



Kewstoke Parish Council

Kewstoke Parish Council

“Here to protect the Rural Character and Environment of the Village and to promote Kewstoke as a pleasant place to live”

Clerk to the Council Mike Hardwick

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Chairman Councillor J.MacDonald

Minutes of the of the Kewstoke Parish Council meeting held on Monday 8th January 2024, which commenced at 7.pm.

Present:- Cllrs, T.Morris,(Vice Chairman),J.MacDonald,(Chairman),

K.Harper,R.Adams,T.Horry, N.Whyte, K,Jenkins ,G.Vearncombe, & R.Cunningham

In attendance

Parish Clerk

M.Hardwick

Unitary Members

Cllr Pilgrim

Cllr Williams

Public Participation

There were 3 members of the Public in attendance.

1.Opening of the meeting

The meeting opened at 7pm

2. Apologies for absence

N.Richards **Liaison Officer**

3. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of Interest

4. Adoption of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 4th December 2023

Proposed Cllr Vearncombe

Seconded Cllr Morris

The Chairman called for a show of hands by the Councillors in attendance at the meeting on 4th December to indicate their support for the adoption. This was indicated unanimously.

Agreed Unanimously

5. Police Beat Report

Some outline details of the latest beat report were referenced by Cllr MacDonald.

Calls Received 36

Cygnets 22

Threats 1

Road Related 6

Assault 1

ASB 1

Other 3

Suspicious 2

Abandoned 999 2

6. O/S Actions/Updates from previous meeting.

Work at Kewstoke Primary School

The Clerk referenced a report for December from the NSC Project Manager predominantly reiterating the delay in completion date to 15th March 2024.

Annual Playground Report

Cllr Morris reported that there was still some work to be completed although the recent inclement weather had delayed any work.

Action: - Cllr Morris & Cllr Vearncombe ongoing (2 O/s Items)

Chestnut Fencing

A meeting has been arranged with a representative of the Environment Agency on 18th January at 10am to review the Sea Defences and assess if any remedial work is required using the Environment Agencies existing stock of Chestnut Fencing.

Signage Toilets & Crookes Lane Footpath

It was agreed that Cllr MacDonald would further progress obtaining signage relating to the fact that the Parish Council maintained both the above facilities.

Cllr Harper confirmed that existing signage had now been installed at the Toilet Block

Action: - Cllr MacDonald- ongoing

Fence Crookes Lane Footpath

Cllr Morris reported that he and Cllr Adams had further inspected the fence and identified that at least 20 posts required reinforcement or replacement, albeit in their opinion they were not in a dangerous condition..

It was suggested that metal stakes were inserted and screwed to the posts initially to see if this resolved the issue.

Action: - Cllr Morris - Ongoing

Registering a Community Asset.

The Clerk reported that this application had been successful,

Book Swap

Cllr MacDonald also raised the possibility of setting up a book swap facility in the Telephone Kiosk currently housing the defibrillator unit. Following some discussion it was agreed that this would be progressed noting some matters of detail needed to be agreed and resolved.

Action: - Cllr MacDonald ongoing

7. Unitary Members Report

Cllr Pilgrim

Cllr Pilgrim reported that the North Somerset Council Planning Officer was reluctant to attend a Public meeting to discuss a recent Planning Application, but would be prepared to meet with representatives of the Parish Council and District Councillors to answer any questions raised at a public meeting.

A decision on a Public Meeting has yet to be made. Refer Planning Minutes

Cllr Williams

Cllr Williams reported that he had sent a letter to the Local MP to ask when full fibre Broadband would be available in the rural communities. A reply is awaited.

8. Other Issues

Agreeing Precept & Budget for 2024/2025

Cllr Morris proposed, following a recent Policy & Finance meeting, a recommended precept increase of £4K to £54. This was predominantly based on a precept report produced by the Clerk and circulated to all Councillors. (see attached)

Proposed Cllr Morris

Seconded Cllr Cunningham

This was agreed unanimously

Cllr Morris Cllr Morris proposed, following a recent Policy & Finance meeting, a recommended budget for 2024/25 (see attached)

Proposed Cllr Morris

Seconded Cllr Vearncombe

This was agreed unanimously

Co Option of new Councillors

A draft advert produced by the Clerk was proposed.

Proposed Cllr Whyte

Seconded Cllr Jenkins

This was agreed unanimously

It was agreed as per Policy KPC025 to set up an interview panel consisting of Parish Councillors.

Cllr Whyte, Cllr Morris, Cllr Horry, Cllr MacDonald and Cllr Harper agreed to form the interview panel.

A meeting was arranged for Wednesday the 17th January at the Village Hall at 7pm to discuss the interview process.

Flood Awareness campaign

The Clerk reported that a campaign is being undertaken in January and February 2024 by the Environment agency targeting the 10 wards in Weston super Mare to increase the levels of understanding and preparation for a flood amongst communities in W-S-M, Uphill and Sand Bay.

