**THE ORDINARY MEETING OF NORTH NIBLEY PARISH COUNCIL WAS HELD ON MONDAY 4th DECEMBER 2017, IN THE VILLAGE HALL, NORTH NIBLEY, AT 7.30 PM.**

**Present:** Mr D Purnell, (Chair) Mrs J Burton, Mr K Larkin, Mr D Palmer, Mr L Smitherman, Martin Hutchings, Rural Housing Enabler, Paul Batchelor, Headmaster of the North Nibley Primary School, and three members of the public.

**District Councillors:** Mr K Tucker

**County Councillor**: Dr J Cordwell

**The Clerk:** Mrs E Oakley.

**The Chairman opened** the Parish Council Meeting.

1. **The Chairman invited apologies.** Apologies had been received from K Brown, District Cllr C Braun, and District Cllr G Butcher.
2. **Declaration of Interests**. The Chairman invited members to declare any Interests relating to this Meeting.There were no declarations of interest.
3. **The Council approved and signed the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 6th November as a true record.** The Minutesof the November Ordinary Meeting of the Council had previously been distributed to all members and displayed on the public notice boards and the website**. All members agreed the Minutes should be signed, as a true and accurate record**. The Minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

**4. The Council noted matters arising from the Minutes, not covered by agenda items.**

* **The Defibrillator** has been serviced and requires testing six times a year. This will be carried out every other month before the Parish Council meeting.
* **Councillor vacancy.** The advertisement was uploaded by the clerk to the council website, parish noticeboards, and sent to On The Edge.
* **Hedges.** The owners of Bird Farm had telephoned to acknowledge receipt of the Parish Council letter concerning hedge maintenance. The owners confirmed they plan to relay hedges.
* **Phone boxes**. The good news of the retaining of parish phone boxes was included in the Parish Council report for On The Edge. This requested volunteers come forward to help maintain the condition of the boxes.
* **Stroud District Council local plan review and consultation**. The Parish Council response to the consultation exercise was sent and an acknowledgement received from the Strategy Manager.
* **Planning Inspectorate, Ref: APP/C1625/W/17/3178172.** Aholding letter was sent by the clerk to the Planning inspectorate confirming a member of the Parish Council will attend the hearing on 17th January 2018. The December council meeting approved the submission of a further council response to be sent to the Planning inspectorate.
* **Access to planning applications on the new district authority on-line portal for Planning.** Following their November training day the clerk had received useful guidance notes for accessing on line and had circulated to councillors.
* **Change of Highways Manager.** County Cllr John Cordwell had informed the clerk, Andrew Middlecote will be relocated to the Forest of Dean at the end of 2017. He will be replaced by Paul Helbrow who will be shadowing Andrew Middlecote during December.
* **Mud on roads, Waterley Bottom.** Cllr L Smitherman had forwarded two parishioner comments on mud on roads. Cllr L Smitherman offered thanks for the rapid Highways response when matters were dealt with very quickly to include pot holes.
* **Speed awareness.** Cllr Dave Palmer had informed the clerk the speed gun in the standard pack does not fit the tripod supplied. The clerk was told by the supplier the plate still awaits specialist rust proof painting but will be sent immediately thereafter.
* **Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan** **for** **Dursley Town Council.** The clerk had received a copy of this draft which is available via a URL link. It is also possible request hard copies of the document from town council offices.
* **Grant applications**. The clerk had received an early application from the CAB for next year’s grant funding and had acknowledged receipt.
* **The Parish Council’s annual finance meeting** was confirmed as held on the 13th November and a separate report and the draft budget for next financial year were submitted to the meeting under Finance agenda item.
* **Letter to Lloyds Bank.** The letter with sums to reflect capital expenditure of Breakheart monies for transfer to the Treasurer’s account was available at the December council meeting for two councillor signatories.
* **Neighbourhood Warden.** The clerk had received a brief monthly report for November highlighting

 availability of free home security surveys.

**5. The Chairman closed the Meeting for Public Discussion and Questions.** Two visitors attending the meeting wished to comment they had walked up Wood Lane over a two day period and found uncollected poo bags left in the area that marred the beauty spot. Councillors responded there are poo bins supplied at the bottom of Wood Lane and discussed additional options including an educational sign at the bottom of the lane and an article for On The Edge. The visitors also raised the issue of vehicles speeding through the village centre, especially noting this occurring in Frog Lane. They requested the speed awareness group to monitor. Cllr D Palmer responded that speed monitoring sites have to be Police approved as safe for the speed awareness group and he agreed to put forward this new site for approval. He had already requested Barrs Lane as an additional site and awaited to hear the outcome.

