

NITON AND WHITWELL PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NITON AND WHITWELL PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE EXCHANGE, HIGH STREET, NITON ON MONDAY 23rd OCTOBER 2023 AT
7:00 PM

PRESENT: Councillors T Addison, B Attrill, S Biles, J Boileau Goad, S Burrige, 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 public.

Meeting opened at 7:15pm.

M01/10/23 APOLOGIES: None.

M02/10/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS: Cllr Osborn declared an interest in a planning matter.

M03/10/23 MINUTES:

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 25th September 2023 be taken as read, confirmed and signed as being an accurate record of the proceedings.

M04/10/23 FINANCE:

4.1 Financial Statement & Bank Reconciliation: Members had before them a schedule for October showing a cashbook balance of £89,599.40 in general funds (including £3,399.05 in earmarked reserves), £26,582.95 in the public sector deposit fund and £6,367.77 in the Bequest Account.

RESOLVED: that the financial statements as of the 17th of October 2023 be received and noted.

4.2 Payments for Authorisation: A schedule of accounts for payments for September were set before the meeting.

Type	Date Paid	Payee	Details	Amount
DD*		XLN	Internet for the Exchange	27.54
DD*		EDF	Electricity for Niton W/C's	1.00
E-trans		BDO LLP	External Audit	378.00
E-trans		John O'Conner	Maintenance at Niton Rec	264.13
E-trans		IW Council	Business rates The Exchange	39.00
E-trans		Top Mops	Cleaning @ Niton toilets	559.84
E-trans		IW Council	Recharge for Environment Officer 22-23	547.00
E-trans		Community Action	C Burt & K Stay salaries	1453.04
E-trans		K Stay Expenses	Paint for the Exchange	25.10
E-trans		C Burt Expenses	Poppy wreathes & HMLR	43.00
	Total			3337.65
* Denotes Already paid				

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

4.3 Statement of Receipts and Payments Against Budget for the 2nd quarter 2023/24: Members had before them a variance report showing where income and expenditure is projected to be greater or less than that originally budgeted.

RESOLVED: The statement was noted as being an accurate assessment.

M05/10/23 PLANNING:

5.1 PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

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.

5.2 PLANNING DECISIONS:

1. **23/01325/FUL** - Proposed new nursery building at Dean Crossing Nurseries Whitwell Road Whitwell. **REF**
2. **23/01342/TW** - T1; Beech Tree - Fell at Ridge House Barrack Shute Niton. **GTD**
3. **23/00720/HOU** - Proposed triple garage at Camellia Cottage Sandrock Road Niton. **GTD**
4. **23/01458/HOU** - Proposed alterations and single storey rear extension @ Stone Cottage Newport Road Niton. **GTD**

Cllr Burrridge announced to Members that planning application 21/00793/OUT Land at Ladyacre Farm, Pan Lane Niton had been withdrawn.

Cllr Burrridge also mentioned that a planning compliance complaint had been lodged on application 22/02025/HOU 23 Verlands Close Niton, where the consented front elevation window had been installed as a set of French doors. Mention was also made of a shed, now exposed subsequent to a hedge removal on Chatfield Road might be in contravention of planning conditions. The shed has been in situ for some while, but was previously behind a hedge, since removed, and not visible.

M06/10/23 IW COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT OFFICER RETENTION FOR A FURTHER 12 MONTH PERIOD: Members had before them a breakdown of the escalating cost of retaining the services of a dedicated Environment Officer. The recharge for the year to October 2023 is £547.00. The merits of retaining the service were debated in the knowledge a new EO had been appointed in September 2023. His patch covers a much-enlarged area than before, so his focus is spread thinner.

RESOLVED: Members agreed that, given we employ our own Parish Warden, who could replicate the regular inspections carried out by the EO, the service should be discontinued.

M7/10/23 REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND PLACES 2023: Members had before them a scheme of Polling Districts from 2021.

RESOLVED: Within the scope of the review, Members agreed there were no changes necessary.

M08/10/23 (i) REPORT FROM THE FOOTPATHS WORKING PARTY: Cllrs Sheerin and Critchison had been canvassing walkers, cyclists, and horse riders to determine what issues they face when moving around the Parish. A recurring concern was the introduction of increasing numbers of electric cars, which aren't always discernible by other road users. As a result, the Working Party had met with a representative of the Ramblers Association to discuss potential enhancements and additions to the local footpath network and, whether any existing footpaths could be upgraded to bridleways. Overlaying an aspirational map, both the Working Party and the Ramblers, came up with similar suggestions. To take matters forward, the footpaths NT32 and 33 area (Specifically, at the top of Boxers Lane turning right to come down to Blackgang Road, to meet NT52) has been identified as the first such upgrade from a footpath to a bridleway. The intent being to provide a safer route around Niton, without using the road. Cllrs are confident the landowner concerned would be amenable to enter into a discussion to achieve this scenario. A further area for discussion is a strip of land, currently overgrown, near the lane to the timber yard (opposite the Southford Lane junction) on the left-hand side of Newport Road running North, towards Sibbicks Farm.

