

Sheepwash Parish Council
Meeting Minutes
Zoom Meeting held on Wednesday 10th March 2021 at 7pm.

Present: Cllr. Ansell (Chairperson); Cllr. Ritson; Cllr. Wheeler; Cllr. Moys; Cllr. Crossley; Cllr. Mathews, Cllr. Hutchings; Selina Woollacott (Clerk) District Cllr David Hurley; County Cllr Parsons; Lewis Clarke (local journalist).

- 1) **Apologies for Absence:** PCSO Mark James
- 2) **Declarations of Interest:** in accordance with the Code of Conduct, members are required to declare any personal or disclosable pecuniary interests, including the nature and extent of such interests they may have, in items to be considered at this meeting. Members are also reminded that any change to their Declaration of Interests must be notified to the Monitoring Officer at Torridge District Council within 28 days of the change. **None.**
- 3) **Public Discussion** – to allow any questions, reports by members of the public on any matters relating to the agenda of this meeting, or any matters the public would like the Council to consider on a future agenda. The period of time designated for public participation shall not exceed 15 minutes.

A reminder that members of the public can speak when invited to when council is in committee.

No public discussion.

- 4) **Minutes** – the Minutes of the meeting held on 20th January 2021 via Zoom, have been circulated by email to be approved for accuracy and signed by the Chair. All Parish Councillors confirmed the minutes are accurate. Cllr Ansell will sign the minutes and hand to Clerk when they next meet. Cllr Ritson asked how soon after a meeting should the draft minutes be put on the notice boards. Draft minutes should be displayed within 28 days of the meeting.
- 5) **County & District Councillors' reports**

District Cllr Hurley's report, Budget and Council Tax The Full Council passed the Budget recommendations at the meeting held on 22nd February. A simplistic view of sources of income for Torridge based on highest to lowest are Fees and Charges, Council Tax, Business Rates and Government Grants. Government funding is reducing year on year with an assumption that Councils will raise more of the required revenue at a local level to provide services. Costs for projects like the Environment Centre have risen despite, or maybe as a result of, the Pandemic. Charges for the green waste collection service will increase from £35 pa to £50 pa over a three-year period. This is similar to other Local authorities in Devon who have, or are, increasing charges. This means that the Council tax bills that we will all be receiving shortly will show a Band D increase of £5. The increase in the average Band D Council tax for Town and Parish Councils is 2.5%. DCC council tax increase will be 4.99%. Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) rises by £14.93 (6.73%) for Band D and the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue will increase by 1.99% for a Band D. This means that the Band D Council tax bill will rise by an average of 4.9%. Please remember that Torridge receives only 8.4 pence per pound collected

G7 Conference at Carbis Bay The G7 Conference is due to be held at Carbis Bay in June. Like many others I was concerned as to how the policing was going to be funded and was more than a little worried that the taxpayers of Devon and Cornwall would be footing the bill. In my role as a Councillor Advocate for the OPCC I was recently sent a video in which the Assistant Chief Constable Glen Mayhew, who is leading the policing of the G7 event, explained that other Forces are going to be providing extra staff to cover the event and the funding for the police to cover the event is being provided from Government sources.

Community Emergency Plan (CEP) I mentioned this event last month and I recently attended the Zoom meeting and presentation given by Devon Communities Together. I understand that all Parish Councils were invited to attend but the take-up was very small. A CEP is devised by a community themselves which is very often led by the Town or Parish Council and local volunteers. It follows a template and identifies possible risks, how they might be mitigated, what resources are needed and how the community would contribute to responding to an event. There are times when a prepared group of

volunteers, first on the scene, can reduce the impact of an event until professional help arrives. This is of great assistance to the Emergency Services who may be delayed by calls elsewhere. The plans are held on a database that is used by responding services to understand who the local contacts are and what resources are available locally. I must stress that the onus of developing a CEP does not fall entirely on the Parish Council as other local volunteers are able to help formulate the plan. Financial support is available.

Devon Communities Together are more than happy to provide support.

