

Kings Nympton Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 30th January 2025 at
Kings Nympton Parish Hall

Minutes taken by: Debbie Cook, Parish Clerk

Present: Councillors J. Bowden (Chair), L. Govier, M. Short, A Govier, M. Pincombe, I. Govier and M. Pailthorpe. DC Councillor Paul Henderson ND Councillor Sue Whitehead

Apologies: Councillors I Blewett and T Chugg.

Please note that these minutes are deemed to be a draft until they are approved and signed at the next meeting.

Public Meeting: No members of the public attended.

Parish Council Meeting

Declarations of Interest: Members' Register of Interests are available to view on the North Devon District website or from the Parish Clerk. Councillors are reminded to update their details on the Register of Interests within 28 days of any change.

Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 19th December 2024 were signed as a true and accurate record of account.

Matters Arising:

Roadworks and Repairs: The clerk has reported the drains at bottom of Little Wampford Hill and these have been inspected and are due for clearing. Councillor L Govier reported bad potholes on the road to Garland Cross. Clerk will report.

PLEASE keep reporting potholes to Devon highways (<https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/>). The more people that report them the more chance that they will be fixed!!

Parishioners can report any road related problems on this website, including potholes, overgrown vegetation and trees, missing road markings, empty grit boxes, obstructions, blocked drains etc. If you do not have internet access then please report the problem to a parish councillor or the clerk, with exact location and description of the problem and they will arrange for this to be reported.

Primary School: The Clerk has made further requests for someone from the school to come and discuss the declining numbers with the Parish Council. The Chair of Governors had replied that she couldn't discuss individual cases regarding why people had removed their children from the school and suggested that representatives from the parish council visit the school to talk to the Headteacher or the SLT. The Parish Council would seek further advice on what action they could take.

Signs for Tongue Lake and Spittle Lanes: The Clerk had received the signs and passed these on to Councillor Chugg to put up. Hopefully this will discourage people from driving their vehicles down the bridleways and getting stuck.

Trains at KN Station: The Parish Council decided to join the Northern Devon Rail Alliance Group. They thought this was a good way to support improvements to the Exeter-Barnstaple line and keep up to date with developments. There is no cost in joining the group but the Parish Council decided to make a £150 donation in support.

Vehicle Charging Point Councillor Pailthorpe reported that this had been discussed at the latest parish hall meeting and they are in favour of siting this in the car park. Councillor Henderson reported that the first round of funding had closed but Kings Nympton is on the list for the second round.

Flagpole: The Clerk reported that the application for funding from the Councillor Grant Scheme had been successful and thanked Councillor Whitehead for approving this. It was decided that a 15-20 foot flagpole would be most appropriate. The Clerk will order this and a Union Jack flag. Councillor A. Govier will arrange the installation and the re-siting of the dog bin.

Road Warden Scheme: The clerk will contact Marcus for an update before the next meeting.

V.E. Day Celebrations – Celebrations will take place on May 8th and May 10th. Councillor Pailthorpe is looking for volunteers to help with the arrangements. He requested help from the Parish Council with the cost of champagne, cake and a flag at approximately £250 which the Parish Council approved.

Hedge trimming – Complaints had been received regarding lack of hedge trimming in some areas. Landowners are reminded of their responsibility to trim road hedges and if further advice is needed please contact the Clerk or a member of the Parish Council.

Chairmans Report – The Community Governance Review was discussed and it was decided that no changes were required.

Clerks Report: The Clerk reported an upcoming road closure between Hill Head Cross and the Grove from Monday 17th February to Wednesday 19th February for cable works by Airband. The Clerk had received quotes for defibrillator training and would ask Robert who provided the training last time.

Finance report: The accounts to date have been reviewed and approved.

Councillor Reports:

Devon County Councillor Henderson reported as follows –

Full DCC Motion to Ask Government to Delay Elections - Following the publishing of the govt white paper on devolution shortly before Christmas, a major rewiring of how local government operates WILL be taking place. To this end, both County and District Councils across the country will cease to exist, instead, they will be replaced by a unitary authority, many of whom will have elected Mayors. Despite bitter voiced opposition from all Devon based District Councils, they will be integrated into a new unitary authority, as will the County Council. The white paper is NOT a discussion or consultation document, it is a statement of statute change. The timescale for this change is incredibly short. By September 2025, Councils must submit their plan for the new unitary authority which will then come into being. The government has asked that the district councils across Devon work with the County Council to create the structure of the new unitary authority. Presently, the District Councils are, as far as I'm aware, trying to halt this change. That won't happen and if the District Councils decide they won't work together with the County, then central government will instead impose a structure. That would not be of benefit to any council or any resident. So why delay an election? Given the tight timeframe (September 25), if an election was to be held in May, purdah would kick in at the end of March stalling any form of collaboration to create a new unitary structure. Following the election, there is a five to six week induction period. This is different to town/parish/district elections. All newly installed councillors have to go through enhanced DBS checks and then there are numerous mandatory training courses covering topics such as adult health & social care, children's services -these are big complex topics which take a lot of time to begin to understand. Given this,

the newly elected Councillors would not be in a position to begin with the additional responsibility of restructuring multiple councils (and the staffing) which have existed for 50+ years until the middle of June. That leaves them a window of just 6 weeks to re-structure. Furthermore, the likelihood is that 60% or more of newly elected councillors would be brand new. Finally, having had an election in May, those Councillors could only be in situ for a year at most before the elections for the new authority would happen. To my mind it's better to have cross party/cross council working together now to structure a new authority that's fit for purpose with one single election to take place in May 26.....not to mention the cost savings to the public purse of holding 2 elections instead of 1. Of course the requested delay of the May elections are subject to central government agreement so we may yet be heading to the polls this coming May.

Planning application no. 79568 at Rosebud Ranch, Jose's Cross, Kings Nympton – the parish council asked the Clerk to comment on this application that they are not in favour of leaving the previous accommodation in addition to a new accommodation building.

Heal Lodge – The Parish Council had received an email from the Enforcement Officer at North Devon Planning to say that they are starting enforcement procedures.

Any Other Business

A complaint had been received regarding the tree in the square and Councillor Bowden will have a look at this. It will be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be on **THURSDAY 20th MARCH 2025 at 7.30 pm.** and parishioners are invited to attend at 7.30 pm to raise any questions or issues they may have.

Future Meetings 2025: May 15, June 19, July 31, Sept 11, Oct 23, Dec 4