

SHEPTON BEAUCHAMP PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE SHEPTON BEAUCHAMP PARISH COUNCIL

Held on Monday 18th March 2024 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 Angie Joy Cllr Andrew Rowswell
Cllr Ed Wakely

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 7.30 pm, left 7.40 pm)

Report from Somerset Council

Cllr Roundell Greene reported that the budget had now gone through. The re-organisation of the council had been carried out in order to slim it down. The staffing levels would be reduced. The Gravity site at Bridgwater is a huge project and it is hoped this will help with improving job prospects.

On a local level she said she hoped all the lights in the village were now working. She asked about the drain at the bottom of Shells Lane and was told it had been reported to the Highways department, but the councillors did not think it would be dealt with as a priority as it was an individual drain. She said if nothing happened, then let her know and she would follow it up.

Ser Item

1036. To receive apologies for absence and to approve the reasons given (LGA 1972, s85(1))

Apologies were received from Cllr Howard (working), Cllr Burwood (unwell), Cllr Stearn (unwell) & Cllr England (prior commitment).

Resolved. To accept and approve the apologies given.

1037. 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)

There were no declarations of interest.

1038. To approve as a correct record the minutes/decisions of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 19th February 2024 (LGA 1972, sch 12, para 41(1)).

Resolved. That the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 19th February be signed as correct.

1039. LCN (Local Council Network)

To discuss any relevant issues that have been received from the LCN

Cllr Rowswell had previously circulated notes from the last LCN meeting. It was mentioned that Somerset Council will no longer be supplying sandbags to householders and so this needs to be mentioned in the next newsletter.

Action – Parish Clerk

The next LCN meeting will be held on 21st March and Cllr Bourn agreed to attend remotely.

1040. Highway Maintenance Devolution

To discuss the recent documentation received from Somerset Council and resolve what action should be taken and the timescale of said action.

Resolved. It was decided that no action is to taken at this stage until costs are known.

1041. Drain at the bottom of Shells Lane

To discuss the blocked drain at the bottom of Shells Lane and resolve what action should be taken.

Cllr Rowswell mentioned that the drain at the bottom of Shells Lane was blocked and he thought we could not rely on Somerset Council to fix this, but would need to get someone ourselves. Cllr Wylie Carrick said he had asked the Ranger to look at it, but he thought it was beyond his capabilities. He had reported it to the Highways department (ref 805452). The Clerk said she had been in discussion with Stocklinch clerk as they were going to get quotes from a private contractor, so would follow this up. If we go ahead with using a private contractor then we need to arrange for these to be cleaned in the summer.

Action – Parish Clerk

Cllr Wakely said if there was no response from Somerset Council by the weekend, he would have a look and see if he could do anything to clear the drain.

Action – Cllr Wakely

[Note post meeting – the drain has now been cleared](#)

If Cllr Wakely could not clear the drain and Highways do not clear it, then the Parish Council should let Jo Roundell Greene know and she will chase this for us.

Action – Parish Clerk

1042. Parish Council Newsletter

To resolve to approve the April newsletter at a cost of £65

Resolved. The April newsletter was approved.

1043. Parish Council charge card

To discuss the options available and resolve whether to proceed with an application for a charge card (unresolved from June 2023 meeting).

The Clerk currently pays for some items using a personal credit card and it was noted that this did not comply with our financial regulations. Various options were discussed.

Resolved. That an application is made for a charge card with our current bank (Unity Bank).

Action – Parish Clerk

1044. Finance

To review the Bank Reconciliation as at 29th February 2024 (previously circulated).

To approve the schedule of payments totalling £1,190.18 (previously circulated)

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

1045. Report from Clerk/RFO. For information only

The Clerk reported that the village hall had thanked the Parish Council for the £500 grant.

In the June meeting she had been asked to investigate the cost for fencing off the play area. This was following dog fouling in the area. It was mentioned to her at the playground inspection training course, that it was not mandatory to fence off the play area as it was not near a main road or a river. If it was fenced, we would need ROSPA approved gates which would have to be wide enough for the grass contractor to access. To date she had received one quotation for two different types of fencing £4,600 - £6,990. It was decided that the recreation field committee should discuss this and advise the Parish Council.

1046. Reports. For information only

Highways

Cllr Rowswell had reported more pot holes which had been repaired. The filled ditch near Lopen Head was discussed, Cllr Wakely had spoken to the landowner, who said that Somerset Council had indicated that they would take responsibility for clearing this. They have been out once and never returned. The landowner has paperwork to substantiate this. Cllr Wakely was asked if he could get a copy of the paperwork which we could then send to Jo Roundell Greene.

Action – Cllr Wakely

It was suggested that we contact Jo Roundell Greene with the copy of the paperwork and a map showing the location of the ditch, to see if she could chase Highways. **Action – Parish Clerk**

Lethbridge Recreational Ground Committee

In the absence of Cllr England, Cllr Wakely reported that there was rutting in the recreation field following the laser display on Sunday. Cllr England had discussed this with Tom from the Events Team, who was going to roll the area when the ground was drier.

Ranger

Cllr Wylie Carrick reported that spraying had been carried out and some footpath clearance, plus clearing the top drains.

Allotments

In the absence of Cllr Howard, there was nothing to report.

Cowleaze

Cllr Bourn said that they were currently carrying out grass cutting and will be bramble clearing next week. It is still very wet in the area.

Footpaths

Cllr Wakely said he had started to level the footpath that ran by his property. He plans to put some hardcore down, topped with wood shavings. This should make the footpath more level. Cllr Bourn mentioned the Ash Lane path and the muddy area on the flat part. It was noted that if we put hardcore on this it might mean the water then floods North Street.

1047. Annex A – Deferred items register

Annex A was updated.

To resolve to exclude members of the press and public. To agree that item 1048 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 to exclude.

1048. Staffing – in confidence

To discuss the recommendations proposed by the staffing committee and resolve what action should be taken.

Resolved. The Parish Council took the recommendations of the staffing committee. It was also noted that the profile of the council is LC2 below standard, spine points 18 – 23.

Meeting closed: 9.15 pm