

# Sheepwash Parish Council

## Parish Council Meeting

held in the Village Hall

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 7.00pm

### Minutes

**Present:** Cllr Ansell (Chairperson), Cllr Moys, Cllr Fairall, Cllr Hutching, Cllr Etherington, Cllr Ritson, Cllr Crossley, District Cllr Wheatley, Selina Woollacott (Clerk), 7 members of the public.

1) **Apologies for Absence:** District Cllr Cottle-Hunkin.

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.

Member of the public reports that Sheepwash bridge has been hit again.

4) **Minutes – the Minutes of the meetings held on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025 have been circulated by email. Minutes to be approved for accuracy and signed by the Chairperson.** All Councillors agreed the minutes are an accurate record of the meeting. Cllr Ansell signed the minutes.

5) **County & District Councillors' reports.**

No County Councillors report.

The following report was given by District Cllr Wheatley.

#### **EXTRAORDINARY FULL COUNCIL**

Torridge District Council has announced that it has been awarded just over £20,070,000 in capital investment with £250,000 revenue funding to support several projects to benefit residents across the district. The projects announced by government are being funded as part of the Community Regeneration Partnership Scheme (previously known as Levelling Up Partnership) and will support the council's strategic ambitions and deliver lasting benefits to Torridge. We are very pleased to have been awarded this government funding for our communities.

The capital projects being supported by the Government are geographically spread across the district and cover a wide variety of themes:

- **Bideford Business Park (£2.6m)** - acquisition and development toward high value manufacturing and engineering facilities.
- **Bideford Pannier Market (£1.475m)** - modernisation and improvements to make fit for future and wider use.
- **Hatchmoor Industrial Estate (£1.6m)** - the project will design a scheme, achieve the necessary consents and then deliver the services and infrastructure to site for future development of workspace for high value manufacturing and engineering facilities
- **Holsworthy Agri-Business Park (£7.3m)** - development of agri-related innovation, retail, and professional space.
- **Appledore Clean Maritime Innovation Centre (£2m)** - additional funding to support the build.
- **Agri-tech nutrient pilot scheme (£0.3m)** - testing the adaptation of a slurry condensing unit to recover nutrients and reduce the pollutants going into rivers.

- **Westward Ho! Water Quality Monitoring Buoy (£0.1m)** - installation of water quality monitoring buoy to provide real-time water quality data for beach users, tourism businesses and for managers of environmental systems.
- **Cleave Wood, Bideford (£1.2m)** - the design and delivery of site servicing and infrastructure as a first phase of a residential scheme in response to local housing needs.
- **Social housing decarbonisation and EPC rating improvements (£1.5m)** - pipeline of works to improve 57 properties with E & F ratings to C or B.
- **Bideford Hospital (£0.75m)** - reconfiguration site to create a "Community Health & Wellbeing Hub" with multi-purpose space.
- **The Globe Hotel, Great Torrington (£0.52m)** - initial capital works on Grade II Listed long-derelict hotel to redevelop into an 11-bedroom hotel and restaurant (in a town with neither) with a strong training presence.
- **Holsworthy Manor Offices (£0.725m)** - phased redevelopment inc. decarbonisation, remodelling to enable improved accessibility, flow and to increase opportunity for flexible community space (for example, co- working)

The ability to achieve such a diverse spread of projects and themes was made possible through the establishment of the Torridge Place Board. The Board, made up of 20 representatives from a cross section of local businesses and services, was established in February 2024. Since then, it has been responsible for steering a potential programme of works, designed to improve the long-term economic opportunities for the region and deliver positive environmental and health benefits to those people living in Torridge.

#### **Notice of Motion**

Cllr Thomas proposed a Motion to support Proportional Representation (PR) which would ensure all votes count, have equal value, and seats won match votes cast. The introduction of PR in Scotland has increased turnout by 44.8% at the last election in 2022. In Torridge, the average turnout was 33%. It was proposed that the UK Government bring forward legislation to run using a PR voting system and TDC write to the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition to support PR.

After short discussion and a recorded vote, the Motion was passed 19 for and 10 against.