RESOLVED: The PC agreed to take these suggestions forward, with Cllr Critchison to determine who are the landowners. The Clerk then to assist the Working Party to craft a letter(s) from the PC to the landowner(s) to open a suitable dialogue.

M08/10/23 (ii) MEMBERS TO CONSIDER PURCHASING ANTI-SLIP PAINT FOR THE REPAIR TO THE BRIDGE ON NT52: The bridleway is currently closed for repairs to a bridge on the bridleway. IWC Rights of Way (RoW) has indicated it will repair the bridge but, if it is considered appropriate, it will not be responsible for attaching anti-slip measures. Ward Cllr Critchison had passed on a suggestion from RoW for anti-slip paint to be applied as an example of what could be achieved. Cllr Sheerin had researched the suggestion proffered and did not believe it to be a viable solution.

RESOLVED: Ward Cllr Critchison will undertake further research to determine if an appropriate solution can be found and will bring the matter back at a later date.

M09/10/23 WHITWELL HIGH STREET DRAIN BLOCKAGE: Cllr Addison brought to Members attention the fact that it has been only the interventions of: one of the affected residents, our Parish Warden and Ward Councillor, driving the attempts to bring a positive conclusion to this longstanding issue. He feels that these individuals have been shouldering the burden for long enough, and it is now time for the PC robustly to bring Wight Fibre, Island Road, the contractors and the IW Council to account for their failings in making the necessary timely repairs.

RESOLVED: The Clerk to draft a letter for the Chair to sign, based on the wording provided by Cllr Addison, addressed to the parties involved.

M10/10/23 TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS (Double Yellow Lines) Cllr Boileau Goad had suggested drone footage be obtained to challenge the assertions of the authorities that there are no issues. He wishes to demonstrate there are shortcomings to the recently implemented double yellow lines in Nettlecombe Lane and Allotment Road. Ward Cllr Critchison has visited several affected residents in Nettlecombe Lane, to understand their concerns.

RESOLVED: Ward Cllr Critchison to compile a report of all Nettlecombe Lane residents' concerns for consideration by the IW Council's Cabinet Member with responsibility for Roads and Transport.

M11/10/23 TOWN END/ALLOTMENT ROAD CAR PARK DISABLED BAY: At the last PC meeting there was no explicit agreement for a bay to be introduced, nonetheless a bay has been painted in the car park. It was said that this had happened for all the right reasons, but not in accordance with the PC's resolved wishes. Once suitable signage has been attached, the bay, in the public car park, will be available for any disabled user. Cllr Boileau Goad suggested signage that states 'vehicles are parked at their owners risk' should be erected. Cllr Logan suggested the car park ought to fall under the responsibility of the Recreation Ground Working Party, so that matters, as above, could be discussed and then brought to full council.

RESOLVED: The Allotment Road car park should also fall under the responsibility of the Niton Recreation Ground Working Party.

M12/10/23 PARISH COUNCIL PRESS AND MEDIA PROTOCOL: This subject was brought back after the Clerk had reviewed the issues raised at the previous PC meeting. It was determined a minor amendment to the PC's Standing Orders (sec. 22) would accomplish the desired result. Cllr Addison suggested a minor amendment to the new Protocol would be necessary, to omit a reference in the proposed wording (Paragraph 1, clause c (ii) to a Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy, which was not being adopted.

RESOLVED: The PC's Standing Orders to be amended to reflect a direct link to a new Media and Press Protocol, subject to its amendment detailed above.

M13/10/23 XMAS COMMUNITY OUTING: Members had before them two costings for transport to and from the parish villages to Busy Bees Nursey, Ryde, from which to make a decision on whether an Xmas community outing is organised.

RESOLVED: That the FYT minibus be hired at a cost of £110 for up to 14 parishioners, funded by the PC, at a date to be agreed between 11th - 15th December. The Clerk to liaise with the Cllrs Hill, Osborn, Logan, Boileau Goad and Critchison, together with the member of the public, to assist in taking forward its organisation.

