

**Meeting of the Pilton Parish Council**  
**in Pilton Village Hall on**  
**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 7.30pm**

**Present:** Councillors Robert Kearle (Chairman)  
Audrey Brown  
David Drew  
Colin Elkin  
Stephen Kearle  
Joe King  
Roger Noble  
Lynda Roberts  
Andrew Shaw

9 Members of the public attended the meeting plus 2 via Zoom.

1 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

i Mobile phones should be switched to silent.

2 **APOLOGIES:**

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:** Councillor R Kearle stated Festival (Dispensation approved) and has no interest in any planning application at present but may do so in the future. Councillor Drew stated a Festival ticket and that he has no interest currently in any planning application but may do so in the future. Councillor S Kearle stated Festival. Councillors Brown, Elkin, Noble, King, Roberts and Shaw stated Festival ticket.

4. **MINUTES:** of the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021 were approved.

5. **MATTERS ARISING:**

i Traffic Matters:

- New Defects: Blocked drains at John Beales Hill and Neat Lane by the Burial Ground. There are two blocked drains near Westholme House. Outside Meadow Croft in Top Street the tarmac is scuffed. The potholes are bad in near Totterdown Farm and near the new houses in Totterdown Farm. Between Steanbow and North Wootten there is water across the road. There is a pothole opposite the Old Bakery in John Beales Hill. Mud builds up and blocks the drains near the church. Councillor King offered to dig up the detritus and clear the drain.
- Lamberts Hill: The Clerk will chase Martyn Evans for an update. Steve Russell-Yarde stated that there is still some legal work that needs completing.

ii SIS Proposal TI004358 for the A361

- The Clerk will chase Andrew Nellist and copy in Nigel Hewitt-Cooper regarding the pedestrian crossing improvement.

iii Community Speedwatch: The weekly data provided by the Pilton Community Speedwatch Team has been highly praised for providing evidence of the speeding hot spots.

- iv Local Council Alliance: Nothing has happened during the Christmas period.
- v Dog Poo Bins: The Clerk will request an update from Mendip District Council.
- vi Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations: An offer of money has been received from the Ellen Pavell Trust. The trees are in pots awaiting planting. It was agreed that something needs to be put in writing confirming permission to access the land.
- vii Parking at the Drew's opposite the Chapel on Top Street: Parking has got easier recently but a note of registration numbers are being collated and given to Highways.
- viii Vegetation: Letters have been delivered to villagers, most have been understanding and one resident has already completed the work.  
A resident in Park Hill has contacted Western Power to request that branches be taken of trees, he will encourage them to take the branches down low. He has been told to expect the work to be completed within a couple of months. Councillors King and Noble will follow this up.  
There has been no response from Mendip District Council regarding the removal of the trees suffering from Ash Dieback. Steve Russell-Yarde will keep chasing. The Clerk was asked to write to Nigel Hewitt-Cooper as it needs to be ascertained what vegetation and Ash Trees are owned by Highways, this is a particular problem in Park Hill on both sides of the road as well as other locations within the village.
- ix Pollution: No response has been received from Mendip District Council. The Clerk will follow this up.
- x Letter to Trustees of the Village Hall: This is on the agenda to discuss that the next Trustees Meeting.
- xi Complaint regarding the Clerk: This was postponed until the February Parish Council meeting to allow the Clerk to have the opportunity to speak with SALC.
- xii Update from Nigel Hewitt-Cooper: See Appendix A

6. **PLANNING:**

Application Number	Proposal	Applicant & Location
2021/2715/TCA	T1 – (Yew and Thuja group) – Reduce height by 2.5 T 2 (Thuja) – Reduce height by 4m.	Mrs P Newman The Old Vicarage Park Hill Pilton
Pilton Parish Council Recommends: APPROVAL Councillor Noble proposed approval, Councillor S Kearle seconded. The vote was unanimously in favour.		
2021/2673/FUL	Extension and conversion of outbuilding to a holiday let.	Mr & Mrs Green Townsend Farm East Town Lane Pilton
Pilton Parish Council Recommends: APPROVAL Although concerns were raised regarding the lack of provision of a water and drainage run off. Councillor Noble proposed approval, Councillor S Kearle seconded. The vote was unanimously in favour.		
2021/2803/LBC	Internal, external alternations and improvement works.	Mr Owain Powell Crown Inn Whitstone Hill Pilton
Pilton Parish Council Recommends: APPROVAL		