The Parish Council has been requested to publish information promoting the event.

Local Plan 2039

The Clerk reported that he had received an email from Bleadon Parish Council requesting that Kewstoke Parish Council revisit its response to the NSC Local Plan with particular emphasis on protection of land needed to deliver food.

It was agreed to revisit the response at a meeting on 17th January 2024.

Advertising Policy

It was agreed that the Clerk prepare a draft Advertising Policy for discussion at the next Policy & Finance Meeting.

Speed Watch Campaign

Cllr MacDonald reported that the Volunteers were currently being contacted by Avon & Somerset's Road Safety Officer with a view to setting up some training, and delivery of equipment.

9.Clerks Report

Streetlight Norton Court Farm.

The Clerk reported that an offer of 50% of the cost to reinstate the Streetlight at Norton Court Farm had been made by Weston Power.

It was proposed that this offer be accepted and for the Council to meet the rest in the sum of £700.

Proposed Cllr Morris

Seconded Cllr Vearncombe

Agreed Unanimously

One Way System Kewstoke Road

The Clerk reported that a request via the Parish website had been received asking if the Parish Council would recommend to NSC that the one way system, currently in operation along Upper Kewstoke Road, be kept in place following the completion of the work on Kewstoke Primary School.

After some discussion this request was rejected, with one reason cited as any roadwork's, as are currently planned for Lower Norton Lane could in potentially prevent access to the Village if the road was closed and the one way system remained in place.

10.Financial Update

Payments for December have been approved outside of this meeting to allow payment in the appropriate calendar month. See below.

Payments for Approval December 2023

Salaries & Reimbursements	£2,470.00
HM Revenue and Customs	£248.16
K.Harper reimbursements	£38.90
H&N Whyte	£286.73
Weston Support Services	£73.44
Total	£3,117.23

Additional Payments for December paid by DD & direct deduction

Water2Business	£40.50
Water2 Business	£86.50
SSE	£187.29
British Gas	£25.88
Servivce Charge	£18

11. Councillors Report

Cllr Vearncombe

Cllr Vearncombe raised the issue of overgrown hedges along Kewstoke Road. Cllr Adams confirmed that he would contact a contractor to check on availability and cost.

Action: - Cllr Adams

Cllr Whyte

Cllr Whyte reported that the Children's Christmas party was a success and that the same entertainer had been booked for the next Christmas party booked for 14/12/2024.

Cllr Jenkins

Cllr Jenkins requested an up-to-date list of Councillors mobile Phone numbers.

Action: - Cllr MacDonald

Cllr MacDonald

Cllr MacDonald asked for an update on the situation regarding the provision of trees by the Forest of Avon Trust, to land adjacent to the Village Hall.

Action: - Parish Clerk

Cllr MacDonald also reported that a request to improve parking facilities by creating a lay-by on land adjacent to the Village green had been turned down by North Somerset Council.

Meeting closed at 8 pm

12. Date of next meeting Monday 5th February 2024.

Expenditure	Budget 2024/25		Income	Budget
		Budget		
Salary & Expenses		£32,000.00	Precept	£54,000.00
Income Tax/NI		£2,600.00	Grant Orderly	£500.00
Groundworks		£15,000.00	Grant Church	£500.00
Insurance		£2,000.00	Allotments	£360.00
Capital Maintenance		£2,000.00	Toilets	£4,500.00
Electricity Kiosk/Toilets		£2,500.00	Interest	£500.00
			Car	
Electricity Street Lights		£3,500.00	Parks	£2,500.00
Admin		£2,500.00	kiosk	£2,500.00
Audit		£450.00		
			Village Hall (Rons	
VillageMaintenance		£5,000.00	Salary)	£8,000.00
			Electricity	
Village Hall Rental		£600.00	Contribution	£2,500.00
Water Allotments		£450.00		
Water Toilets/kiosk		£1,242.00		
Events		£1,000.00		
Toilet				
Consumables/Maintenance		£2,000.00		
Bin Emptying		£2,500.00		
Electricity Telephone box		360.00		
Donations		0.00		
		<u>£75,702.00</u>		<u>£75,860.00</u>

Total

Precept Report – 2024/2025

2023/2024 Current year Income/Expenditure

Looking forward to the end of the financial year I am predicting that we should achieve our budgetary targets.

We had planned for a slight surplus within the budget for 2023/24.

Expenditure is predicted to be £70.1K against a budget of £64.9K and income of around £70.6K against a budget of £67.8K

The result is are projected to achieve a situation whereby expenditure equals receipts for the financial year 2023/24.

The £5.2k increase in expenditure is mainly due a projected overspend on Groundwork's of around £1.6-2k, the increase in electricity charges for the Streetlights of around £1K, an increase in one of our orderlies hours, both working directly for the Parish Council and in particular the Village Hall (Noting the Village Hall expenditure is recouped) as well as a increased remuneration slightly greater than the minimum wage rise w.e.f. 1/4/2023 of around £3k in total.