M14/10/23 WARD COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: The report had been circulated in advance and was noted. A copy of the report is attached as an Appendix to these minutes. There were no matters arising. Ward Cllr Critchison did enquire whether there had been an approach to the PC from anyone, regarding a grant request towards the costs of producing lanterns for a Niton Lantern Parade, to be held in December. The Clerk advised he had been approached, but too late for it to be included as an Agenda item this time. The matter will be discussed at the November PC meeting.

M15/10/23 CLERK'S REPORT: The Clerk reported that sign-off of the prior years AGAR had been provided by the external auditors. There were no matters arising.

The Clerk has purchased two Remembrance Day poppy wreaths. Cllrs Osborn and Burridge agreed to represent the PC in Niton and Whitwell respectively.

Prices for this year's Xmas trees acquisition had not been received in time for their purchase to be on the Agenda. The Clerk had subsequently received costs from Thompsons which would total £180, a £10 increase on the prior year. Given the poor quality experienced last year, the Clerk has been liaising with Steve Riddett - local supplier, to determine if he could source suitable trees for both villages. The Clerk will continue these discussions.

RESOLVED: The Clerk be given delegated authority to spend up to £200 for the purchase of two trees.

The Niton Historical Society approached Cllr Boileau Goad to determine whether the PC would be amenable to providing the Exchange for a WWII exhibition to be held on Friday 3rd November. No publicity has yet been made available.

With regard to Planning Enforcement, the Clerk advised he had been approached by a neighbouring PC's Clerk to determine interest in 'clubbing together' to make the appointment of a dedicated part-time IWC Planning Enforcement Officer to reduce overall costs. These discussions will continue and, if deemed appropriate, will be brought before a future PC meeting.

Further to the discussion at last month's PC meeting regarding commissioning a Niton map, Cllr Boileau Goad and the Clerk have secured the interest of local artist, Alan Rowe. Mr Rowe is willing to meet with Cllrs to discuss his concepts for the purpose. Cllrs Hill, Osborn and Boileau Goad expressed a willingness to participate. The Clerk will organise a suitable date to meet. Cllr Addison suggested a wider view be taken, in that a Parish map ought to be produced to be used as a resource for many applications from which a Niton specific map could be derived. This will be put forward at the initial meeting.

The Clerk mentioned that discussions with Peter Matthews regarding the fingerposts at Nettlecombe had not progressed. However, Mr Matthews had suggested Ian Raymond who might be interested in fabricating the boards for us. He has seen what is required and is keen to meet at site to discuss this further. The Clerk will liaise with the Parish Warden to progress matters.

M16/10/23 COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS: Two written reports were received from Cllrs Critchison and Osborn and were noted. Copies of these reports are attached as an Appendix to these Minutes.

Cllr Osborn wished to record the following tribute to two Niton householders: "This week I received the horrific news that David Barlow and Celia Geyer, who had a second home in Niton, were killed in what is believed to have been a terrorist attack in Uganda. They had just gotten married in South Africa, and were on their honeymoon. David and Celia regularly visited the island with their two dogs, and enjoyed walks, cycling and mountain biking and had made strong friendships with a number of villagers. Ceila, who was originally from South Africa, had recently completed a sponsored cycle ride across the Pyrenees. David, who had his own timber company in Berkshire, was also Chair of his local Parish Council in Hampstead Norreys, Berkshire. They made sure they supported our local businesses whenever they came over and often frequented the White Lion and Sam's Bar whenever visiting. We had often spoke of some of the common challenges of our two parish council communities. We even joked about second homeowners. But they were genuine, generous and kind people, who had decided to make a second home here in Niton, amongst us. They will be missed terribly".

He proposed that as a Parish Council, we send a letter of condolence to Hampstead Norreys Parish Council, where David was Chair. Cllr Hill agreed to take this forward.

Cllr Sheerin has been approached by several concerned residents of Church Street regarding the upcoming closure for utility works. The concern being the egress from Pan Lane and Star Inn Road and the lack of information forthcoming from Wight Fibre. Cllr Boileau Goad has been in contact with Wight Fibre to attempt to address these issues. He advised that information regarding this issue will be forwarded to the Clerk for dissemination to all Cllrs.

Cllr Hill had prepared a Chair's Report, which is attached as an Appendix to these Minutes.

One issue raised related to the spate of road closures in Niton and whether there is a more effective way of communicating with, for example business owners. The suggestion was to put a mailing list of businesses together, so that when a road closure announcement is made, the information is sent straight to those business so they can advise staff and customers.

Cllr Hill has asked the school and pre-school to create decorations once again for the Xmas trees. The suggestion was made that decorations are made from degradable materials to reduce any non-recyclable litter.

