

**MINUTES OF THE ST SAMPSON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD
VIRTUALLY USING ZOOM ON TUESDAY, 22ND SEPTEMBER 2020**

Participants: Councillors D Jenkinson (Chairman), A Van den Broek, D Johns, S Harper and M Whell.

Christopher Retallack, Stuart Rolt, Viviane Barr , Colin Martin, David Peters, Mary Bredin and Juan d’Ornellas

Sue Blaxley (Clerk to the Parish Council)

Public Participation

Mary Bredin said that she has concerns about the felling licence which has been granted for Penquite Wood. She explained that it takes 100 years for an ecosystem in an ancient woodland to evolve and that ancient woodlands are threatened on a massive scale. She said that the fact that Cornwall Council put a Tree Preservation Order on the woodland means that they recognise its importance. She said that she knows the wood very well and cherishes it and that she respects that the owner has a right to manage the wood and make a living for his family and in this respect, he is complying with the law. She said that the woodland which is vanishing is beyond price and when it is gone, it is gone forever. She said that it is important to work together as a community to protect the woodland for future generations and in this respect to work towards a creative solution involving all perspectives so that the wood is protected and the owner’s livelihood is protected but at the same time, not losing any more of the woodland.

David Peters said that Penquite Wood is a 10-acre jewel of untouched ancient woodland. He said that the southern end of the wood is a semi natural woodland which means that it has had continuous tree cover since 1600. He said that only 2% of British woodland falls into this category. He said that he appreciates that managing woodland costs money. He said that sensitive felling could benefit the wood but he understands that the road which has been put through the woodland has damaged healthy trees. He said that he urged the parish council to meet the owners in the wood to ascertain exactly what works are taking place. He said that it is imperative to look ahead so that Cornwall Council and the Forestry Commission regulate more effectively what can happen in a riverside woodland such as this one. He said that it takes 1,000 generations to create an AONB and he does not want our generation to be the one that destroys this part of this AONB.

Christopher Retallack explained that he owns the fields between Bellscat and Penquite Stables and has been familiar with Penquite woods for 30 years. He said they are wondrous and rare. He asked that the parish council works with John Varco to help him protect this precious asset. The Chairman said that he will be visiting Penquite Woods on Thursday 24th September 2020 with Cornwall

Councillor A Virr and Alan Rowe (Cornwall Council's Tree specialist) and Ruth and John Varco. He said that there has been growing anxiety in the parish about the matter since the felling licence had become known to everyone and that a site visit would be beneficial.

Stuart Rolt thanked the parish council for taking the matter so seriously. He said that he accepts that the parish council has limited powers but the task is to persuade Cornwall Council and the Forestry Commission that the felling which is taking place is unacceptable.

Juan d'Ornellas said that he hears and sees the woodland being destroyed on a daily basis. He said there has been an historical attempt to destroy the woodland and that the Forestry Commission gave a felling licence without analysis or a visit to the woodland. He said that the Forestry Commission believes that the felling which is taking place is in accordance with the licence.

The Chairman said that, from the village, the works are not apparent but that the visual impact is greatest from across the river. He said that Mr Varco has only just become aware of the extent of the anxiety that is being caused by the felling and has a written a letter to be read by all Councillors.

Colin Martin said that from a legal viewpoint, every box has probably been ticked and that the way forward is positive engagement with Mr and Mrs Varco.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors D Pugh-Jones and S Phillis.

2. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 25th August 2020

The minutes of the meeting held virtually using Zoom on Tuesday 25th August 2020, having previously been circulated, were agreed as an accurate record subject to an amendment to minute 4 changing "The Chairman reported that Ian Laughton has raised the existing sign out of the grass" to "The Chairman reported that Ian Laughton has made the existing sign more visible".

3. Declaration of interest in items on the agenda

None

4. Matters Arising from the previous meeting

To receive and consider reports on the action points from the previous meeting

Drill grit bin that is full of water – MW

Councillor M Whell said that he has actioned this matter.

Examine lease for Boatwatch hut - DMJ

This matter has not yet been actioned and will be carried forward and completed by the next meeting.

Ask Ollie Reed to clear turning circle of leaves and cut the vegetation covering the No Parking sign and along the car park – AVB

This matter has not yet been actioned and will be carried forward.

