

NITON AND WHITWELL PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NITON AND WHITWELL PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT WHITWELL VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 25th SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 7:00 PM

PRESENT: Councillors T Addison, B Attrill, S Biles, J Boileau Goad, S Burrridge, C Critchison, J Hill (Chair), A Logan, A Osborn, L Sheerin

IN ATTENDANCE: C Burt (Clerk to the Council), K Stay (Parish Warden), 1 member of the press and 18 members of the public.

A member of the public wished to update the PC on the ongoing issue of a blocked sewerage drain in Whitwell High Street. Mr Stay, the Parish Warden, has attended the site on several occasions. Despite recent reassurances from Island Roads and Wight Fibre, the issue is not yet resolved. The member of the public thanked the Ward Cllr, Parish Cllrs and Parish Warden for their assistance to date and sought their continued support to resolve this long running situation.

A member of the public sought clarification on the sequence of recent events regarding application 21/01827/FUL Land Rear of 1 Hillside Terrace and Trenale (known as School House Meadow) and including St Michaels High Street, Whitwell. His understanding was the developers submission had to be provided by July, yet he continues to see requests for documents from planners to the developer and Consultee responses added to the IWC Planning portal after that date. Indeed, a document from Hants and IW Police had been added this day. The question was, why is the developer still allowed to update his application post the announced cut-off date? Ward Cllr Critchison responded that the decision date remains 24th October. In the interim, a process of disclosure on the IW Planning portal has to be re-advertised to allow responses to the revised/additional application documents to be reviewed by and further comments received from Statutory Consultees. The process is to prevent the possibility of any future challenges, by the developer, should application permission be denied.

A member of the public asked if the PC was aware of the ownership of the Whitwell water hydrants. Cllrs assured him they were aware and that the PC has undertaken their upkeep for many years in a custodian capacity. Regarding the planning application 23/01508/LBC Proposed relocation of water hydrant at St Michaels High Street Whitwell. A member of the public implored the PC to stand behind Whitwell residents in not supporting the application. Cllr Burrridge added the PC has already provided strong comments to IW Planners against both the proposals raised and that the PC remains extremely mindful of the strength of feelings of Whitwell parishioners.

Cllrs Hill and Burrridge reminded everyone the issues surrounding both applications raised would be discussed formally as part of the meeting's Agenda. Any further comment the PC agrees to make during this meeting, will reflect Parishioner sentiment. Cllr Burrridge urged Parishioners to review past comments on the IW Council Planning portal and urged anyone who might not yet have done so, to make their feelings known on the portal. A Parishioner asked if previously provided comments remained valid as a result of the readvertising of the application. Cllrs assured him they were.

Cllr Boileau Goad thanked all members of the public for attending and showing their support and strength of feeling against the application. He assured the PC had heard what was said and will reflect that sentiment when coming to a decision on how it responds to the IWC Planning Dept. Cllr Burrridge stressed the final decision on the application rests with the IW Council.

A member of the public expressed that the Planning portal could not be accessed. Assurance was given by Cllrs this should not be an issue. Ward Cllr Critchison added that if Parishioners were having access difficulty, they should email her and she will pass any comments on to the Planning Dept.

A member of the public asked whether a refusal in October would bring an end to this drawn out process. Cllr Burrridge advised the developer has redress to appeal the decision. Cllrs confirmed the application had never yet been refused, on two past occasions the developer had withdrawn the application. It has not yet been before a planning committee.

A member of the public wished to clarify the impact of the introduction of double yellow lines on Nettlecombe Lane. His belief is the position of lines recently introduced by Island Roads are in contravention of the Highway Code, due to where vehicles can now only park further up the Lane. He went on to add, that if the Whitwell development

application, previously discussed, were to go ahead, his belief is further double yellow lines will be introduced on Whitwell High Street displacing even more parking spaces. He recalled no road traffic incidents (RTC) occurring for many years on Nettlecombe Lane prior to the new lines being put in place. He is aware of one such incident since their introduction. His and his neighbour's drives are now regularly partially blocked by parked vehicles. Why were they introduced? Cllr Boileau Goad asked if the RTC had been reported. The response was no. Cllr Boileau Goad implored people to report all road incidents to the authorities.

Meeting opened at 7:21pm.

M01/09/23 APOLOGIES: None.

M02/09/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS: There were no declarations of interests.

M03/09/23 PLANNING:

3.1 PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

Much discussion was had over the applications relating to the proposed High Street Whitwell development and the associated proposed move of the water hydrant. Cllrs felt very strongly that these proposals should not be approved and will stand behind the many objections already raised by Whitwell residents.

Cllr Addison expressed the PC's appreciation of the work Cllr Burridge has put in regarding the Whitwell High Street development application.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk be asked to submit to the Isle of Wight Council the comments set out in Appendix I which forms part of these minutes.