Councillor Shaw proposed approval, Councillor S Kearle seconded. The vote was unanimously in favour. Councillors wished the owners good luck and expressed how lovely it was to see The Crown being restored.		
2021/2802/FUL	Internal, external alternations and improvement works.	Mr Owain Powell Crown Inn Whitstone Hill Pilton
Pilton Parish Council Recommends: APPROVAL Councillor Shaw proposed approval, Councillor S Kearle seconded. The vote was unanimously in favour.		

**ENFORCEMENT:**

- i Update: The Clerk will chase enforcement for any updates and copy in Nigel Hewitt-Cooper.

7. **FINANCE:**

- i Financial Statement:

Banked							
							£ -
Less cheques drawn:							
cq number	details						
2275	K Buckley	(HWA, Insurance £15.50 & Zoom 14.39)					409.99
2273	Ben Kearle						64.00
2274	R England						48.78
2276	HMRC	(K Buckley £281.60, R England £28.00)					309.60
2277	Pilton Working Mens Club						15.00
2278	W Lynn						41.20
							£ 888.57
							£ 21,411.19
Balance at 31/12/2021							

- ii Financial News/ Requests for Grants:

**Request for financial support for the annual running costs of the Playing Fields.**

Currently the Parish Council makes no annual payment to the Playing Fields to help it with the annual recurring costs. This was a long standing arrangement. Councillor Kearle suggested that an annual payment of £3000 was appropriate. Baltonsborough Parish Council made a similar payment to their Playing Field. There was a general agreement that an annual contribution was appropriate. However Councillor King pointed out that standard of behaviour demanded of us was "The prudent man of business acting in his own interest". No financial information had been provided demonstrating that the proposed level of grant was necessary. The legal body responsible for the Playing Fields was the Trustees of the Village Trust and the request had not come from the Trustees. Councillor

King suggested that as the Trustees meet on a regular monthly basis that we should wait until we had received a request for funding from them backed up with the necessary financial information confirming the need for the grant and allowing us to come to a considered group opinion. It was agreed to wait until we had received the formal request from the Trustees. Hopefully this would be in time for our next Parish Council meeting.

**Request for a pump priming grant of £10,000 for a complete upgrading and extension of the current playground area.**

Councillor Kearle brought the attention of the Councillors and the members of the public present to the plans for a complete upgrading of and extension of the current Playground area. Three quotes would have to be sought and the total cost was likely to be of the order of £200,000. The Parish Council had received a payment of £10,000 from Mendip District Council as part of their covid recovery campaign and this would be an excellent project to spend it on for the benefit of the young people of the village. It would show that the Parish Council supported the scheme and that it had community support. All further grants would be sought from other bodies for the remaining funding. The money will not be required immediately, but a promise to pay once the full balance has been agreed and full funding in place was necessary. This may run into the next two financial years. Should the project not go ahead then no grant will be required from the Parish Council.

It was stated that some of the existing play equipment was over 60 years old. One villager attending stated that the plans looked amazing. Councillors S Kearle and Drew expressed their support stating how important the playing fields had been for them as children and for their own children.

Councillor Noble felt that the project should be scaled back to a more reasonable figure. The Playing Fields had received considerable funding for capital projects in the last two years already from the Parish Council.

It was agreed that it was necessary to wait until we had received a formal application from the Pilton Village Trust Trustees, who are legally responsible for the Playing Fields, hopefully this would be in time for our next Meeting.

iii Precept/ Spending for 2022/23:

It was agreed at the Precept meeting prior to the Parish Council meeting that The Precept should increase to £14000. This is to allow for wage increases and grants and inflationary costs. It was agreed to review burial costs at the next Parish Council Meeting.