<https://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/resilience-forum-resources>

Planning Manager response I asked the Planning Manager to comment with regard to Parish Councils feeling that any response to Torridge with regard to planning applications seemed to be a waste of time. As I'd heard nothing more since the original reply, I sent another message to Shaun Harrington last week. In reply he apologised for not providing a proper response and said that he had a team leader on long term sick leave and there were a lot of planning applications to be dealt with. This was in addition to an enquiry he had to attend.

Waste and Recycling I asked a waste a recycling officer for figures of tonnage collected over the Christmas period. In January in addition to just over 1,000 tonnes recycling that was collected (including food) over 1,050 tons of refuse was also collected. December's recycling collection was around 150 tons less than January's at 893 tons. On the TDC website there is information on where all the waste and recycling goes.

OPCC and Speedwatch I am shortly attending an Office of the Police and Crime Commissionaire's meeting for Councillor Advocates that will be discussing Speedwatch teams. The OPCC would like to know of any set up problems, how motorists react to them, how effective it is believed that they are, recruiting volunteers to the teams and any other relevant issues. I have corresponded with two team members from a local Speedwatch team to ask for their input. Cllr Crossley hopes to be running Speedwatch in Sheepwash in the coming months.

County Cllr Parsons report This is the last time Cllr Parson will be attending a Sheepwash Parish Council meeting as he is stepping down from the role as County Councillor in May. Devon is currently the best in the country in terms of low Covid cases and providing the most vaccines to care home staff and residents. The communities in Devon have been wonderful at supporting each other and being vigilant. Last week 70,000 tests were carried out in Devon the population of Devon is 800,000 great work being achieved with testing so many in a week.

Children are back to school this week with staggered returns at secondary schools. 94% of all children eligible to be back at school were. Lots of talk around remote meetings and returning to face to face meetings after 7th May. We will see what happens. Any highways issue please contact me if there is anything I can help with. Massive thank you and best wishes to all the parish councillors.

The Parish Councillors wished Cllr Parsons best wishes for the future.

No Questions. Cllr Parsons leaves the meeting.

6) PCSO report

PCSO James was unable to attend the meeting. Clerk sent the monthly rural policing report to all Parish Councillors. Sheepwash was not included in the report as no crimes were reported.

7) Chair's Report

Devon Wildlife Trust project – Save Devon's treescape. Lisa Butt, from Devon Wildlife Trust, came along to the Jubilee Park on Monday 8th March 2021, and planted a hawthorn tree in the south west corner of the park. Trouble free and no cost to the parish. **PC response to planning application** David Hurley contacted Shaun Harrington, the TDC Planning Officer for his comments regarding the feeling that Parish Councillors comments in relation to planning applications were being ignored. He replied saying that he is aware of some concerns and frustrations within Parish Councils relating to the planning process and suggested some form of bulletin/communication with Parish Council. David awaits further information about what the Planning Officer intends to do. Sheepwash Parish Council have agreed to continue providing the views and opinions of the Parish Councils on Planning applications. **Census** day is

21st March 2021. Parish Council to publicise on Facebook pages and website, plus notices in the shop and on the noticeboard, encouraging people to complete the census, which is a legal requirement. We can also say that we're able to help people to complete the Census, if needed, either online or on paper. Cllr Ritson will update the village notice board. **Highways.** The road drains at Upcott, just near the barns, have been jetted, a buried drain un-covered and ditches cleared. We have asked for potholes between Upcott Avenel and Down to be repaired. On behalf of the Bridgeland Trust, we have asked for the entrance to a field just below the ski-jump drain, to be repaired. The whoosh of water from the ski-jump drain has caused the field entrance to be eroded. The Village sign on the West road has disappeared, Cllr Ansell is investigating.

8) Request to use Jubilee Park, 21st August for a BBQ and Live band

The date for the above may change to 14th August 2021 there has also been a request to hold a Strawberry Tea on 26th June 2021 at Jubilee park. All Councillors agreed to both requests as long as Covid rules permit the events to be held.