3.2 PLANNING DECISIONS:

1. **23/00950/HOU** Proposed single storey extension at Niton Barns Blackgang Road Niton **GTD**
2. **23/01095/HOU** Replacement sunroom at Linstead Sandrook Road Niton **GTD**
3. **23/01145/HOU** Proposed single storey extension to south elevation at Quiet Hills Crocker Lane Niton **GTD**
4. **23/01152/HOU** Demolition of garage; first floor extension to provide attic bedroom; single storey side extension at Meadow Rise Laceys Lane Niton **REF**

M04/09/23 MINUTES:

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 24th July 2023 be taken as read, confirmed and signed as being an accurate record of the proceedings.

M05/09/23 FINANCE:

5.1 Financial Statement & Bank Reconciliation: Members had before them two schedules (one for August supplied for information) and for September showing a cashbook balance of £93,723.00 in general funds (including £3,399.05 in earmarked reserves, £26,359.13 in the public sector deposit fund and £6,367.77 in the Bequest Account.

RESOLVED: that the financial statements as of the 21st August and 19th of September 2023 be received and noted.

5.2 Payments for Authorisation: Schedules of accounts for payment made in August and proposed for September were set before the meeting.

Type	Date Paid	Payee	Details	Amount
DD*	10.09.23	XLN	Internet for the Exchange	47.53
DD*	15.09.23	EDF	Electricity for Niton W/C's	1.00
E-trans		Jeromes	Land Registry charges for leases (22.1.22)	135.00
E-trans		John O'Conner	Maintenance at Niton Rec	264.13
E-trans		Focus Plumbing & Heating	Legionella Risk Assessment Niton w/cs	99.00
E-trans		Wight Computers	Web hosting & Domain name annual fee	171.59
E-trans		IW Council	Business rates The Exchange	39.00
E-trans		Top Mops	Cleaning @ Niton toilets	291.07
E-trans		Community Action	C Burt & K Stay salaries	1,415.54
	Total			2463.86

* Denotes already paid

RESOLVED: that the Parish accounts as listed above be approved for payment.

M06/09/23 COMMUNITY WORKING PARTIES: Cllr Osborn suggested the creation of volunteer working parties, possibly once a month, to undertake certain tidying up projects throughout the Parish. Both he, the Parish Warden and any other Cllrs would co-ordinate a group of Parishioner volunteers. An example of the type of suggested project is a tidy up of the area surrounding the PC office. He suggested this first project could take place on Saturday 30th Sept, with further projects organised in the future. Cllr Critchison suggested a project where the cutting back/down of the hedge at the Niton W/Cs be considered.

RESOLVED: The introduction of regular PC initiated working parties be adopted.

M7/09/23 TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS (Double Yellow Lines)

7.1 POST IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES:

Cllr Boileau Goad expressed his dismay on hearing that past road traffic collisions (RTCs) in the Parish are not being reported to the authorities. His point being that the positioning of recent Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) have not allayed the concerns nor consequences expressed by Parishioners. Cllr Osborn also had heard of incidents on Kemming Road. He reiterated the need to report all RTCs if a case is to be built to approach the statutory bodies to better position the TROs recently introduced. Ward Cllr Critchison reminded all present she is running a Community Road safety meeting on Thursday 5th October, at 7:00pm in Niton Village Hall, when these and other road safety concerns can be discussed.

Cllr Addison recounted the pre-consultation discussions had by the PC with the statutory bodies, where the rationale for the proposed TROs had been derived. No details were provided. A further interaction was had during the official consultation process, where again, the rationale and technical justification was sought for why the proposals as presented were being put forward. No details were provided. Ward Cllr Critchison responded that as far as she was aware the PC's concerns were taken into account during the consultation process, amendments had been made and then had been undertaken in the proscribed manner, citing parishioner, emergency services and waste collection providers concerns. She believes all the proposals were justified and enacted accordingly. Cllr Boileau Goad recalled he had requested a conversation with the District Steward but was refused with regard to a specific instance. The points being made by Cllrs were that they felt further local input should have been sought, prior to implementation. A Parishioner has subsequently questioned whether one instance is in contravention of the Highway Code.

7.2 REQUEST FOR AN ACCESS PROTECTION BAR (Hard White line) AT THE ENTRANCE TO NITON RECREATION GROUND:

Cllr Boileau Goad explained the request for a hard white line, brought about by the repositioning of a disabled bay (from Town End) to Allotment Road, during the TRO implementation, the bay is now located adjacent to the entrance of the Rec. Occasions have been witnessed where vehicles are parked across the entrance, exacerbated by the new positioning of the disabled bay. This is both an impediment to vehicular

access to the Rec and a safety hazard to pedestrians (moving between the car park and the Rec) and with regard to larger vehicles negotiating the 90 degrees turn from Town End into Allotment Road.