**The Chairman re-opened** the Meeting without further discussion.

1. **The Council considered and commented upon the following Planning Applications:**

**Application Number: S.17/2527/FUL.** Location: Five Acres, Millend Lane, North Nibley.

Application Type: Full Planning Permission. Description: Erection of agricultural storage building.

The council agreed to make no comment.

**Application Number: S.17/2503/HHOLD** Panswold, Waterley Bottom, North Nibley. Description: Demolition of existing conservatory, proposed orangery in its place.

The council agreed to make no comment.

**7. To note the following Planning Applications decisions by Stroud DC Planning:**

None to report

**8. To receive a written District Council Report. The Council received** awritten report from District Councillor K Tucker on behalf of the ward’s District Councillors. The chairman thanked Councillor Tucker for his report who highlighted the session the following day concerning the future of the Stroud Subscription Rooms. A particular bid would have been recommended for acceptance. However, as there were concerns about double accounting after the financial details sent to bidders was incorrect, it was fairer to give other bidders an opportunity when the bidding process was relaunched. The Heritage lottery bid had been submitted by The Stoudwater Canal Trust. This is expected to be robust as previous deficiencies had been addressed. The Brimscombe port development included mooring for four hundred boats and one hundred and twenty new homes, a community centre, and restaurants. However, there was a need to change the roads around the canal and underneath it.

**9**, **To receive a written County Council Report.** **The Council received** a written County Council Report from County Councillor Dr J Cordwell. The Chairman thanked County Cllr Cordwell who highlighted the start of the budget setting process shortly.

**10.** **To receive and discuss Reports of Committees and Meetings** **attended by Parish Councillors and the Clerk.**

There were no items to report.

1. **Parish Council Finances:**
2. **To approve the Invoices and draw up cheques for items on the enclosed Payments Schedule.** The Council received and approved:

**Waterplus. Water supply to the cemetery, 29th August to 01st November 2017.**

 **£9.74**

**Hawkins, contract mowing cemetery and churchyard, October and November 2017.**

 **£768.00**

**Vision ICT, hosting of website.** (The year’s website hosting from December 2017 to November 2018 as the going forward costs of the website unrelated to website build in 2016**). £150.00**

**2/ To consider quotes for scheduled work.** The council received and approved the payment:

The plinth work includes for a shallow excavation and to bed the remaining stone from the site to provide a plinth approximately 150mm (6") high and 300mm (12") deep and topped off with slabs 300mm deep and 600mm long.

 **Total: £550.00**

**3/ To confirm arrangements for 2017/ 2018 internal audit.** The clerk informed councillors she had contacted the new internal auditor to arrange a meeting during December with the chair, vice chair and clerk attending. The meeting was to discuss in outline the arrangements for the audit process in advance of the end of the current financial year.

**4/To receive an outline of the arrangements for 2017/ 2018 external audit**. The clerk informed councillors of the new appointments made for the external audit with the schedule of fees attached, as there were new requirements depending on whether the precept/expenditure was above or below an annual financial threshold. The clerk undertook to seek further details of the definition of precept and expenditure.

**5**/**To receive a report from the pre-Budget and Precept Setting** **Finance meeting.** The clerk’s notes from the autumn finance meeting held on the 13th November were agreed. Key items identified had been brought forward as agenda items. Other items would constitute future agenda items.

6/**To receive and approve the draft budget for 2018/2019.** Councillors approved the budget for the financial year 2018/19 as brought forward fromthe 13th November autumn finance meeting.The budget would guide the forthcoming precept application due in January 2018. As documented in a previous minute brought forward from 2016 the precept level was agreed as set at the same level as for financial years 2016/17 and 2017/2018.

**12/ To receive and approve Cemetery and Closed Churchyard Reports. The clerk informed councillors** the Burial Clerk had been contacted during the month about a tree issue by Western Power who were working in the area, as a cemetery tree was in danger of touching the power lines if not trimmed back. The man subsequently visited the chair who gave given him consent to trim the tree and the necessary forms were signed. When Western Power trimmed the tree they were required to remove any branches.