#### **External Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

We had a very constructive and excellent presentations regarding arts, music, theatre and creativity from the Chief Execs Emma Marston, the Plough Torrington, Harriet Copper from the Burton Art Gallery in Bideford and Phil Parker co/founder Director of Artmakers in Bideford and some public speakers. There was a lot of interest and highlighted the importance of arts and the creative industries in our community for young, old, and reaching out to those with physical and mental disorders, particularly in these troubled times. Involving young people, schools, workshops, plays/theatre, comedy, and being creative by nature, and working with TDC, and NDC, Arts Council, Lottery, and others for funding.,

**The Plough** in Torrington has a Youth Theatre with 70 members. From June - August this year there are 29 shows, and 13 venues scheduled including a panto this April. The Plough has 65 volunteers with 7 full time staff currently. It is 50 Years Anniversary of the Plough so watch this space! A better bus service between Barnstaple, Bideford, and the Plough would help, especially in the evenings.

**Burton Art Gallery** in Bideford is 75 years old in October and had over 149,000 visitors including from many parts of UK and overseas. The Burton Gallery is somewhat hidden by trees along Kingsley Road and Victoria Park though, like the Plough, recognises the importance of youth/schools and had 19 school visits. The upstairs gallery is to be developed, and the adjoining Cafe Du Parc does very well with ground floor access to the Burton. Fantastic ceramics, art along with famous artists are on show and noted internationally with free entrance to their galleries.

**Artmakers Exhibition** is located 1st Floor The Quay Bideford. Artmakers has a virtual gallery made up of over 200 local artists. Workshops, working with mental health, textile artists and largely voluntary! We are very fortunate to have so much creativity here in Devon. Something we need to be shouting about and there was also discussion about the impact large murals could have in our towns in Torridge. Is a mini-Melbourne a future possibility for Torridge?

Member of the Public (MOP) asked was the £20million a one-off payment.? Cllr Wheatley answered it is an initial payment, with a future as a Unitary Council we are not sure what will happen in the future. MOP2 asked, a lot of the £20million is going to businesses and business parks and not much going to housing, when housing is an issue in Torridge, Cllr Wheatley replied there are other funds and schemes for housing, we need to make sure the housing is in the correct places and the right infrastructure. I am on the planning committee most planning is decided by the Planning Officers. Cllr Fairall and a MOP asked if rules can be put in place to get the infrastructure before the housing? Cllr Wheatley, as a planning committee we do look at infrastructure.

6) **Clerk Report.**

**Sheepwash Bridge, Sheepwash Village sign and 30mph signs, Parking. Councillors Register of interest forms.**

**Sheepwash Bridge:** I have reported the bridge damage, and our new Highways Officer has passed the details on to the Bridge and Retaining Wall Inspector for the area. This was with a suggestion to place a bollard or something to protect the bridge.

**Sheepwash Village sign and 30mph signs:** Details from Traffic Orders, Policy & Programme Team: We have not yet identified the precise positions of where the speed limit signs, and village nameplate will be installed. The issue at present is that the desired locations for the speed limit signs, the hedges are privately owned, meaning even if the signs could be placed at the edge of the carriageway, there would not be sufficient width for the village nameplate.

It may be that the village nameplate needs to be put in a different position to the speed limit signs. We will be reviewing this in due course, and as the housing development progresses the best location for the signage may become clearer.

**Parking:** Cllr Ansell and a member of the public have been working on this with Holsworthy Police force. The update from the Police: the vehicle had been brought to our attention. My neighbourhood officer has attended and viewed the car and spoken to the owner regarding it obstructing the junction and being within 10m of the junction. He was advised to move the vehicle, or he could receive a ticket, or the vehicle may be towed. He was advised to park in the square. I have spoken to highways regarding the junction, road markings, etc and I am awaiting further contact from them to see if there is anything which can be done to assist the situation.

We will be making further patrols of the area and if the vehicle is still causing an obstruction we will take further appropriate action.

Unfortunately, with our staffing levels and incident demand we cannot say when we will be able to patrol.

I will keep you updated and please let me know if there are any specific issues of obstruction, near misses.

I (Clerk) sent an invite asking if a member of the force could attend this meeting. There was no one available to attend. The team leader has the date of the May meeting and is planning to alter shifts so someone can attend the May Parish Council meeting.

MOP feels that having bus stop markings and a hatched area instated would be a good idea. This is being discussed with Highways.

**Councillors Register of interest forms:** Forms were emailed to all Councillors if you need a form a have paper copies here, please complete and return to me asap.

MOP asked how did Black Torrington get their 20mph speed limit? Cllr Crossley answered, they applied, they had a Speedwatch team and were able to prove accidents had happened with Police reports.

