make impartial recommendations, in respect of any planning applications. Criticism will not deter us from expressing our unbiased opinions on any community matter, and the fact of this criticism will have no bearing on any comments that we may have on future planning applications from any resident, including the Inn.

## **In respect of further e mails dated 16<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 21st October from Mr and Mrs Berry**

Their queries, as to the PC donations to COVID support groups, were answered in the Clerk's e mail of 26<sup>th</sup> October, in which it was stated that the PC had, in accordance with national emergency COVID guidelines, unanimously agreed to donate £500 and £100 to the two support groups in the parish, and that these payments were properly made, and fell well below the £2,737 allowed to St John for donations under Section 137 of the 1972 Local Government Act.

Criticism of communications to parishioners through the local Newsletters, was also answered in the Clerk's response, where the following was emphasised,

Transparency of all records of decisions and payments is maintained through notice boards and the St John Parish Website.

Items of local interest will continue to be communicated from time to time through the local Newsletters.

The Parish Council rejects any suggestions of any inappropriate "connections" with village halls, and Councillors recuse themselves from any decision making which may be construed as indicating any bias.

The Parish Council will continue to make impartial and independent decisions on any matter relating to any parishioners or local organisations."

The motion was raised to accept this record.

Proposed Cllr Richards Seconded Cllr Trevitt.

Unanimously approved.

### **21.20 Planning.**

The planning report was reviewed and approved.

An additional application was received on 8/12/2020 on behalf of the Village Hall to trim branches of a Maple tree that are brushing against the Village hall.

Cllr Richards recused himself from this discussion.

It was agreed to support this application unanimously.

### **22.20 Network cluster meeting for S E Cornwall Sept 2020.**

Cllr Hoskin reported that this meeting covered the following items:

- Repairs on Military Road ( currently being undertaken).
- Adoption of the new White paper on planning that may restrict development of affordable housing countrywide.
- Tregantle parking issues and road obstruction during the summer months.

### **23.20 Rame Cluster traffic enforcement Sla.**

The 5 year Traffic enforcement Sla taken out with Cornwall Council is up for renewal with significantly different terms. It is estimated that additional traffic enforcement visits could cost each Parish council approximately £ 750 pa.

As St John Parish council has no car parking revenue to offset this expenses it was agreed not to sign up to the new proposed scheme by all members ( with the exception of Cllr Trevitt who recused himself from this decision as an employee of Cornwall Council).

#### **24.20 Mobile speed flashing unit.**

St John PC was requested by Cornwall council to review where they would like the unit to be placed. Military Road is not an option as it is national speed limit.  
The unit is to be placed near the village hall facing the downhill traffic.

#### **25.20 Auditor.**

It was agreed by the full council to appoint Mrs Heald as the new Auditor for St John Parish council.

**26.20 Clerks salary** was approved in accordance with Nalc approved payscales to £ 11.53 per hour.

**27.20 All seasons gardening quote** of £ 690 p a for 2021/22 was accepted.

#### **28.20 St John overgrown hedges.**

Mr Dolton expressed health and safety concerns for the overgrown hedges for walkers and vehicles driving through the village, particularly Gooseyford lane.

**Action:** Cllr Hoskin to obtain advise on this matter.

**Action:** Cllr Everard to identify the relevant properties.

**Action:** Clerk to investigate if Parish Council can fund hedge trimming.

#### **29.20 Western power telegraph pole needs attention Gooseyford Lane St John.**

**Action:** Clerk to report it to Western power.

#### **30.20 Finance.**

**30.20 a The payments** as listed were reviewed and approved by the full Council.

Additional payments for extra Christmas lights for Freathy were approved.

Cllr Everard to be reimbursed £8 for heating costs for the hall.

Clerk to be reimbursed £2 for heating costs for the hall.

**30.20 b The Asset Register** as listed was reviewed and approved by the full Council.

**30.20 c The Bank Reconciliation 30/11/2020** was reviewed and approved by the full Council.

**30.20 d The Solar benefit fund report** was reviewed and approved by the full Council.

**30.20 e The Management Report 30<sup>th</sup> Nov 2020** was reviewed and approved by the full Council.

### 30.20 f 2021/22 Budget .

The draft budget was prepared by the clerk and submitted for approval. The members agreed that there should be some amendments made.

2021/22  
Approved  
budget

RECEIPTS	£
Forecast Brought Forward 1/4/2021	£5,497
Precept	£6,000
CTS Grants	£63
Interest	£1
VAT refund	100
Community Benefit funding	£3,083
	<b>£9,247</b>
PAYMENTS	
VAT	£100
Clerk Salary	£1,575
Clerking expenses	£325
Subscriptions CPD	£215
Grass control/ Footpaths	£1,250
Community benefit projects and donations	£3,083
Hall Rent	£180
Misc Wreath and Christmas tree project	£250
Election	£1,000
Website	£300
Audit fee	£100
Computer	£100
Section 137	£500
Insurance	£260
Printing Postage and Stationery	£110
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£9,348</b>
<b>Profit/ ( Loss)</b>	<b>-£101</b>
Forecast Cfwd 31/3/2021	<b>£5,396</b>

The full council approved the revised budget.

Proposed by Cllr Richards Seconded Cllr Hoskin. Unanimously approved.

### 30.20 g 2021/22 Precept .

The full council approved to maintain the Precept at £6,000.

Proposed by Cllr Richards Seconded Cllr Hoskin. Unanimously approved.

### 31.20 Date of next meeting .

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February at Freathy Sports and Social Club 7.30pm.

Meeting closed at 9.20pm.