To receive and consider reports on any other matters arising from the previous meeting

The Chairman reported that Chris Taylor was no longer in a position to lead the sub-committee on the provision of new play equipment on the village green. He said that he has asked Jo and Gillian Cocker if they might consider taking on this task. He said that he invited Martyn Hardy to compile a list of minor issues in the village which need addressing. He said that the latest list now comprises 61 items, demonstrating that we need a better way of dealing with these minor issues. The Clerk said that all expenditure has to be authorised by the parish council in accordance with the adopted financial regulations.

5. To receive the Chairman's Communications

The Chairman reported that he had received considerable correspondence regarding the tree felling in Penquite Woods. Councillor D Johns said that a list of those who had communicated to the parish council on this matter would be useful. The Chairman said that he had shared many of the email letters, (to identify the extent of the feeling of concern) but would send any remaining emails he has received to those councillors who wanted them. He said that many of the emails have referred to the NDP. Councillor S Harper commented that where licences have been granted by specialists, it is not the role of the NDP or the parish council to dictate what people do on their own land. It was noted that the felling licence is for dead or diseased trees and a specific volume of trees within the plan. Councillor S Harper said that, from the river, the creation of the road in the woods is a visual scar. She said that there is evidence of new planting

having taken place. Whilst the woodland is a lot thinner, she said there is evidence of forestry management. Councillor D Jenkinson said that the felling licence would allow a percentage of the wood to be taken each year. Councillor D Johns said that the parish council can have a stated opinion when all the information is known. Councillor M Whell said that the owners of the woodland want to preserve the woodland and that parishioners are anxious because they are uncertain about what is going to happen next in the woodland. Councillor A van den Broek said that there is a need to manage woodland. The Chairman said that the debate maybe more about retaining the existing wood as opposed to allowing any felling, even a limited amount. But without more facts, more debate would not be appropriate.

6. To answer any questions from Councillors, previously notified to the Clerk

None

7. To receive a report from the Clerk

None

8. To receive reports from -

a) Police

None

b) Cornwall Councillor

Update on a devolvement opportunity see item 15.

9. To authorise the signing of orders for payment, including -

Mrs S Blaxley (19th August 2020 – 15th September 2020) - £499.82
Cornwall Council (Rent for Car Park – September 2020) - £166.67
Cornwall Pension Fund (Pension Contributions – September 2020) - £87.04
Glenn Humphries Landscaping (Grass Cutting – June 2020) - £90.00
David Jenkinson (Zoom Subscription) - £14.39
South West Water (Water for Toilets – July and August 2020) - £107.47

It was proposed by Councillor D Jenkinson and seconded by Councillor D Johns that all the above orders be authorized for payment. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal. The proposal was therefore carried.

10. Finance Report

To receive a current financial statement of the accounts and to review income and expenditure against budget

The Clerk reported that, since her last report, income has been received in the sum of £10,000 from Cornwall Council as a Covid 19 payment (triggered by maintaining a public toilet in operation). She said the accounts balance at £25,193.12.

11. Internal Auditor's Report

To receive and consider the internal auditor's report for 2019/20

It was proposed by Councillor D Jenkinson and seconded by Councillor S Harper that the recommendations contained within the internal auditor's report be noted. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal. The proposal was therefore carried. These documents are all available on the web site.

12. Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Internal Financial Controls and Financial Risk Assessment

To approve the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Internal Financial Controls and Financial Risk Assessment

It was proposed by Councillor D Jenkinson and seconded by Councillor M Whell that the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Internal Financial Controls and Financial Risk Assessment for 2020/21 be approved. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal. The proposal was therefore carried. These documents are all available on the web site.

13. Clerk's Salary

To approve the Clerk's salary for 2020/21

It was noted that the Clerk is currently paid at spinal point 20. (Council speak for pay grade) It was proposed by Councillor D Jenkinson and seconded by Councillor D Johns that this be increased to spinal point 21 from 1st October 2020.(an increase of 27pph or 2%) All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal. The proposal was therefore carried.

14. Cormorant Hotel Site

To receive and consider matters arising relating to the Cormorant Hotel site

The Chairman said that work on the Cormorant Hotel site is likely to commence properly in October. It was noted that a large vehicle was moved down Water Lane today without incident, having been pre warned by the developer and a

Maurie Mail. The Chairman said that he will be meeting with the developer on the 1st or 2nd of October (together with Andrew Van den Broek). Councillor D Johns asked that they be reminded of the agreement to park on site as opposed to the roads near the site. Councillor M Whell said that the developer is seeking to rent a space in the parish for storage and parking. The Chairman said that a parishioner on Water Lane has reported that her stream had become silted up and wondered if this was due to the Water lane development. It was noted that a concrete lintel had been installed (by the developer) to support the old well in Tinneys Lane.

