

SHEPTON BEAUCHAMP PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE SHEPTON BEAUCHAMP PARISH COUNCIL

Held on Monday 18th September 2023 at 7.30 pm
In the Village Hall, Middle Street, Shepton Beauchamp TA19 OLQ

Councillors present: Cllr Nigel Wylie Carrick (Co-Chairman) Cllr David Bourn (Co-Chairman)
Cllr Sarah Brunt Cllr Clare Lillywhite
Cllr Angie Joy Cllr Tim England
Cllr Ed Wakely

In attendance: Stella Davies (Clerk)

Members of the public: There were 3 members of the public in attendance

District/County Councillors in attendance: Somerset Cllr Adam Dance (arrived 8 pm & left 9.15 pm)
Somerset Cllr Jo Roundell-Greene sent her apologies

Somerset Cllr Adam Dance reported that blood pressure monitors were being installed in libraries for rental, as we have many people with high blood pressure, and is hoping to get monitors in some of the larger employers in the area. The council is £13.7 million underfunded in public health. Councils around the country are going bankrupt and being issued with a section 115 which means that their assets have to be sold. No grants are available from Somerset Council at the moment and pest control is no longer available. Adult social care and children's services are the biggest overspend.

Cllr Dance was asked by the Clerk if a contingency should be put into the budgets for future years in case Somerset Council was declared bankrupt, as the parish council would incur costs that were previously paid for by the county. Cllr Dance advised that we raise the precept so that an amount could be put into budgets (particularly highways), to allow for this.

Ser Item

As the Chairman was held up elsewhere, the meeting was chaired initially by Cllr Bourn

- 941. To receive apologies for absence and to approve the reasons given** (LGA 1972, s85(1))
Apologies were received from Cllr Howard (working) and Cllr Rowsell (personal commitment)
Resolved. To accept and approve the apologies given.

- 942. Declarations of interest** – Members to declare any interest, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interest they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any prior requests from members for dispensations that accord with the Localism Act s33 (b-e). (NB this does not preclude any later declarations)
Cllr Bourn declared an interest in item 946.

- 943. To approve as a correct record the minutes/decisions of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 17th July 2023** (LGA 1972, sch. 12, para 41(1)).
Resolved. That the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 17th July be signed as correct.

- 944. Grant Application – The Shepton Playhouse**
To review the grant application received from The Shepton Playhouse and resolve whether to give a grant of £500
Resolved. The grant application of £500 was approved unanimously.

945. Grant Application – The Art and Craft Group

To review the grant application received from the Art and Craft Group and resolve whether to give a grant of £183.86

Resolved. The grant application was approved unanimously and it was decided to give a grant of £200

As Cllr Bourn had declared an interest in Item 946, it was decided this would be dealt with when Cllr Wylie Carrick took the chair.

946. Grant payment to Cowleaze Meadow Project

To resolve to approve the payment of £650 towards the upkeep of Cowleaze Meadow (yearly grant applied for in November 2021).

Resolved. The grant application of £650 was approved unanimously.

947. Recreation Field Survey Results

To review the results from the survey and resolve which items to take forward and the timescale.

The results were reviewed. Cllr England said the feedback was mostly around our existing facilities, which was to do essential repairs to the pavilion and also enhance it. These would be a substantial commitment and so would be a long-term plan in view of financing the project. In the short-term there are items of play equipment which need work on them. It was mentioned that there were funds donated from the pre-school which could be used to purchase some new equipment, but also repairs were needed to some of the existing items. There are grants available which we could apply for. Planting of trees along the top of the west bank was a long-term plan, with memorial trees being donated in memory of someone. The recreation committee had suggested planting spring bulbs around the car park area. Dog walking was also discussed and the fact that there is a footpath along the side of the recreation field.

Resolved. It was decided that:

Short-term – (a) large signs should be put up at all entrances to the recreation field to say “No dogs allowed on the recreation field. Please keep to the footpath and keep your dog under close control”

Action – Parish Clerk

(b) investigate the cost of putting a fence around the site of the Hawes memorial shelter.

Action – Parish Clerk

Medium-term - to plant native trees and wildflowers on the western bank.

Long-term – (a) to carry out essential repairs and enhancements to the pavilion

(b) Play equipment should be repaired and possibly new equipment purchased. Cllr England will look into the costs of this.

Action – Cllr England

At this point Cllr Bourn vacated the chair and Cllr Wylie-Carrick took over, starting with item 946 before moving onto item 948

948. Printing of Recreation Field Survey Results

To approve the printing of the results for distribution with the September issue of The Web at a cost of £85.

Resolved. That the printing of the results at a cost of £85 be approved.

949. Bonfire Night

To discuss the proposals put by the Events Team and resolve what action to take.