8. **BURIAL GROUND**

i Maintenance reports: Two reports were received, both were fine.

ii Maintenance work:

- Dangerous Grave: a recently dug grave was left in a very dangerous state, the hole was filled with water with only two planks covering it. There was also a huge mound of earth. This was both dangerous and unsightly especially given that it was Christmas time when people visit the burial ground to pay their respects. The Clerk will find out who the funeral director responsible was and send them the photos that were

taken. They will also be advised that the Parish Council no longer wish for that grave digger to be used in future.

- The Parish Council received a letter stating that a grave marker had been shifted and had mud all over it. Councillor R Kearle has cleaned and replaced the stone. The Clerk will write to the funeral director as it looks the grave digger could have caused the damage with a vehicle.
- The working party has nearly finished Thanks were given to all involved and also to Councillor Drew for repairing the fence.
- Low branched still need to be cut, Councillors R Kearle and Noble volunteered to do this work.
- There are two leaning gravestones. Councillor Drew will provide the Clerk with the details of the graves and see if there are any living relatives. If none can be identified then a stonemason will be approached. Councillor Noble suggested Hobbs.

## 9. FOOTPATHS

- i Weir Lane Footpath: The Clerk will contact Kelly Knight to see if any grants are available for the work to the handrails and for potential contractors. No further quotes have been received.

The stile at Hooting Ash Farm, footpath number 16/6 has collapsed into a pile. This has been reported to the ASBO's. The Clerk will report to Footpaths at Mendip District Council. This was previously reported on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020, issue number 59604 but repair work was never carried out.

It was requested that a stile be put in at the Neat Lane footpath on Stricklands lane footpath 16/35.

## 10. ITEMS FOR COUNCIL'S INFORMATION:

- i Roundabout report:

Reporting faults on the Highway: Members of the public can report a highways problem from potholes, blocked drains and broken manhole covers, to mud on the road, overgrown vegetation, damaged pavements or cycle paths, faulty traffic lights or missing markings – they can all be reported from a smartphone, tablet or computer via [www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem-on-the-road/](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem-on-the-road/)

The Village Litter Pick will take place on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> February starting at the Village Hall at 9am. Why not come along and help keep the village looking beautiful.

Due to local government reorganisation to a single unitary council, town and parish elections will take place in May 2022.

The next GFEL/Pilton Parish Council Meetings will take place on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> February and Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 6.30. GFEL will also be holding drop in sessions for villagers starting at the end of January. They are also prepared to visit residents in their homes if necessary. Further details and dates will be published on the village Facebook page.

Discussion took place regarding the noise from the Shooting Ground, which was very loud on New Year's Eve and Christmas Day, which was unsociable caused distress to animals. A villager stated that he felt that the Shooting Ground was following their Code of Practice. There was also noise pollution, the pollution of the shots going into the ground in vast quantities and unsociable behaviour.

The Clerk was asked to write to Mendip District Council to ask on what grounds the site is operating and the start and finish times. She will also ask if there as anything that can be done about it as it constitutes a public nuisance.

A villager read a letter that was sent to another villager when they reported the issue, which states that they can shoot for 28 days per year and therefore they are compliant and the activity an continue. A copy of the letter can be found on the Pilton Facebook page.

For further information details can be found at:

<https://www.mendip.gov/articles/7522/noise>.

The Clerk will also write to Mendip District Council regarding the complaints

## 11. GFEL

### i. Dates of Festival Meetings & public involvement:

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2022

The next GFEL/Pilton Parish Council Meetings will take place on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> February and Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 6.30. GFEL will also be holding drop in sessions for villagers starting at the end of January. They are also prepared to visit residents in their homes if necessary. Further details and dates will be published on the village Facebook page.

The Parish Council proposed that only villagers be allowed to attend these meetings.