It should be noted that it has been agreed that the Groundwork's contractor ceases work around the Village from Dec- Mar (although with the option of one off arrangements should the need become necessary) this would save approx £3K – reducing the projected overspend to around £1.6.as above.

The surplus income of £2.8K is accounted for by the additional grant of £1K for the Car Park opposite the new castle (£500) and for the fence in the copse in the Car Park opposite the South Sands Hotel. (£500), and increase in interest rates in respect of the reserve accounts of 0.5K and a projected surplus in income from the toilets of 0.3K

In summary I am projecting that the Council will achieve budgetary targets.

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A) 2024-2025

The budget for 2024/23 has been used as the basis of the 2023/24 budget.

The figures have been adjusted to take into account the projected overspend on Groundwork's, the increase in electricity charges, and hours worked by one of the orderlies. .

Therefore I am proposing again a balanced budget for 2024/25. Please see attached.

A constant review of our income and expenditure will be undertaken throughout the year, and spend against budget will be subject to an ongoing review by the Policy and Finance Committee, thus ensuring that Parishioners are receiving value for money in respect of the precept they are charged.

B) Cost Savings 2024/25

. We have rigorously looked to minimise costs over the past few years leaving very little room to achieve more significant cost saving.

It is also appropriate to review all the activities undertaken by the Parish Council and consider if they are still required. In particular the hedge trimming around the Village and the work of the orderlies

C) Income 2024/25

The lease granted for the Kiosk contains a rent review, increasing the rent is something that could generate additional income. It was agreed to increase the rent for 2024/25 to £2,750

It may be possible to increase revenue by charging for advertising of local businesses on the Parish Web Site, this is being looked at by the Councilors and a article proposed for the Christmas newsletter will endeavor to gauge interest.

The results of the feedback are awaited.

.D) Expenditure 2024/25

The main focus is the effect of increasing energy costs due to the volatile markets (In particular Street lighting). The fixed term contract came to an end in August 2023.

The increase in electricity costs in respect of the Toilets and Kiosk are expected to be met from the current tenants.

The minimum wage is expected to be increased to £11.44 historically the Council increases this to the nearest pound at £12 per hour. This relates to an increase of £1,368 per annum at current rates. This increase has been built in to the budget for 2024/25.

E. Projected Cash Position (current Accounts) at year end

	_£
Opening Balances	10.9K
Projected receipts to Y/E	73.3K
Projected payments to Y/E	(72.6K)
Projected balance at Year End	11.6K

Receipts £

Budget	67.8
Salaries	1.0
Toilets	0.3
interest	0.5
Car Park Grant	1.0
VAT to reclaim	1.0
VAT reclaimed	1.7
Total	<u>£73.3</u>

Payments

Budget	64.9
VAT	2.5 (Already Paid)
Vat	1.0 (To Pay)
Groundwork's	1.6
Salaries	3.0
Streetlighs	1.0
Water net	0.2
Total	<u>£72.6</u>

Current Assets

Projected Balances end of year 2023/24		Actual
Balances 1/4/2023		
Current A/cs		
	(Nat west) £0	£2,876
	(Unity Bank) £11,600	£10,902
Reserve1	£31,000	£27,697
Reserve2	£36,225	£35,712
Total	<u>£78.250</u>	<u>£ 77,187</u>

F.) Precept

Additional expenditure items that were discussed for 2024/25 were

Repairs to the Crookes Lane Footpath

- It is generally accepted that repairs are required to the Crookes Lane footpath fencing. It was agreed to repair and replace the sections of the fence that have become damaged. The anticipated cost would be £9K and it was agreed to add £3K to the precept for the next 3 years to allow for a staged repair and replace.

Sea Defences

- b. Now that the Council has the go ahead to use Chestnut Fencing again for repairs to the Sea defenses a further £1K was agreed to be included in the precept for this work.

History Group

- c. There is a possibility of providing financial assistance to the new Local History Group although as it was not clear on the way forward for the group this was put into abeyance.

Street Light Norton Lane

- d. There is a street light that requires repairing adjacent to Norton Court Farm at a cost of £1,400, It was agreed that this work will be undertaken should funds become available but would not be included in the precept .

Hedges/Verges Kewstoke Road.

- e. There is possibly a requirement to undertake work to cutting back the hedges along Kewstoke Road; this is in addition to the normal groundwork's that are undertaken. It was agreed that this work will be undertaken should funds become available but would not be included in the precept.

In conclusion it is to be recommended to the Parish Council that the Precept for 2023/24 should be increased by £4K to £54K representing an increase of 8% on 20/23/24 precept figure.

Prepared by

Mike Hardwick

Dated 02/01/2024

