

# Portbury Parish Council

## MINUTES

**Minutes of the meeting held 12<sup>th</sup> June 2012**  
**Village Hall, High Street, Portbury**

**Present:**

**Councillors:** Cllr Weeks Cllr Marshall Cllr Young Cllr Tarr Cllr Chilcott

**Chairman:** Cllr Cooke

**Clerk:** Cllr Meek – (Minutes taken by Sara Thompson)

**Others:** Brian Weekes  
Mandy Bishop NSC – Arrived at 7.40pm  
Haydn John  
Five members of the public

Meeting commenced at 7.30pm

Apologies received from Mr Summerfield, PC Clark and Mr Ball

No	Item	Action																
PC/06/01	<b>Minutes</b> of May's meeting held 01.05.12 signed as a true record of proceedings. Proposed: Cllr Meek                      Seconded: Cllr Weeks                      All in favour																	
PC/06/02	<b>Councillor Co-option</b> Proposal – To co-opt Stefan Chilcott to the office of Portbury Parish Councillor Proposed: Cllr Tarr                      Seconded: Cllr Young                      All in favour  The meeting was suspended to allow Cllr Chilcott to sign the 'Acceptance of Office' form and to complete a 'Declaration of Interest'. The meeting resumed at 7.35pm.																	
PC/06/03	<b>(a) Payments for Authorisation</b> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 70%;"></th> <th style="text-align: right; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"><b>Nett</b></th> <th style="text-align: right; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"><b>VAT</b></th> <th style="text-align: right; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"><b>Gross</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>PBS – Administration/Coordinator June 2012</td> <td style="text-align: right;">795.00</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.00</td> <td style="text-align: right;">795.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Brian Weekes – Maintenance May 12</td> <td style="text-align: right;">273.00</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.00</td> <td style="text-align: right;">273.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fountains Dog Bins April 2012</td> <td style="text-align: right;">48.00</td> <td style="text-align: right;">9.60</td> <td style="text-align: right;">57.60</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		<b>Nett</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Gross</b>	PBS – Administration/Coordinator June 2012	795.00	0.00	795.00	Brian Weekes – Maintenance May 12	273.00	0.00	273.00	Fountains Dog Bins April 2012	48.00	9.60	57.60	
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	<p>PVH – Jubilee Donation cheque 150.00 0.00 150.00  Cllr Tarr – Travel to NG Forums/MS Therapy Centre 105m 45.95 2.10 47.25  Cllr Tarr – Parking 4.00 0.00 4.00</p> <p><b>Retrospective Approval</b>  EDF Energy – Electricity 01.02.12 to 30.04.12 100.91 5.05 105.96</p> <p><b>Additional items for authorisation</b></p> <p>Portbury Village Hall – jubilee donation 157.00 0.00 157.00  NSC – dog bin 55.00 0.00 55.00</p> <p>Proposed: Cllr Cooke                      Seconded: Cllr Tarr                      All in favour</p> <p><b>(b) ALCA membership</b>  The current subscription rate is based on the electorate of the Member’s Parish and is banded plus the NALC subscription. PPC’s current electorate is 740, therefore the subscription would be £ 176.64, which includes membership of NALC.</p> <p>Due to forthcoming changes in planning etc it was thought that it would be worthwhile to rejoin NALC so that the Council were kept updated and be able to call upon their knowledge for assistance. It was proposed that PPC renew its subscription and review this on an annual basis.</p> <p>Proposed: Cllr Tarr                      Seconded: Cllr Cooke                      All in favour</p>	
<b>PC/06/04</b>	<p><b>Crime &amp; Disorder</b>  (a) Unfortunately neither PC Clark nor Mr Ball was in attendance to give an update regarding May’s crime figures. Below are details emailed through by PC Clark prior to the meeting;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 23/5 - theft of gate from Portbury/Failand Cricket Club</li> <li>2. 25/5 - theft of a front number plate from High St</li> <li>3. 7/6 - theft from a garage, High St</li> <li>4. 11/6 - attempt burglary, Mill Lane (no entry gained or anything stolen)</li> <li>5. 9/6 - burglary in Priory Road. Large number of valuable items stolen plus their car</li> </ol> <p>In view of the above, residents are reminded to be vigilant and to report any suspicious activities to the police whilst ensuring that cars/sheds/garages etc are locked. It was suggested that a mail drop maybe beneficial as a reminder of these points. Mr Ball, Neighbourhood Watch, would be contacted to see if they have readily available printed literature.</p>	
<b>PC/06/05</b>	<p><b>Parish Plan and Website</b>  (a) Mr John advised the Council that the website was now back online and that councillor’s email addresses were available for use. The server that Mr John had selected had several useful features. It was suggested that the council also consider implementing a subscription email service so that regular updates could be sent to residents</p> <p>(b) The development of the finalized parish plan is ongoing.</p>	