Cllr Hill updated members on where the PC's legal representative is with matters relating to Castlehaven Lane. A meeting has been arranged on Fri 27 October to discuss where matters stand. Cllr Boileau Goad agreed to join Cllr Hill.

M17/10/23 PARISH WARDEN'S REPORT: Mr Stay updated on Members of the timing of his knee surgery. which will take him out of action for some time. He will advise the Clerk when a specific timeframe is known.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 9:00pm.

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

APPENDIX I TO MINUTES

COMMENTS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

1. **23/01695/HOU** - Retention of car port and roof solar panels at Adela Kemming Road Whitwell. No objections - **SUPPORT**

2. **23/01765/HOU** - Proposed replacement raised roof to form additional accommodation at 1st floor level; single storey extension on west elevation; alterations at Niton Manor Cottage Pan Lane Niton

The Parish Council does not support this application. Niton Manor Cottage is one of the oldest dwellings in Niton and is Grade II listed. Further alteration and addition to the building would ruin its wider historic interest. - **OBJECT**

3. **23/01766/LBC** - Listed Building Consent for proposed replacement raised roof to form additional accommodation at 1st floor level; single storey extension on west elevation; alterations at Niton Manor Cottage Pan Lane Niton.

The Parish Council does not support this application. Niton Manor Cottage is one of the oldest dwellings in Niton and is Grade II listed. Further alteration and addition to the building would ruin its wider historic interest - **OBJECT**

4. **23/01851/FUL** - Demolition of former piggery buildings; proposed detached dwelling (Revised Scheme) at Land Adjacent To Danby Southford Lane Whitwell. No objections - **NEUTRAL**

APPENDIX II TO MINUTES

WARD/COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Ward/Councillor Critchison

Cllr community catch up/surgery sessions 2023

Whitwell: Monday 6th November 10.30 – 11.30 am at the church

Niton: Wednesday 1st November 10.30- 11.30 am, Niton Exchange

Chale: Saturday 18th November 10.30 – 11.30am at the village hall

Community speed watch

I have arranged for a community road safety meeting at Niton Village Hall on Thursday 5th October at 7pm.

If you would like to join the Niton, Whitwell or Chale volunteer speed watch teams or be the coordinator of the groups please get in touch for more information.

Planning Application: 21/01827/FUL - Whitwell

The final deadline for decision was agreed as 24th October and this has not changed. The planning team have assured me it will not go beyond the agreed date.

The strength of feeling within the community over the moving of the hydrant is evident. It is an important feature of the village and to relocate something with historic relevance will be very emotive.

This application has been open for quite a length of time now so it would be good to reach a conclusion for the residents affected by the plans.

Bus service

The later evening service enhancement to the No.6 has been approved. The new timetable will now include additional journeys, early evening into Newport and return late every evening Monday to Saturday. This has been made possible through the IW Council, using Department for Transport and Bus Service Improvement Plan funding.

Niton and Whitwell Horticultural Show

I would like to thank the organisers of the show for putting on a superb family event.

Well done to all taking part and congratulations to the winners. I was extremely proud to get first for my Victoria sponge!

It was a wonderful day and great to see the traditional village event continue.

Parish Council report October 2023

Footpath network meeting

Cllr Sheerin and I have met with Mike Slater, IOW Ramblers Footpath Secretary about identifying opportunities to extend the footpath network across the south of the Island. We have suggested several paths in Niton and Whitwell that can be investigated.

Library signage

The library asked about road signage so that people can find it easier. I have suggested they look into some signage they could put outside the building to make it more obvious, and they have been in touch with Island Roads who said they are on a list. I'm not sure what list that would be? I said I would bring it to the attention of the parish council too. One idea that has been mentioned several times, to help people find their way around the village, is a map be placed outside the parish council office. The toilets, church, library etc. are tricky to find if visitors are not sure which way to go and it would be a very helpful addition to the village.

Lantern parade

I am looking to hold the Niton village lantern parade on Sunday 3rd December. This will be a great way to start the festive season.

If you can help run lantern making workshops, marshal the parade route or assist at the church afterwards, please get in touch as we need as many volunteers as possible to make sure it runs safely.

Councillor Osborn

1. **Monthly Working Party.** Last month I proposed a monthly working party to focus resources on a specific villager project each month, and encourage residents to get involved in the upkeep of their village through focussed community activity. Our 1st working party took place two weeks ago and focussed on the grounds around Niton Old Telephone Exchange (or as I call it - City Hall.). Thanks to Keith, myself and Tash Dix, we weeded, trimmed, swept and tidied, including the area behind the building. Tash also generously provided a 1 tonne garden waste bag and arranged for its removal.