RESOLVED: A payment for the cost of implementation for the hard white line should be made, but that representations should be made to Island Roads for reimbursement, as the need has occurred only as a consequence of the implementation of the TRO along Town End.

M08/09/23 NITON W/C REPAIRS: During the summer, damage occurred in one of the gents' cubicles resulting in a replacement pan and reconnection becoming necessary. The Clerk sought three quotes, two of which were received, for £210 and £268.

RESOLVED: The quote for £210 be accepted and a request for the work to be undertaken as soon as possible.

M09/09/23 NITON PCC FUNDING REQUEST: A grant request has been received for repairs to the earthworks, including graves, surrounding the Niton War Memorial, which have become uneven.

RESOLVED: A grant of £234 be made to Niton PCC to enable the work to be undertaken.

M10/09/23 WHITWELL PCC/FACE ANNUAL GRANT FUNDING ALLOCATION: A request has been received to consider increasing the annual grant allocation to The Friends of Ashknowle Cemetery and its Environs (FACE). The request comes as a result of increasing costs due to the current economic climate and is for a 10% uplift on the current allocation of £400.

RESOLVED: An increase in the annual grant allocation to £440 be agreed and advised.

M11/09/23 PARISH COUNCIL PRESS AND MEDIA PROTOCOLS: Members were presented with two documents setting out a Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy and a Media and Press Protocol to be adopted in light of the PC's aim of utilising its Website and Facebook page to enhance positive press coverage. Cllrs Sheerin and Addison questioned whether such documents were necessary, on the basis many aspects of that proposed were already covered by the PC's Standing Orders and Councillors Code of Conduct. Cllr Addison suggested amending the existing Code of Conduct to incorporate necessary references relating to media and press interactions, prior to adopting the new policy and protocols.

RESOLVED: The Clerk to determine where existing governing documents need to be amended to accommodate one or both of the Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy and Media and Press Protocol and represent at a future PC meeting.

M12/09/23 WARD COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: The report had been circulated in advance. There were no questions arising.

Cllr Sheerin wished to thank Ward Cllr Critchison for securing additional evening bus services Mon -Sat into and from Newport. There will be no costs passed onto the PC. The services will be reviewed in 12 months time, based on usage. Cllrs extolled the opportunity to ensure parishioners are aware of these additional services.

M13/09/23 CLERK'S REPORT: The Clerk reported that a new broadband provider had been sourced, XLN (soon to be renamed, Daisy Communications). An 18 month contract has been agreed at £2 pm cheaper than Plusnet. The Exchange non-functioning electricity meter has been replaced. This was only raised as electricity bills for at least 18 months have been estimated and could be on the low side. A large catch-up payment may be required.

Having discussed the request to place an Access Protection Bar across the entrance to Niton Rec, another consequence of double yellow lines being installed on Town End is that a resident's disabled parking bay had been moved to the left of the Rec entrance. The resident says he will be unable to use the new bay, as it's too far from his house. A proposed solution would be to establish a disabled bay in the Rec car park. The Clerk sought Cllrs views on whether this was a supportable proposal. Cllrs responded positively agreeing to the principle, recalling the suggestion had been made several times in the past. But felt further discussion was required to agree to paying a company to install the bay and should be an agenda item next month.

The Niton telephone kiosk project is entering its next phase, with a request from the project leader to release funds being held by the PC to fund the audio equipment. Agreement was provided.

The Clerk relayed he had received emails from persons unknown regarding the closure of Permaculture Island. Cllr Boileau Goad was able to provide a positive update, thanking Ward Cllr Critchison for her support. The site has now reopened on a temporary basis, with certain conditions: restricted to 200 monitored resident users, vehicle details to be recorded, 10:00am – 4:00pm weekdays. Cllr BG was very pleased with this news for what is considered a great community service.

M14/09/23 COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS: Two written reports were received and noted. No questions arose. Cllr Critchison wished to advise that she and Cllr Sheerin had met a representative from the Ramblers Association, who showed them a good interactive map, which will form the basis for any extensions or upgrades of the footpath/bridleway network. Cllr Sheerin asked if a meeting of the Footpath Working Party could be called to discuss the local network and how it might be improved to overcome safety concerns with the existing network. It was agreed a report from the Working Party be included on the Agenda for the next PC meeting.

Cllr Critchison has been discussing signage for Niton Library to provide clear direction to its location. Cllr Critchison then referred to the need for a wider Niton village map, suggesting it could be located at the Exchange. Cllr Hill suggested this could be raised on the Agenda for the next meeting. Cllr BG suggested the local artist, used for the Smugglers Walk pamphlet, could be approached for the purpose. The Clerk had taken a photo of the Whitwell village map, which could be used as an example of what could be reproduced.