PC/06/06

(a) Applications received

(1) 12/P/0780/F Land off Portbury Hundred Change of use from agricultural land to a mixed use of agricultural land and equestrian use including the erection of stables with a tack room and hay storage facility and a winter turnout area. . Due to the reply date given, PPC's objection response (as detailed below and being agreed with a quorate vote) was doxed via the NSC planning portal 23.05.12.

*Access - Originally a farm track, made of fly ash from Portishead Power Station, Gypsy Lane, now a Public Bridleway, is showing considerable stress caused by the increase in traffic movements to the 3 existing developments plus the original farm usage. The track is not easily navigated, with a deeply uneven surface, one junction is dangerous and the other is difficult. Substantial infrastructure work is required before any additional development can realistically be supported.*

*Drainage - The land in question is marshy in nature, possibly a peat outcrop, and a type of land of significant importance to wildlife. The ecological survey recognised the category marshy grassland but fails to note that the site resides within it, the whole area becoming waterlogged as part of the flood plain of the Gordano Valley. The resurrected rhynes (drainage ditches) indicate the water-table within the location, and are not free flowing, therefore prone to pollution and would need protecting from livestock to regenerate in the way prescribed in the ecological survey.*

*The Flood Risk Assessment & Sequential Test concludes:*

*That the proposed development will;*

- 1. Provide wider benefits than outweigh flood risk.*
- 2. Be on developable previously developed land.*
- 3. That the development will be safe, without increasing flood risk elsewhere and reduces the risk of the building flooding.*

*PPC would argue*

- 1. That the land is so wet that it makes it wholly un-suitable for an equestrian centre such as proposed and the benefit that is provided is only for that of the occupant. The level of the field will have to be raised with tipped hard-core to provide sufficient support for the proposed structures, (there is no mention in the application of how this will be achieved).*
- 2. This is a totally untrue statement. **This is not and never has been developed land. Nor has there ever been any planning permissions granted for any structures on this site.***
- 3. This land is usually waterlogged and prone to surface-standing water during the winter months (currently not so evident following abnormally dry winters but the land remains wet).*

*Visual Impact - The visual impact is totally understated, as shown by the attached photos taken from the adjacent Gypsy Lane, and the development can be seen from residencies in Caswell Lane. Thus is contrary to the visual amenity and openness of the Green Belt.*

*Ecology and Conservation - Over the past 10yrs. diminishing rainfall has led to a drying out of many of the important wildlife sites further up the Gordano Valley, so much so that, lapwing, as an indicator species, but not exclusively, have followed the remaining wet lands. Last year the only remaining pairs in the valley attempted to breed in land adjacent to the development site. This year, again, this red-listed species is attempting to breed close-by, together with another red-listed species. These birds are sensitive to disturbance and it is unlikely that they will tolerate the occupancy and constant disturbance that this*

development will bring. It is regrettable that the ecological survey was not done on the virgin site as there has been a great deal of disturbance associated with the earlier installation that PPC brought to NSC attention. The application form states that **no trees or shrubs are to be removed**; this is because **within the last 9 months there has been extensive clearance within this site**. Trees were felled and burnt and shrubs removed. The ditches have been excavated, tipping has taken place in the gateway sufficient to provide hard-standing for a vehicle and a clearly visible stable has been installed, which undoubtedly has had a negative effect, influencing the validity of the survey. However it is noted that the occupant has planted some replacement tree whips. PPC is aware of bat surveys carried out not far from the site, including pipistrelle, serotine, noctule and daubenton's feasting on the insect life on the main ditch and surrounding area. Greater and lesser Horseshoe bats were recorded in Caswell Lane during 2011. Hares and Roe Deer have been seen on the site in question, prior to its inhabitation. Yellow hammer, sedge-warbler, willow warbler and chiff chaff etc. are known in the hedgerows. Skylarks and lapwing occupy adjacent fields and reed warblers regularly nest when reeds are available on the side of the main rhyne, as well as many other species. Recently new burrows have been evidenced in the main rhyne, almost certainly water vole (a re-appearance after at least 20yrs).