**NEXT MEETING:** Parish Council Meeting will take place on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022 at 7.30pm

Meeting closed 9.15pm

## **Appendix A – Report from Nigel Hewitt-Cooper**

Coronavirus infection rates: As of 31st December the number of confirmed Covid cases in Somerset was 83,300 (22% up from 68,307 on 30th September) and the number of Covid-attributed deaths 977. The rate per 100,000 stands at 766.6 (435.2) for Somerset with Mendip at 892.0 (564.1), Sedgemoor at 756.6 (418.1), South Somerset 684.3 (505.5) and SW&T at 770.4 (276.6). The number of total deaths across the County is currently level with the 5-year average and the latest R-value for Somerset is between 0.9 and 1.1

Infection rates in Somerset continue to be extremely high. With the new Omicron variant it is important, even for those who have had both jabs, to remember to follow Government guidance on wearing masks, to continue to observe Social Distancing and to always ventilate indoor areas.

Somerset Coronavirus Support Helpline: A single phone number continues to be available for anyone in Somerset who needs Coronavirus-related support. 0300 790 6275, is open seven days a week from 8am to 6pm.

Vaccination programmes roll-out: Somerset continues to have one of the highest vaccination rates in the country with the latest figures showing over 95.8% of the 18+ population having had one dose of vaccine and 93.2% having had both doses. IN total 50.9% of the adult population have also received their booster.

Local Government Reorganisation: Following the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) decision to support the move to a single Unitary Council across Somerset it is expected that statutory orders will shortly be laid before Parliament with an agreed vesting date of April 2023. The first elections to the new authority together with Somerset Town and Parish elections will be held on 5th May 2022.

Pay boost for Somerset Carers: Somerset County Council and the NHS have announced a £4.8m investment to increase pay and recognise the vital contribution of carers in Somerset. The Council are proposing a 9% uplift to domiciliary care providers who agree to pay all their staff a minimum of £10.50 per hour; a retention bonus of £250 for those who have been working in registered care for the last 6 months; and a £250 payment for new starters in domiciliary care. The funding for these changes has been jointly agreed and funded by Somerset County Council and the NHS, as social care is crucial in supporting people leaving hospital and in the community. There are currently a number of vacant social care roles and to find out more visit [www.proudtocaresomerset.org.uk/jobs](http://www.proudtocaresomerset.org.uk/jobs)

Appeal for return of healthcare equipment: Healthcare equipment is loaned on behalf of the NHS and social care teams when people leave hospital or after a period of illness, to help them stay safe at home and retain their independence. However, the Covid-19 pandemic has increased demand for this equipment and created shortages in supply. To book a free collection so that equipment can be reused to help others call Millbrook Healthcare on 0333 003 2407.

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans: SCC has unveiled plans for major new safe cycling and walking routes in the county to help create greener, healthier and more active streets. The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) for Yeovil and Taunton are the first to be published – they’ll be followed by plans for Bridgwater and Frome and funding has been netted to draw up plans for three other towns. Having a plan in place is key to unlocking Government funding to build the infrastructure and enable people in Somerset to choose to walk or cycle to work, school, the shops or for other short trips for the benefit of people’s health and the environment.

Reporting faults on the Highway: Utilising a new upgraded online system with an improved interactive map, members of the public can report a highways problem 24/7. From potholes, blocked drains and broken manhole covers, to mud on the road, overgrown vegetation, damaged pavements or cycle paths, faulty traffic lights or missing markings – they can all be reported in just minutes from a smartphone, tablet or computer.

The full range is available via [www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem-on-the-road/](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem-on-the-road/)

Reaching Carbon Zero: As part of Somerset County Council’s commitment to decarbonise its buildings Yeovil Library has undergone a transformation to make the building greener and more energy efficient. The project has seen a new air source heat pump installed to heat the building in a more sustainable way, lamps changed to LEDs, new thermally efficient windows, improved ventilation with carbon dioxide monitors, and significant additional insulation. The measures will save approximately 27 tonnes of carbon each year. The investment is part of a wider SCC scheme to decarbonise and make the Council’s buildings more environmentally friendly and will cover 12 projects including Taunton Library, Frome Library, Glastonbury Hub, and County Hall. Early estimates indicate that the delivery of the various schemes could reduce SCC’s carbon output by around 27% – around 400 tonnes of carbon per annum. All the remaining projects aside from County Hall are due to be complete by March 2022.

Applications for school places 2022: All children starting school for the first time in September 2022, as well as those moving between infant and junior or first and middle school applications must be submitted by Saturday 15 January 2022. [www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions)