

SHEPTON BEAUCHAMP PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE SHEPTON BEAUCHAMP PARISH COUNCIL

Held on Tuesday 21st April 2026 at 7.30 pm

In the Village Hall, Middle Street, Shepton Beauchamp TA19 0LQ

Councillors present: Cllr Paul Vacani (Chairman) Cllr David Bourn (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Angie Joy Cllr Andrew Rowsell
Cllr Sally Burwood Cllr David Linten

In attendance: Stella Davies (Clerk)

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

Unitary Councillors in attendance: Somerset Cllr Steve Ashton

Report from Somerset Council

Cllr Ashton reported that the Government Consultation on the National Policy Planning Framework closes on 24th April. There is going to be a change to the planning regulations which means that objections can only be raised if a development has more than 9 houses. There can only be one objection raised, subsequent objections will no longer be allowed. Appeals are also changing in that you can no longer bring up any item that has not previously been mentioned.

The way that potholes are being dealt with is changing. The repair of potholes is subcontracted to Kier and they would only fill marked potholes. They charge by the pothole. Somerset Council are attempting to implement a process where they fill a pothole that is within 10 metres of the marked pothole and measure the additional pothole. They are filling 1,000 potholes per week and aim to complete pothole repairs by the end of July.

Regarding Boundary changes, some of the 2 member wards are being removed and the number of Councillors is being reduced.

Cllr Vacani mentioned the £24m savings had been taken out of the revenue and capital budgets and asked if the effect of that removal from the capital budget could be given. Cllr Ashton said that the only way to find this out was to put in a FOI request.

Cllr Vacani also mentioned that following the meeting that Adam Dance had with some of the Councillors concerning the flooding problem on Barrington Main/A303 bridge, which blocks the main access into the village for vehicles, including emergency vehicles, Adam said he would follow this up with highways. Cllr Vacani followed this up with Adam's assistant a few weeks ago who said that highways would contact him direct, however there is no progress. Cllr Ashton said to send a copy of the email to him, and he would follow this up.

Action– Parish Clerk

Ser Item

1382. To receive apologies for absence and to approve the reasons given (LGA 1972, s85(1))
Apologies were received from Cllr Tim England (working) and Cllr Ed Wakely.
Resolved. To accept and approve the apologies given.

1383. 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.

1384. To approve as a correct record the minutes/decisions of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 16th March 2026 (LGA 1972, sch 12, para 41(1)).

Resolved. That the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 16th March be signed as correct.

1385. Co-option

To review application received and resolve to appoint a Parish Councillor to the vacant position, who should sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Resolved. Steven Fidgeon was co-opted to the Parish Council and signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Proposed by Cllr Joy and seconded by Cllr Bourn. Carried unanimously.

1386. 100 Club

To appoint a new named councillor to replace Cllr Wylie Carrick who will be authorised to certify lottery returns to the local authority.

Resolved. That Cllr Bourn be appointed as the Councillor authorised to certify lottery returns to the local authority.

1387. LCN (Local Community Network)

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

Cllr Vacani mentioned that all Councillors had received minutes from the LCN meeting. Somerset Cllr Ashton said that there was a presentation on referrals to care, who assist relatives on planning for long-term care. The Bus Partnership also talked about the problems with the bus timetable to Crewkerne Railway Station as they do not tie up with the train timetable. There was also a report from Highways. He also mentioned that the LCN tends to be dominated by the towns, who have different priorities than the Parish Councils. When questioned, he said he thought the LCN should not be split geographically but by common interest issues, which he put to Val Keitch who was responsible for the LCN, who said there were no plans to reorganise it.

1388. Flood Resilience

To update the council on any relevant developments.

Cllr Rowswell reported that The Somerset Rivers Authority grant application had been successful and the money would be used for the Lambrook Road/Cowleaze culvert. The storm drain culvert is blocked which they are currently sorting. He managed to speak to S&D Drainage yesterday and has a meeting with them next Monday. Once they've had the meeting, the purpose is to look specifically at getting the culvert cleared. They will then look at ongoing maintenance of gullies and drains. Somerset Cllr Ashton said he would be interested in receiving feedback on how the Somerset Rivers Authority were like to deal with.

Action– Cllr Rowswell

1389. Piece Lane

To discuss recent developments and resolve what action should be taken.

The Clerk said she had been contacted by a resident who was upset about the fact that two of the properties near her boundary has windows overlooking her property. She had previously mentioned this at the public consultation prior to the planning application and was assured that there would be gable ends and no windows overlooking her property.

The Clerk also emailed Otter Homes as they appeared to be rescinding on the original plan to put a 3 metre vehicle access to the allotments, which would allow allotment holders access to a potential car park near the allotments, and instead were going to put a footpath access only.

A new plan was sent to her by one of the Directors at Otter Homes, together with a detailed email. Somerset Cllr Ashton did say that the Parish Council should have been informed of a new plan being submitted. Cllr Vacani said the Director was proposing that now the development site was not being adopted by highways, they would be setting up a management company and that the Parish Council should be a member of that management company and contribute towards it. Somerset Cllr Ashton suggested that we contact Somerset Planning department to see if vehicular access was a condition on the original plans, to see if they were aware of the updated plans and was it a material amendment, how did it occur and what standing has it got. Copy Cllr Ashton into the email.

Action– Parish Clerk

An email should be sent to Otter Homes to say this is currently on hold as we are still in the process of researching this with the planners.

Action– Parish Clerk

Cllr Vacani said that the water supply from the development to the allotments had been completed and the pipes were now in place. The water pressure has been measured and is fine for the push taps, but the problem is that we have been advised that due to the hardness of the water the taps would soon be leaking and troughs were recommended. The taps would cost £150 to replace and so Cllr Roswell proposed that we have troughs instead. This was seconded by Cllr Burwood and carried unanimously.

Cllr Rowsell asked Somerset Cllr Ashton why planning was not the most profitable part of any development as the charges for solicitor, architects etc. are far more than the planning department ask for. Cllr Ashton said that the pre-application price had been increased, but he will ask the question about other costs.

1390. SID Locations

To discuss whether to site the SID along Lambrook Road for traffic entering from the direction of West Lambrook.

The Clerk said she had been contacted about the speed of traffic going through the village along Lambrook Road near Brimgrove Lane. We do have approval for a SID to be sited near 4 Lambrook Road, and so Cllr Bourn said he would speak to the Ranger on Friday to see if it could be sited there and let the Clerk know so that she could reply to the resident.

Action– Cllr Bourn

1391. Reserves at end of FY 25/26

To discuss and approve the re-allocation of reserves.

Resolved. That the re-allocation of reserves be approved.

1392. Finance

To review the Bank Reconciliation as at 31st March 2026 (previously circulated).

To approve the schedule of payments totalling £5,301.54 (previously circulated)

Resolved. The Bank Reconciliation as at March 31st was approved and signed as correct by a non-bank signatory. The schedule of payments was approved.

1393. To review and approve the restated/correct Bank Reconciliations

As at - 31st July 2025; 31st Aug 2025; 30th Sept 2025; 31st Oct 2025; 30th Nov 2025; 31st Dec 2025; 31st Jan 2026 and 28th Feb 2026.

Resolved. The Bank Reconciliations from July 2025 to February 2026 were approved and signed as correct by a non-bank signatory.

1394. Report from Clerk/RFO *For information only*

The Clerk reported that she had spent the remaining £14.00 on the CIL money as compliance with CIL regulation 59C (b).

She is also having issues with our documents uploaded to the website not being compliant with WCAG2.2. The website company have sent a quote to carry out audit checks on our documents which she will put as an item on the May agenda. **Action– Parish Clerk**

Cllr Linten said that he knew of free software which he could let the Clerk have details of which would help make the documents compliant.

1395. Reports. *For information only*

Highways

Cllr Rowswell said he was reporting potholes. The pothole at Hurcott crossroads has been filled. The top of Great Lane is improved.

Lethbridge Recreational Ground Committee

In the absence of Cllr England there was no report. Cllr Vacani said he had received complaints about the amount of swearing from an away team during football matches, which could be heard in the neighbouring houses. The Clerk will bring this up at the next recreation field committee meeting.

Action– Parish Clerk

Ranger

Cllr Bourn reported that the Ranger had cleared the Japanese Knotwood from the stream along Cowleaze/Drove Lane and it would be incinerated. The footpath next to the allotments is getting overgrown and is on the list for the Ranger to trim.

Allotments

Cllr Burwood said she thought the map she had of the allotments was out of date as it was only showing one half-plot as vacant. The Clerk asked if payment had been received and a contract sent out for the latest allotment holder. It did not appear to have been sent and so she would issue one as soon as possible. **Action– Parish Clerk**

She also said that she had been approached by an existing allotment holder who said she had asked to give up half her allotment last October, but the Clerk could find no record of this.

She had received an enquiry from a resident requesting an allotment and an existing allotment holder had asked to take on an additional allotment. The Councillors agreed that the newly vacant allotment should go to the person enquiring about an allotment.

An allotment holder had just given in her notice and had made a complaint. The Councillors suggested that an email be sent to all allotment holders to remind them that the allotments should be kept in a manageable state and that respect should be given to the other allotment holders.

The Clerk reported that not all allotment holders had paid the £25 deposit for the water supply.

Cowleaze

There has been more willow planted in the willow tunnel and hedging has been replaced. Grass cutting is scheduled for next week.

Footpaths

In the absence of Cllr Wakley there was no report.

Defibrillator

Cllr Joy said she had fitted the new battery.

1396. Preparation for Annual Meeting of the Parish 18th May at 6 pm

Cllr Vacani said that this year he would like to change the format. He would like each Councillor to talk about their designated areas. If they were not happy to do this, then send a report to the Clerk and she would read it out. The Clerk asked for a report to be sent anyway.

To resolve to exclude members of the press and public. To agree that item 1397 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.

1397. Staffing– in confidence

The recommendations proposed by the Locum Clerk/RFO were discussed .

Meeting closed: 9.29 pm