Cllr Critchison was keen to reinstate the Niton lantern parade, culminating at the church. A date proffered was Sunday 3 December. She has liaised with Newport Carnival Committee to develop a management plan. She will seek volunteers to marshal road closures, etc. Cllr Hill asked whether the school could be involved to be more inclusive. Cllr BurrIDGE recalled a coinciding event being held at the Village Hall and wondered whether a similar event might attract a wider audience.

Cllr Sheerin requested that the resolution passed in October 2021 (M09/10/25) to grant up to £200 to Niton Community Football Club to acquire nets and flags, etc. now be released. The Clerk will include this in the monthly payment run.

Cllr Sheerin had been approached by a Parishioner reporting an incident of fly tipping at the Undercliff Drive entrance to the Tunnels footpath. The belief is that a commercial vehicle is responsible. Cllr Logan has seen evidence of this occurring several times. Cllr Sheerin will liaise with Ward Cllr Critchison to resolve.

Cllr Addison updated members on the Nettlecombe Lane historic footpath sign needing repair. Agreement has been reached with Nettlecombe Farm to provide access to the area surrounding the post, and at a future PC meeting, agreement will be sought for the PC to provide funds for new oak finger pointers. Nettlecombe Farm has suggested a similar sign elsewhere on the farm will be funded by them. The Parish Warden has spoken to Peter Matthews to ascertain those costs.

Cllr BurrIDGE has been approached by a parishioner asking for an update on what might be happening at Castlehaven Lane and the village green. The Clerk updated that responses to the project being undertaken by the PC's legal representative were still awaited. Further information to complete the project is still not available. It was agreed the Clerk produces a letter for the Chair to sign, urging this situation to be brought to a speedy conclusion.

Cllr Logan enquired who was responsible for the upkeep of road signs on Undercliff Drive, as one is in need of attention. The Clerk had been contacted by a Parishioner to report the issue. The Parishioner was directed to Island Roads fixmystreet app, to report it.

Cllr Osborn commented he had been approached concerning the TRO double yellow lines at Sandrock Road. He wished this to be included when revisiting any issues arising from Parish-wide implementation.

M15/09/23 PARISH WARDEN'S REPORT: Mr Stay updated on his involvement with the previously discussed drain blockage issue on Whitwell High Street. A new District Steward has been appointed, who has taken a close interest in the issue. He has informed a new IW Council drainage specialist is to be appointed. It is hoped a meeting of all the interested parties will be held shortly.

Mr Stay sought direction from Members concerning the hedge at Niton W/Cs. Cllr Osborn suggested this could be tackled by a working party. Debris removal remains the issue.

Mr Stay relayed that a further graffiti issue at the Rec had been discovered and quickly removed.

He was thanked by Members for the work he has undertaken in repainting the outside of the Exchange.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 8:36pm.

Signed..... Date.....

APPENDIX I TO MINUTES

COMMENTS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

1. 23/0508/LBC Proposed relocation of water hydrant at St Michaels High Street Whitwell.

The clean water system and these hydrants were put in place in 1886 by a combination of funding by a local philanthropist and public subscription. As a result, the Parish Council has been the 'custodian' of the Whitwell hydrants over many decades, active in up-keeping the standpipes in good condition, painting, cleaning etc. Also, there is a possibility that it is still connected to the freshwater source. The hydrant in question is one of the most prominent in Whitwell High Street. The Parish Council remains totally against the proposed relocation of this grade II listed structure.

We note there is still no assessment on the impact of re-siting the water hydrant. We note also, Historic England's concerns for the protection of the hydrant during the construction phase of the development.

Niton and Whitwell Parish Council is supportive of, and stands behind, the many comments posted on the IW Council planning portal by local Whitwell residents, who do not approve of a move from its current location on the grounds of its integral image on Whitwell High Street and its historic heritage importance within the village. - **OPPOSE**

2. 21/01827/FUL Land rear of 1 Hillside Terrace and Trenale (known as School House Meadow) and including St Michaels High Street, Whitwell.

Niton and Whitwell Parish Council strongly objects and reiterates its many concerns over this proposal as put forward in its July 2023 submission to the IW Council's Planning portal.

In addition, the recent implementation of Traffic Regulation Orders in Whitwell and consequent displacement of parked vehicles, together with the continuing regular flooding events in and around the area of the development site, add credence to the unsuitability of such a development and the additional strain it will impose on already stretched local infrastructure. - **OPPOSE**

3. 23/01518/HOU. Demolition of single storey extension; proposed dormer on the south elevation with Juliet balcony; alterations at Nell Bank High Street Whitwell. No objections – **SUPPORT**