9) EV Charging Point

No update at this time. Item to be added to future agenda once Covid restrictions have eased.

10) Flooding

Clerk has been emailing DCC highways officer Steve Brockman about the flooding at the bridge. Information on the flooding and current signs in place provided by Cllr Ansell and Cllr Crossley. Clerk has asked for more signs to be installed, if Highways are unable to budget for the installing the signs the Clerk asked Highways to advise on what signs to install should the Parish Council wish to do so. Steve Brockman has spoken to a senior traffic technician who is looking into the matter. The Clerk emailed Shebbear Parish Council Clerk (as they have a regular flooding issue at Dipper Mill) asking for information on the system in place at Dipper Mill. The Shebbear Clerk explained that the system was paid for by DCC. There is an annual service and maintenance charge for the system which monitors the river level and the information can be accessed via a website. Cllr Hurley thinks the annual charge is about £700 - £800. Councillors discussed the system at Dipper Mill and that it is not just the parishioners of Shebbear who access the website for the river level info as it gives an idea if the Sheepwash bridge will flood as Dipper Mill is up stream. Councillors have asked the Clerk to approach Shebbear Parish Council and ask why local parishes are not contributing towards the annual cost of the system and to confirm how much the system cost to run each year.

11) First Aid Training

The Clerk has contacted St John's Ambulance - they are only running training in Barnstaple and currently no dates for day to day first aid training; SW Ambulance, currently not running courses; and SW First Aid Support who are able to run a first aid course in the Village Hall. The cost would be £25 per person, minimum of four, maximum of 12 people, the Parish Council pay for the Hall. The Clerk was also sent information on Wyatt First Aid which was £50 pp and she will research other local first aid training and will communicate with Cllr Crossley. Once a company has been agreed approach the Bridgeland Trust to see if they will split the cost with the Parish Council and participants. The plan is to have a course date by the next meeting.

12) Footpaths

Footpaths in the Parish have been inspected. New footpath signs are needed in a few locations. Cllr Ritson and the Clerk will contact DCC footpaths to arrange new signs. Way markers are also needed in a few locations, the Parish Council have them in stock and Cllr Ritson will install. Footpaths are wet, muddy and extremely narrow in places, Cllr Ritson or the Clerk to ask DCC footpath warden to speak to the landowners.

13) Lawn Mower Servicing

The Clerk contacted three local companies asking for an idea of cost to service the lawn mower. The amounts were approximate costs of, £65.40, £60 and £90 including VAT. The Parish Council choose to

send the Lawn Mower to Northmoor Garden Machinery in Hatherleigh which was the approximate cost of £60. Clerk and Cllr Ritson will book the lawn mower in for a service.

14) Weed Killer Spraying

The Clerk contacted local gardening companies and not many companies have the certificates and insurance to spray weeds. Devon Garden Solutions who are based in the Okehampton area do. Cllr Ritson met with Stuart from Devon Garden Solutions and asked him to quote for spraying weeds on the Square, East Street, alongside the graveyard wall and the gravel drive into Jubilee Park. The quote is £80 per time. The Parish Council have agreed to have the weeds sprayed twice a year, April and September. Clerk and Cllr Ritson to arrange the spraying of the weeds for April.

15) Resurfacing the Square estimate (add to the budget)

The Clerk contacted Michael Vanstone asking for an idea of cost to resurface the square. Councillors asked that the estimate take in to account that the surface is a pink colour - they do not want black tarmac. They also suggested that the Clerk ask Highways for an idea of cost.

16) Horse Chestnut tree in the square

A parishioner has brought it to the attention of the Parish Council that the Horse Chestnut tree in the Square has areas of split bark and maybe diseased. The tree has leaves and buds growing on it. The Parish Council agreed to monitor the tree and if the tree looks diseased once in full leaf, to contact an expert to check the tree.