The proposal put forward by the Events Team was that they run the bar and barbeque and that the recreation field committee organise and build the bonfire and take the money at the gate. The Events Team would then take the profit from the bar and food and that the Parish Council take the profit from the gate, with the council paying for the laser display and the hire of a turf cutter. Based on the costs

and number of attendees last year, this would mean £690 would be given to the Parish Council towards the recreation field costs. However, as the laser display would cost an additional £500 this year and there was outlay for the turf cutter, then with the same number of attendees the figure would drop to below £100. If the event did not take place due to the weather, then the Parish Council could incur a loss of around £1,600. The Events Team would also incur a loss with any food that could not be frozen for future events or drink that could not be saved for future events.

It was therefore thought that the event should be a joint venture with a split of the total profits, to better benefit both organisations. If there was a loss then that would also be borne by both organisations. The councillors wanted it noted that they appreciated all the work that the Events Team did within the village and that they should get a larger % of the profits and so they did not expect the split to be 50/50.

Tim is to contact Tom from the Events Team on behalf of the recreation field committee to see if a meeting could be arranged to discuss this and to negotiate a % split of the profits. It was suggested that this could be 60/40 in favour of the Events Team. This was voted on and agreed by 6 councillors with 1 abstention.

Action – Cllr England

950. Recreation Field Gates

To resolve if the trial period of keeping the gates open should continue and if so, when it should be reviewed again.

Resolved. That the recreation field gates should remain open, but this would be reviewed if and when we receive any complaints about cars being in the car park late at night.

951. Grass cutting at the Recreation Field

To review the grass cutting to date.

The Clerk mentioned that the football team had complained that the football pitch was not being cut short enough, but that our tender document had asked for all areas to be cut the same at 40mm. The old contractors used to cut the football pitch to 38mm. Cllr England mentioned that they borrowed a mower from a local resident to cut the pitch shorter and had raked the cuttings and left them to one side. The Clerk said she had found out the date of the home football matches and that the contractor was cutting the grass on the Friday before a match. She also said that the contractor could set his mower to cut lower, so we need to let him know if we want him to do that. It was decided to speak to the football club about this.

Action – Cllr England / Parish Clerk

The Clerk also mentioned that our tender document asked for 'no less than 20 cuts per year' and the contractor was currently doing 4 cuts per month. If he carries out doing 4 cuts per month June to November and then 2 cuts March to May, with none from December to February we will have overspent by £2,800.

952. Sickness Absence Policy

To resolve to approve and adopt the Sickness Absence Policy

Resolved. That the Sickness Absence Policy be approved and adopted.

953. Expenses Policy

To resolve to approve and adopt the Expenses Policy

Resolved. That the Expenses Policy be approved and adopted.

954. Dignity at Work Policy

To resolve to approve and adopt the Dignity at Work Policy

Resolved. That the Dignity at Work Policy be approved and adopted.

955 Document Retention Policy

To resolve to approve and adopt the Document Retention Policy

Resolved. That the Document Retention Policy be approved and adopted.

956. Finance

To review the Bank Reconciliations as at 31st July 2023 and 31st August 2023 (previously circulated).

To approve the schedule of payments totalling £25,123.39 (previously circulated)

Resolved. The Bank Reconciliations were approved and signed as correct by a non-cheque signatory. The payments were approved.

957. Report from Clerk/RFO. For information only

The Clerk reported that the Pre-School had given us a donation of £3,000 which they have asked be used for equipment or facilities for younger children or families.

Regarding Chapter 8 qualification, the Clerk had sent an email asking if any councillor wanted to take the qualification, but the general consensus was as the current Ranger now has the qualification then the moving of the SID should be kept with him.

The annual play equipment inspection will be carried out in November by the company who did it last year. Cllr England mentioned that for future years we may be able to use staff from Ilminster council who have the qualification.

SALC are running a playground inspection seminar at Somerton in early October and she suggested she attended the course and feedback to the 2 councillors who carried out the visual inspections as they were both working.

She asked who was going to attend the LCN meeting in Crewkerne on 21st September and Cllr Wylie Carrick said he planned to go. If he was not available then Cllr Bourn said he would attend.

She said that Bridget had said that she, Peter and Dorothy could do with some help on a regular basis to maintain the Platinum Jubilee Garden. She will put something in a future edition of the Newsletter.

958. Reports. For information only

Highways

There was nothing to report

Lethbridge Recreational Ground Committee

Nothing further to report

Ranger

Cllr Wylie Carrick said he had received positive comments about the work of the new Ranger. Cllr England mentioned that the gulley just as you past Silver Springs is quite weedy and needs to be tidied to prevent them blocking.

Allotments

The Clerk said that we have one allotment still vacant and so would mention it in the Newsletter.

Cowleaze

Cllr Bourn said that the Cowleaze volunteers had clubbed together and purchased a seat made from recycled material in memory of Roger, which had now been placed in the meadow.

Footpaths

Nothing to report.

959. Annex A – Deferred items register

The Chairman reminded Councillors to let the Clerk know when actions had been completed.

Meeting closed: 9:15 pm