Should this area be allowed to grow into an equestrian centre, as we are seeing, with its intrinsic occupation the overall effect will be to diminish the areas strategic importance as a wildlife site and in PPC's opinion represents an overdevelopment, in this ever diminishing wetland resource, this being the 4<sup>th</sup> structural development, within Gypsy Lane, a sensitive Green Belt area.

Should NSC be mindful to pass this application ;

PPC would ask for mitigation for the loss of wildlife habitat in a wetland environment equalling that which is being lost. With stabling of this nature comes occupancy. This is different in character to the previous agricultural use of the land, and is not easily reversed, as the fabric of the soil has been changed. It is therefore questionable that this type of activity can continue under an agricultural umbrella and the application should contain a request for a change of use to equestrian. Within the application there is no mention of how waste will be disposed of, and access makes this an even greater problem, we would suggest a formalised procedure for its removal to prevent the illegal burning of horse manure, previously experienced at the other 2 stabling sites. We would also request assurances of **No caravans or horseboxes to be parked on site** so commonly found in association with developments of this type, as the site is already littered with a tarpaulin, a large black plastic tent, tyres, wooden pallets and the debris left over from the clearance, in addition to the tilting mobile stable.

It is not clear from the application whether the ménage, (winter turn-out area), is part of this application. (temp12/0776). As PPC is objecting to the application as a whole then the ménage is incorporated in that objection, for the reasons specified. Should an additional application/ amendment follow PPC would request notification.

(2) 12/P/0788/F 13 Priory Walk. Erection of a 2mtr high boundary wall. Due to the reply date given, PPC's objection response (as detailed below and being agreed with a quorate vote) was loded via the NSC planning portal 29.05.12.

Portbury Parish Council (PPC) has grave concerns with respect to this planning application. While apparently innocent in nature, as a minor adjustment, it has quite a strategic impact on the openness and character of the whole area. To build a brick wall immediately adjacent to the pathway of Priory Walk, conforming to **no** existing building

lines is to create a permanent solid projection within a character area of soft lines and greenery. The wall's projection can be viewed from both ends of Priory Walk, residing as it does in the centre, and its presence would be contrary to the openness of the whole estate. It would effectively create an alleyway, rather than an attractive walk through a country village. Its existence would create a precedent, which, should others follow, will heighten the impact. A similar effect will also be created on the footpath to the rear of no.13 adjacent to no.12. and may exacerbate the problems of anti- social behaviour that has concerned the council in the past. There will be a net loss of green open space in the form of lawn that currently exists and the extension of the wall may also cause light exclusion to neighbouring vegetation. PPC regard this as an inappropriate development that has no tangible benefits for the area as a whole, will adversely impact on nearby residencies and is contrary to the character and charm that exists within the village at this location. When the estate was created it was based on an open plan structure and PPC believes that restrictive covenants may exist to inhibit changes such as proposed in this application. For the reasons above we strongly urge North Somerset Council to reject this planning application.

**(3) 11/P/1317/LUP** Certificate of Lawful Development for Proposed Development: construction of 16 concrete silos 30 m in diameter and 50 m high together with associated conveyors and rail loading facility and acoustic screening, Portbury Dock.

Cllr Weekes gave a brief presentation as to the history of this application and of the 'Dock's Act' that control development within Portbury Docks. The main point of concern, with the original and revised application, is the impact that it will have on the environment with regards to atmospheric pollutants. PPC are therefore surprised that NSC do not consider that an Environmental Impact Assessment is justified. As PPC question this decision it was proposed that the Council write to NSC and advise them of same.

Proposed: Cllr Weeks

Seconded: Cllr Cooke

All in favour

**(b) 12/P/0330/F** Land behind 15 Caswell Lane - Change of use from agricultural land to equestrian including the erection of a new stable, ménage and associated facilities (note: PPC approved of this application, with conditions, and lodoxed same 21.03.12).