17) Gazebo

Cllr Ritson has asked Outdoor Play Devon Ltd to quote for a new gazebo to replace the existing gazebo in the Jubilee Park which is starting to rot. For a gazebo with no decking in the bottom and a feather edge roof £5,000 plus VAT. For the same with a decked bottom and a feather edge roof £6,000 plus VAT. The Outdoor Play gazebos have a 20-year guarantee. The Clerk researched gazebos from other companies - all were more expensive than Outdoor Play and most only had 15 years guarantee. Councillors think the current gazebo has been in place for over 20 years. As wood floors can be slippery Cllr Ansell suggested looking into other flooring options. Mark Perfili quoted for £4,148 for the current gazebo to be repaired. Given the small difference between replace and repair the Parish Council agreed that a new gazebo would be the best option. Cllr Ritson suggested a group of volunteers dismantle the gazebo and share or store the firewood for villagers. This would make the gazebo a more community project. The Parish Council and the community need to apply for Grants and fundraise to pay for a new gazebo. Cllr Ansell and Clerk to look into grants. Mark Perfili has offered to demolish and remove the existing gazebo at no charge if we proceed with a new structure.

18) PLANNING:

Planning Applications - Torridge District Council has asked for comments from the Parish Council on the following planning applications: Comments Via email, 1/0071/2021/FUL Change of use from guest house to residential, The Court, The Square, Sheepwash, Beaworthy. The Parish Council was asked to comment by 15th February 2021. They commented No Objection.

Two new planning applications were received by the Clerk on the morning of the meeting and have been forwarded to all Parish Councillors. Parish Councillors will feedback to Clerk once they have had time to look at the planning applications.

1/0245/2021/FUL New Machine Shed and Store, Land At Grid Reference 247645 107552, Sheepwash

1/0242/2021/LBC Removal of existing garage and erection of two storey extension, South Hill, Sheepwash, Beaworthy, Devon

Planning Decisions: None.

19) FINANCE:

- 19a)** as at 2nd March 2021:
Main Account £2,103.19
Saving Account £15,107.67

Expenditure:

Date	£	Detail	Transfer
09.02.2021	£100	Grant to Citizens advice.	Bacs
09.02.2021	£36	Payment to Clerk for training course.	Bacs
			Bacs
TOTAL	£136		

Income:

Date	£	Detail
01.02.2021	£1,400	Chq from Bridgeland Trust Grant for the Play equipment
Total	£1,400	

No questions with regards to the finances.

- 19b)** All Councillors agreed to Cllr Ritson purchasing the following as part of the 2020/21 P3 funding: **Shears, Wood Saw, three stroke oil, Petrol, 4x2 treated timber and bolts for bridge handrail on the footpath.**

Items for Information.

Street Drinking and Anti-social Behaviour in Bideford -Consultation Notification. Email sent out.

Thank you letter from Citizen Advice for the Grant.

Road Closure notice, Sunday 11th April 2021, Roads affected - WEST ROAD, SHEEPWASH , (O/S THE GLEBE, WEST ROAD - TO JUNCTION OF NORTH STREET

The following emails were sent to the Parish Councillors since the last meeting.

County and District Councillor reports.

Census information,

OPCC Community Speed Watch Scrutiny / Councillor Advocate Focus Groups email.

Items to be included in the agenda for the next meeting,

Flooding update, First Aid Course, Footpath's update, Resurfacing the square estimate, Fundraising and grants for the Gazebo. Next meeting or the one following EV charging point.

At the moment face -to -face meetings will resume from 7th May. The legislation is currently being reviewed to decide if Parish Council meetings should continue online or if it is safe to resume face- to - face. The Clerk will update councillors if the legislation is going be changed. The next meeting is the Annual Council Meeting.

An Annual Parish Council meeting is to be held before 1st June depending on the legislation this maybe the same night as the Annual Parish meeting to fit the meetings in before the 1st June.

Meeting closed 8.28pm

Clerk: Selina Woollacott, Furze House, Shebbear, EX21 5RL

Tel: 01409 281280 email: clerk@sheepwashparishcouncil.co.uk