The clerk’s inspection of the main cemetery on the 30th November showed a fall of small to medium sized branches from recent high winds. The clerk removed some medium sized branches from near graves and paths. A representative from Grimes and Goscombe was on site the same day preparing for the interment of a family member in the older part of the memorial garden on 1st December. An adjacent plot to the immediate right of this interment site had been marked for future use by his wife. The chairman circulated councillors during the month regarding this memorial, and the proposed interment of ashes on December 1st, recommending that this be allowed to go ahead. A cheque has recently been received by the assistant to the Burial Clerk for the internment of £270.00. The request for approval of the wording of the memorial is a separate agenda item. There is also a request for approval of wording for a new inscription on a memorial from for a second family as an additional agenda item.

The Grimes and Goscombe representative on site wished to pass on good comments concerning the new memorial garden facility. He observed the trend is toward interment and he foresees more demand in future. The clerk understand that for his own company reference he has copied the plan layout of the existing memorial plaques in detail. The information was supplied by the Burial Clerk.

The assistant to the Burial Clerk had received a cheque for the memorial fee after a burial in late 2016 for £125.00. There is additionally a new burial scheduled for the 7th December, and the clerk noted this maybe be the first time the new cemetery paths have been used by funeral directors for this purpose.

Councillors wished to record their special thanks and acknowledgements to Ruth Kirkup who had been a huge advocate for the village, and helped out in the chapel, shop and village hall. There were overall very few facets of local community life she was not involved with making a contribution towards.

The clerk had received a quotation for the proposed plinth work for the memorial garden from the contractor and this is a separate agenda item.

The clerk informed councillors that whilst the Burial Clerk manages recent burial and cemetery records, the clerk retains many similar but much older records going back in time to just after 1900. These were identified during the original archiving project in 2016. The clerk had attached the archiving document with a view to re considering the location of the older burial and cemetery ledgers and one ledger example was allocated to Cllr D Palmer to review. Councillors agreed the assistant to the Burial Clerk would review the listing and location of files next year in more detail.

**Churchyard**

Clerk’s inspection on the 30th November showed minimal grass growth since the autumn cut but quite a high fall of leaves and many small to medium sized branches brought down in recent winds. There remains some sections of previously cut trees and bushes uncollected in the cemetery to the left hand side of the church and against the back wall behind the church. The WC at the back of the church that can be accessed from the churchyard has now been repaired after being closed for part of last month.

**13/ To consider update issues relating to cemetery regulations.** Theclerk informed councillors that a previous minute stated the regulations would be reviewed once the major new work in the cemetery was completed. Councillors considered the existing regulations including the feasibility of drafting a separate document as an attachment to the main regulations for the garden of remembrance. A copy of the similar schedule for the Wotton Under Edge garden of remembrance would be useful for comparison.

**14/ To consider application for new memorials in the cemetery.** Councillors received an application for a plaque with proposed wording to be placed in the original section of the garden of remembrance for Henry Burroughs. Councillors agreed this application as well as a concrete reservation marker on the plot immediately adjacent for future use by the same family. Councillors discussed that there was no currently official way of reserving a plot as opposed to buying a plot directly. The Burroughs reservation was a blank stone agreed unofficially in this instance. Councillors agreed to discuss this issue again in the New Year. The setting up of a working party to review was an option. Councillors received an application for an additional inscription on an existing plaque for the Farrant family. Councillors agreed this additional inscription.

**15/To consider issues relating to ivy growth by the closed churchyard**. Councillors noted from Cllr D Palmer the advice he had received that a stone walling expert was more appropriate rather than an engineering approach to the wall maintenance. Councillors agreed to refer this item to Cllr Ken Brown when he was back in the New Year for investigation of liability or otherwise through a solicitor. Cllr L Smitherman had received local advice to indicate that factual proof of ownership/liability was difficult to find and councillors agreed that whilst acting as good neighbours was important, legal liability was key.

**16/ To consider arrangements for the councillor vacancy.** Councillors noted that whilst there was to date no formal expressions of interest in the vacancy, there remained three weeks to the closing date at the end of December. The chair noted that two local people had been discussing the vacancy and that it would be an item on the agenda for January 2018.

**17To receive an update on issues relating to rural housing.** Councillors received a verbal update report from Martin Hutchings, Rural Housing Enabler. He noted the previous Affordable Housing Enabler, Karen Phimister, had carried out a housing needs survey which had identified twelve households who might need affordable housing locally and various sites were identified. However, nothing came to fruition at that stage. He had recently made enquiries to update the initiative and received the information that the owners of the site identified as the optimum site were not interested to pursue this. For the second favoured site near the cemetery, the planners had also recently said it was not a suitable site for affordable housing development. Councillors requested that Martin Hutchings identify why the planning authority had had a dramatic change in approach as this site had previously been favoured and was well connected and with footpaths. Martin Hutchings agreed to talk to Mark Russell and make clear from the Parish Council point of view the preferred site. Cllr K Larkin said the council had responded to the consultation exercise invited by the options and issues document in the new draft planning review to state that the council preferred the two sites identified above over the potential site marked in this document behind the Innocks estate.