15. Devolving Assets from Cornwall Council

To receive and consider matters arising relating to the devolution of assets from Cornwall Council

The Chairman reported that there is no further update regarding this matter at this time. He said that the Cornwall Council budget holder are now considering offering the 'gallery' as an asset for devolution. He said that it is a freehold premises. Councillor D Johns said that the parish council should consider purchasing it dependant on price and that it should be retained as a commercial premises irrespective of ownership. It was agreed that the Chairman would respond to Cornwall Council expressing an interest from the parish council but stating that there are a number of questions that need answering particularly in relation to the freehold and leasehold price. The Chairman made clear that although questions and comments are to be invited, there is no guarantee of any outcome at this stage.

16. Golant Car Park and Toilets

To receive and consider any matters arising relating to the car park and toilets

Councillor A Van den Broek said that he had re-filled the hand sanitiser dispenser. The Chairman said that he had received an email from a parishioner who purchased a £30 car parking permit but has, on a number of occasions, not been able to park in the car park. He has asked if consideration would be given to increasing the number of £100 permits. Councillor D Johns said that it has been an exceptional year in terms of visitor numbers and there is merit in having parking at the top of the village in the summer months. Councillor S Harper said that it may be a good idea if members of the rowing and canoe club undertook car sharing in the summer months although it was acknowledged that with the current pandemic, this is not advisable. Councillor D Johns said that parking is only a problem at the weekends. Councillor A Van den Broek asked if anyone is

policing the car park? The Chairman said that he would check with AS Parking that they are operational.

16. Village Green

To receive and consider any matters arising relating to the village green

The Chairman said that the chain across the entrance to the village green had been successful but it is no longer required. He said that Ian Laughton will remove it until it is required again.

17. Neighbourhood Plan

To receive and consider any matters arising relating to the Neighbourhood Plan

It was reported that the latest version of the NDP and the consultation statement was put on the parish council's website at the beginning of the summer. Councillor S Harper said that she is in the process of compiling a condition statement for submission to Cornwall Council which has to be approved by their legal team.

18. Highways

To receive and consider any other matters arising relating to highways in the parish

The Chairman said that he had received a letter saying that there is a risk of an increase in the use of Church Hill (as the Cormorant development gets underway) and it is becoming narrower due to overgrowing vegetation. He said that he would contact Cornwall Council regarding the need to cut back the vegetation and remove soil and debris at the side of the road. There was also concern that the salt bin is in the passing place. Councillor M Whell said that he would relocate the salt bin.

18. Footpaths and Benches

To receive and consider any matters arising relating to footpaths and benches in the parish

The Chairman reported that footpath number 5 was reported to Cornwall Council in 2013 as going through a number of gardens and that it should officially be re-routed and the plans changed to recognise the fact. He said this request was repeated in 2017 but no further progress was made. He said that the issue has arisen again and that he will request that Cornwall Council recognise the new footpath route.

19. Corona Virus

To receive and consider any matters arising relating to the corona virus pandemic

There were no matters to report other than a reminder about the rule of six which would prohibit a parish council meeting to be held in person and would currently be contrary to CALC (Cornwall Association of Local Councils) recommendations.

20. Date of next meeting

To confirm the date and venue of the next meeting on Tuesday 27th October 2020

The next meeting of the parish council will be a virtual meeting held using Zoom and will take place on Tuesday 27th October 2020 commencing at 7:15pm.

ST SAMPSON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

22nd September 2020

ACTION POINTS

| <u>Minute Number</u> | <u>Action</u> | <u>By Whom</u> |
|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| 4 | Examine lease for Boatwatch hut | DMJ |
| 4 | Ask Ollie Reed to clear turning circle of leaves and cut the vegetation covering the No Parking sign and along the car park | AVB |
| 5 | Forward remaining emails received regarding Penquite Woods to Councillor David Johns | DJ |
| 15 | Express interest to Cornwall Council in obtaining the gallery | DJ |
| 16 | Ascertain if AS Parking are operational | DJ |
| 18 | Ask Cornwall Council to cut vegetation in Church Hill | DJ |

18

Re-locate salt bin in Church Hill

MW