I am in discussion with Keith about November's project -although we have agreed this will not be a public working party due to the inherent risks of the site - to tackle the hedges and grounds around the Public Toilets.

2. Niton War Memorial. Last month the PCM approved funding of a grant to Niton Parish Church, to undertake light groundworks surrounding the memorial to level and return the grass area. Happy to report this has been completed, and in good time for this year's Nov 11 memorial service and wreath laying.

3. Road Safety. I attended our Ward Councillor's Parish Road Safety meeting which involved Niton, Whitwell and Chale. Broad discussion of issues, most of which we hear are all well aware. One take-away for me was that Undercliff Drive will not to be officially closed.

With regard to Seeking a solution to Niton Crossroads traffic management the next stage appears to be a consultation, led by IWCC / Island Roads to explore the options. I am keen to help drive this forward - I believe Claire is liaising with IW Councillor Phil Jordan. I would urge all councillors to support this - and as a PC to do what we can to help drive this forward. **Possibly with drafting of a letter to Phil Jordan requesting this be expedited, and request that the PC be involved in that consultation.**

4. Social Housing Niton. I have recently been shocked and dismayed at the lack of empathy, interest or understanding of issues which a Housing Association Landlord who manage properties in Niton, and the apparent lack of standard working policies, that should ensure the welfare and potentially the safeguarding of their tenants and the properties they live in. It is my understanding there are links to the recent car smashing incident in Niton. Happy to work with any other councillors to explore the engagement protocols regarding the provision of good quality social housing in our villages.

5. Castlehaven Lane. I have been monitoring the water and drainage issues and am increasingly concerned at both the amount of unmanaged water running down the lane all the way to the sea - and increasingly concerned at the quality and type of water run off - something I would like to discuss with the Castlehaven Working Group.

At the end of the Summer I reported Japanese Knotweed to the IWCC and Environment Agency. The area was "trimmed" by the land owners, but it's growing back. And is in the water course of the Buddle Stream. I will raise this again with the IWC and Environment Agency.

6. Castlehaven Green

Happy to report that the memorial bench located on the green, has been restored and back in place with thanks to the Harbour Club.

I have been monitoring accessibility of public footpath NT46 from the Village Green along the seawall. This remains clear at this time, although the adjacent hedge does hang over the path. This has been reported to Fix My Street.

The Green itself is looking ok but the area closest to the sea is bare earth and often muddy. Something I would like to discuss with the Castlehaven Working Group.

7. Going Forward.

I would like to look at two further issues; and would be keen to chat to or work with any other councillors on thoughts around:

- **Refurbishment of our Public Toilets**

- **The issue of pavement parking, and pavement accessibility** (some cross overs with road safety and crossroads project.)

Happy to chat further with any councillors who have an interest in looking further at these issues, and the feasibility of ideas, with a view to draft a future formal proposal to the Parish Council's consideration.

Councillor Hill's Chairs Report October 2023

It feels like no time at all since our last meeting, but I also feel like so much has happened in that short amount of time.

A visit by myself, Andy, and Chris to the Permaculture sight in Niton was a very educational and a worthwhile 2 hours. Gavin and Lucy were most accommodating and gave us a thorough tour and a 'history' of events that were affecting their home. It appears to me that not only are they providing a worthwhile service to the village, but they are also protecting their small part of the island from slippage into the sea. I

could quite clearly see the issues that have arisen of late with the cutting back of trees in the 'nature belt' on their boundary that have exposed their site to their neighbours. The planning authorities are involved and have carried out site visits advising the couple of actions they need to carry out to satisfy the Planning Department.

It was good to see work starting on the drains in Whitwell at the beginning October and joyous messages of repairs undertaken only to be dashed again after a rainfall showing that there were indeed more issues than first anticipated. I am fully in agreement with other councillors that we press ahead with insisting on a formal enquiry into the whole sorry state of our roads and drainage system in Whitwell.

The works on Niton Recreation Ground have not moved on but we cannot go full steam ahead with half a plan! This is a vast area of land that needs careful management and consideration for all those who use it. I believe our first step is to consult with the public and put together a plan of works.

There have been several incidents of fly tipping in and around Niton and Whitwell. I have been reporting them on 'fix my street' as I'm sure have others. The issue is not the removal of said rubbish but how do we stop it happening in the first place. Maybe we need to look at the hot spots and discuss a solution.

Road closures have been a real issue for parishioners this month and I wonder is there a more effective way of alerting people to them in advance.?? As a business owner in the village, the recent closing of Chatfield Road has affected attendance.

I appreciate all the support you have given me as Chair and some parts of the role have been a steep learning curve.