**18/To discuss possible gift from planning gain for benefit of the Parish.** The clerk had received details of a sum of money available for the parish for the purposes of upgrading or improving recreational facilities. This was obtained as a planning obligation and is a section S106 benefit which would require completion of a project proposal form to be returned to the district authority. Councillors agreed that this item would be taken forward to an early 2018 agendato discuss recreational projects at that stage.

Paul Batchelor, the Headmaster of the North Nibley Primary School attended the meeting on the invitation of the chair to give a presentation on the school’s fundraising activities to create more break out space for children’s activities. This would enable more group work, personalising of the curriculum, mixed stage classes and use of Teaching Assistants in contrast to the current condition whereby the school was pressed for space for activities. Whilst the school expected to gain from the new national funding formula, it was already drawing on its reserves. Councillors agreed through the chair to support where ever possible. This could include further contacting Mr White with regards to the previously discussed ex gratia payment. Cllr K Larkin proposed a meeting with him in the New Year and Cllr D Purnell agreed to discuss this with Cllr Ken Brown. The clerk undertook to forward by email the new council grant application form to Paul Batchelor, as the school could equally be considered for smaller level grant awards from the council itself during its next round of awards in March 2018.

**19/ To consider issues relating to quarry maintenance.** Councillors noted thata fence had been put up twenty to thirty years previously but agreed to defer discussion of this issue. It would become an agenda item for January 2018 when Cllr Ken Brown returned in the New Year.

**20/To consider issues relating to horse riding on the Knoll.** CllrD Palmer informed councillors he had recently seen people galloping horses, and some were on Parish Council land and some on Knoll Trust land. He had informed them on a number of occasions they do not have the right to use the land in this way. He has also spoken to Cllr Ken Brown about this. Councillors agreed the Parish Council take the lead and write to the person identified to say they are not authorised to exercise horses and Cllr D Palmer undertook to draft the appropriate letter. Councillors noted the proposal from Cllr L Smitherman of a charter trust on a board and councillors agreed to confer a meeting in January of all three parties involved to include the Knoll Trust and Parish Council to further discuss the issues.

**21/ To receive an update on the Wood Lane gate project.** Cllr D Palmer informed councillors he had emailed the Amey representative to confirm the Parish Council is happy to go ahead with the concrete posts as previously discussed. These will be concreted in but with lift out posts with flanges which the Cotswold wardens would install. He also informed councillors two metal posts had been put back in at the other end of the same route.

**22/To receive monthly** **update on broadband project.** Councillors noted from Cllr L Smitherman that the first people locally had received the new broadband service from the 20th November. Councillors agreed this was in line with the expected date previously given by the BT manager in his previous monthly update. The clerk reported she had pressed for an official update from BT but this was not forthcoming this month. Councillors noted that different servers, for example, Sky, Plus Net, and BT have equally produced results. However, there have also been varied reports of speed and availability depending for example on property locations. The clerk undertook to request parishioner feedback on the various aspects of the broadband service, to assist with monitoring, through an article for On The Edge.

**23/To receive for information details of Correspondence received.** The clerk informed councillors she had received an invitation from the chief executive of the district authority to attend his annual meeting with parish and town councils in the council chamber on the 30th January. The clerk agreed to forward Cllr D Purnell’s name as an attendee. The clerk informed councillors she had received a request from the Business and Education Liaison officer at the district authority to help identify small plots of land suitable for beekeeping. Cllr L Smitherman undertook to let the new owners of the Breakheart land know of this search, and also identified two other possible local sites for beekeeping which the clerk agreed to respond to with this information in due course.

**Additional items.** CllrJ Burton invited councillor advice on behalf of the owners of Millman’s farm with regard to their concealed entrance as accidents were liable when pulling out. County Cllr J Cordwell agreed to discuss the issue with Andrew Middlecote. Highways Manager. He also advised that If on own boundary it is legal to put up a warning sign and mirrors are also permitted on private land.

Cllr D Palmer raised the prior issue of overgrown trees at Forthay and county Cllr Cordwell agreed to refer back to Andrew Middlecote to determine where Highways had reached with this request.

**There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.55 pm.**

**The next Meeting of the Parish Council will be held in the Village Hall on Monday 8th January**

**2018**