The applicant requested permission to address the Council with regard to information that he had received – Cllr Cooke gave him permission to do so.

The applicant believed that a Councillor had circulated inaccurate information/concerns to other Councillors regarding the clearing of the site. He had taken great exception to this and disputed several comments that had been made. He also took umbrage at the fact that he had not been directly approached regarding these concerns but that they have been forwarded directly to a NSC Planning Officer.

In reply, the Councillor advised that he had only circulated information to other Councillors that had been provided by NSC. He also advised that having approached applicants directly in the past, he had been subjected to verbal abuse and damage to his property; he was therefore loath to do so again. He also advised the applicant that the Parish Council do not have any jurisdiction over planning matters and so even if meetings were held, no formal decisions could be made.

After several minutes, Cllr Cooke halted further discussion and enquired of the applicant as to what his expectation of the Council was. He requested that the Council review the existing planning procedure and to include for direct contact with applicants should

	concerns regarding their developments be voiced. Cllr Cooke agreed that the procedure would be reviewed and the applicant advised accordingly.	
<b>PC/06/07</b>	<p><b>Parish Co-ordinator /Task Monitor</b></p> <p>(a) An email had been received from a local resident voicing his concern regarding the personal conduct of an individual councillor and also the conduct of the Council particularly in relation to the election of councillors. This will be dealt with at the 3<sup>rd</sup> July meeting, when the resident will be invited to address the full Council to hear and respond to his concerns.</p>	
<b>PC/06/08</b>	<p><b>Maintenance</b></p> <p>(a) Allotments – A letter will be sent to the allotment holders reminding them that it is their responsibility to maintain and cut the paths.</p> <p>(b) NSC has marked 42 potholes in the village for repair. Those in Caswell Lane have not been marked although NSC is reminded of these on a regular basis. Mandy Bishop will follow up with Paul Smart NSC.</p> <p>(c) Brambles – Hillside. Brian Weekes will cut back the brambles that are encroaching on to the public footpath.</p> <p>(d) Overhanging Trees – Hillside. As the trees are on private property, the Council is unable to assist with any maintenance. Mandy Bishop will request that Adam Wood NSC make an assessment though, as a resident remarked that it is surprising that none of the trees have toppled on to the public highway due to the poor root anchorage.</p>	<p><b>PBS</b></p> <p><b>MB</b></p> <p><b>BW</b></p> <p><b>MB</b></p>
<b>PC/0609</b>	<p><b>Transport and Traffic</b></p> <p>(a) Coaches – PBS will write to Tyntesfield and Noah's Ark Farm to request that coach parties are reminded that Portbury Lane has a weight restriction and should not be used as a shortcut to these destinations from M5 Jct 19.</p> <p>(b) Jct 19 Improvements – A vast improvement in traffic flow has been noted. A copy of the safety audit has now been received which Cllr Coke will review.</p>	<p><b>PBS</b></p> <p><b>PC</b></p>
<b>PC/06/10</b>	<p><b>Community Reports</b></p> <p>(a) St Mary's School – A new head teacher has been appointed and a reminder that the school fete will be held 06.07.12.</p> <p>(b) St Mary's Church – Nothing new to report.</p> <p>(c) The jubilee celebrations were a great success, as too was the lighting of the beacon, with 120 plus residents attending both events. Many thanks to Brian Weekes for his assistance.</p>	

<p><b>PC/06/11</b></p>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>(a) NSC – Electoral Review. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England intend to carry out an Electoral Review of North Somerset commencing later this year. This is a review of the electoral arrangements of North Somerset Council: the number of councillors, the names, number and boundaries of wards and the number of councillors to be elected to each. Electoral reviews are initiated primarily to improve electoral equality. This means ensuring, so far as is reasonable, that each councillor elected to a local authority represents the same number of electors.</p> <p>Due to the long term implications of this review, it was felt that PPC should be represented at the event being hosted by NSC.</p>	
<p><b>PC/06/12</b></p>	<p><b>Date and time of next meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2012</b></p>	

**Meeting finished at 9.05pm**  
**Portbury Parish Council**  
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