

Minutes of Neroche Annual Parish Meeting

5th July 2002

Chairman's Report: Mark Palmer in his new role as Chairman gave his inaugural address to a well-attended meeting.

Ken Brown, a former chairman of nearby Corfe Parish, addressed the meeting on “**Against All Odds: What Parish Councils Can Achieve**”. His theme was the battle to introduce a 30pmh speed limit on the B3170 the main road through the village. Parish Council records show that as early as the 1960s the villagers were arguing for a reduction in the speed limit through the village.

Somerset Highways Department and the police were unsupportive of the initiative at the outset. It took time, determination and a great deal of hard work by the parish and county councillors but they had the overwhelming support of local residents. At a public meeting in the village hall to which the Highways Department and police were invited, they finally acknowledged the strength of local opinion and the need for a speed reduction. A speed limit of 30mph was finally achieved in 2012 after the villagers raised several thousand pounds to help fund the changes.

County Councillor Ross Henley spoke about the changes that would be happening in order for the five district councils to be amalgagted into the new unitary authority. The new Somerset Council will come formally into being in April 2023.

Councillor John Parsons spoke briefly about Highways England's plan to upgrade the A358. Local opinion does not support the upgrade recognising it will cut off communities and potentially lead to an increase in traffic on village roads. He also reported there was no new information about any potential housing development by Taylor Wimpey on the 1100 acres of land they bought in Orchard Portman from the Crown Estate.

At the Open Forum for parishioners there was interest in a speed reduction scheme through Staple Fitzpaine village. Councillor Fiona Gledhill spoke about the potential of a Village Gateway with a speed limit of 30mph through the centre of the village. Councillor Sue Hayman spoke about the need to keep the parish's Rights of Way open and unobstructed. Councillor Jane Hole spoke about the potential of schemes to reduce the parish's carbon footprint and improve biodiversity.

Bickenhall W.I. kindly supported the evening with beverages and delicious cakes.