

SHEPTON BEAUCHAMP PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE SHEPTON BEAUCHAMP PARISH COUNCIL

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

Councillors present: Cllr Nigel Wylie Carrick (Chairman) Cllr David Bourn (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Andrew Rowswell Cllr Angie Joy
Cllr Tim England Cllr Nick Howard

In attendance: Stella Davies (Clerk)

Members of the public: There were no members of the public in attendance

Unitary Councillors in attendance: Somerset Cllr Jo Roundell Greene (arrived 8.05 pm, left 8.20pm)
Somerset Cllr Adam Dance (arrived 8.05 pm, left 8.45 pm)

Report from Somerset Councillors

Cllr Adam Dance said that he had received letters from a resident of Piece Lane who is concerned about the possible flooding when the new development is built.

He reported on the provisional local government finance settlement for 2024-25, with councils set to receive an above-inflation average of 6.5% increase in funding. It was not yet known what the budget for Somerset Council would be.

The unitary authority was getting close to issuing a 114 notice and so the Parish Council should decide which services they wanted to take on as the unitary authority would no longer be offering the services that they have in the past, such as cutting of verges. Those services that would still be provided (for example dog poo bin emptying) would need a financial contribution from the Parish Council, but the actual cost of these services was still not known.

He recommended that Parish Council's precept should be significantly increased to meet the anticipated requirement to pay for services that they wished to retain. This would be in line with what other Parish Councils were doing.

Ser Item

995. To receive apologies for absence and to approve the reasons given (LGA 1972, s85(1))

Apologies were received from Cllr Wakely (unwell).

Resolved. To accept and approve the apologies given.

996. 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 Joy declared an interest in item 1000 and signed the book.

997. To approve as a correct record the minutes/decisions of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 20th November 2023 (LGA 1972, sch 12, para 41(1)).

Resolved. That the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 20th November be signed as correct.

998. Future LCN meetings

To resolve which councillors will attend the LCN meetings to be held on 18th January, 21st March and 13th June and provide feedback at the following council meeting.

Resolved. Cllr Rowsell offered to attend the 18th January meeting. For the March and June meetings, the Clerk will email the agenda to all councillors and see which councillor is able to attend.

Action – Parish Clerk

999. Grant Application – The Events Team

To review the grant application received from the Events Team and resolve whether to give a grant of £802.17 to cover their insurance costs for the year.

Resolved. The grant application of £802.17 was approved unanimously.

1000. Grant Application – Senior's Xmas Meal

To resolve to give a grant of £133.16 towards the cost of the Christmas Meal for our senior residents.

Resolved. The grant application of £133.16 was approved unanimously.

1001. Action Plan v6

To review and re-adopt the Action Plan v6 (unresolved from November council meeting).

Resolved. The action plan was reviewed, slightly amended and re-adopted

1002. Asset & Service Devolution

To review the documentation sent by Somerset Council regarding Devolution of services and resolve if the council should send a response (unresolved from November council meeting)

Resolved. It was decided that the council would not send a response to Somerset Council. The Clerk will email to all councillors, the information sent from Somerset Council on services that we may have to take on, in order that a shortlist can be drawn up and quotes can be sought to aid budget setting for the next financial year.

Action – Parish Clerk / All Councillors

1003. Annual Leave Policy

To resolve to approve and adopt the Annual Leave Policy.

Resolved. To approve and adopt the Annual Leave Policy.

1004. Staffing Committee

To resolve to appoint another councillor onto the committee in line with the Terms of Reference.

Resolved. Cllr Howard was appointed onto the staffing committee.

1005. Finance

To review the Bank Reconciliation as at 30th November 2023 (previously circulated).

To approve the schedule of payments totalling £1,980.39 (previously circulated)

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

1006. Report from Clerk/RFO. *For information only*

The Clerk reported that following the expression of interest form that we completed for a community review, our application for a Community Review Project was successful. The councillors considered the confirmation email we had received and asked that the Clerk respond to ask for more detail on what would be delivered and to confirm that no agreement could be signed without bringing this to a council meeting for discussion. Cllr Wylie Carrick and Cllr Joy offered to be the named contacts should the project go ahead.

Action – Parish Clerk

The old Recreation Field committee was having their meeting to disband the group on Tuesday and any remaining monies would be given to the Parish Council. This was thought to be in the region of £1,300 and would be ring-fenced for recreation field development.

She had been in contact with some local Parish Clerks regarding the withdrawal of the ranger service and Lopen are interested in working with us to find an alternative. Hinton St George were looking to work with other parish council for larger issues, such as gully clearing and tree works.

She reported that a tender had been issued for a ground maintenance contract (to replace the Somerset Ranger) and the closing date for this was 10th January.

1007. Reports. For information only

Highways

Cllr Rowswell said he had reported various potholes, particularly the one heading out of the village past Upper Silver Street. The street light outside the church had now been repaired.

Cllr Wylie Carrick mentioned that the lights had gone on two of the lights in Silver Street. Cllr Rowswell said he would report these.

Action – Cllr Rowswell

Lethbridge Recreational Ground Committee

Cllr England had nothing to report. The Clerk said we had received the latest Play Equipment Inspection report. Cllr Bourn said there was a reinforcing bar sticking up in the woodchip bank and Cllr England said he would remove this with an angle grinder, once Cllr Bourn tells him the exact location.

Action – Cllr Bourn / Cllr England

Ranger

Cllr Wylie Carrick reported that a tender had been issued for a ground maintenance contract (as reported by the Clerk). SID had been temporarily taken down and will remain out of action until February.

Allotments

There was nothing to report.

Cowleaze

Cllr Bourn reported that a third small bench was now installed. The posts to the dog-free zone, which had rotted, have now been replaced.

Footpaths

There was nothing to report.

To resolve to exclude members of the press and public. To agree that items 1008 and 1009 below be dealt with after the public have been excluded as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Resolved. There were no members of the public in attendance to exclude.

1008. Tender for Lethbridge Recreation Field grass cutting

To review the tenders received and resolve which tender (if any) to accept.

Resolved. The tenders were reviewed in some detail, together with references and Somerset Landscapes was accepted by a majority of the councillors.

1009. Staffing – in confidence

To approve the recent appraisal carried out for the Clerk/RFO.

Resolved. The recent appraisal was approved.

Meeting closed: 9.00 pm