Sheepwash did join the campaign and did voice to County Council that all villages should be 20mph.

7) **Chair's Report.**

Cllr Ansell had no update. She invited Cllr Etherington to update on rules for the Jubilee Park. This was raised a few meetings ago as children playing at the park had been asked what they were doing and if they could not do it. The Parish Council wondered if rules need to be put in place for the park. There have been no issues in the past. Cllr Etherington asked all the residents of the properties adjacent to the

park their thoughts and feelings on how the park was used, any issues etc. All but one property had no concerns. One property wanted strict rules. With this information Cllr Etherington felt no need to set rules. All Councillors agreed with her.

Cllr Ritson said he will reseed the grass soon when weather allows.

**8) Community Hall, Section 106.**

Update from Cllr Ansell. This is still ongoing. Still waiting for the landowners to sign the transfer documents. Cllr Cottle-Hunkin has been chasing TDC and today TDC have heard that the landowner may be meeting with their solicitor next week. They have had the document for six weeks. An email has been drafted ready to send to Sir Geoffrey Cox as it was February 2024 when we met with him, this email will also be sent to Head of TDC and Head of the TDC legal team. MOP asked what the time scale is to have the land transferred over by? Cllr Ansell replied, the time scales have changed and been extended a number of times for different reasons.

**9) Play Inspection.**

The inspection has been completed and a copy of the report sent to all Councillors. The gazebo is still the main ongoing issue, with it needing to be checked regularly. Cllr Fairall raised that the goal post was reported in the report as not being suitable for public use. Clerk to check were the Parish Council stands re: insurance on this.

**10) Village Clean up and Footpaths.**

Cllr Ritson informed the meeting that the Village clean up is being advertised for Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2025. A few of the jobs which will be completed are paint the shed, paint Village Hall railings, grass seeds in the park. Cost of £100 is the estimate for materials. All Councillors agreed this cost. Cllr Ritson has checked the footpath stile and in his opinion no work is needed on it. At the last meeting Windsor Lane was discussed. Windsor Lane is not a footpath or a public right of way, it is for access only for the farmers to access their fields. There have been issues with dogs not being on leads and chasing sheep. Farmers are allowed to shoot dogs which are chasing livestock. The Parish Council would like to remind people to stick to the footpath and not walk in the fields off the footpath route and to keep dogs on leads around livestock.

**11) Clerk Appraisal.**

It was agreed that Cllr Fairall would complete the Clerk's Appraisal. Clerk and Cllr Fairall to set a date. Any issues to be reported to Cllr Fairall to be discussed at the appraisal.

**12) CPRE Membership**

Cllr Crossley has been a personal member of CPRE which stands for Council for the Preservation of Rural England. Cllr Crossley feels it would benefit the Parish Council to be a member at £7 a month. They are good for planning advice and expertise, and they promote affordable housing and food security. Lots of information and advice available to members. All Councillors agreed to joining. Clerk to sign the Parish Council up.

**13) First Aid Course.**

Cllr Ritson has arranged with an ex-colleague a first aid course, which will be on the 17<sup>th</sup> April 7pm – 9pm. 12 places on the course. Poster with all the information will be displayed soon. The Parish Council agreed to pay the travel cost and Hall hire.

**14) PLANNING:**

**14a) Planning Applications.**

**1/0121/2025/FUL Replacement Conservatory, Court Farm Cottage, East Street, Sheepwash.  
Comments by 13th March 2025.**

The applicant for this planning application spoke at the meeting explaining why this needed a planning application and that the new conservatory is the same size as the current one. All Councillors were sent

the Planning Application prior to the meeting. All Councillors agreed to submit No Objection from the Parish Council.

**14b) Planning Decisions.** None.

**14c) Planning Appeal.**

**TDC Ref E/20/0096/UND. Appeal Reference APP/W1145/C/24/3356368 Alleged Breach Without planning permission and within the last 4 years, the partial demolition and rebuild/extension of an outbuilding. Outbuilding Clinton House North Street Sheepwash. Comments by 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

The information about the Appeal has been sent to all Councillors. The Parish Council has sent to the Appeal inspector the same comments which were submitted to TDC when the applicant applied for planning.

**15) FINANCE:**

**15a) as at the 4th March 2025:**

**Main Account £16,667.29**

**Saving Account £18,616.84**

**Expenditure:**

Date	£	Detail	Transfer
31.01.2025	6.00	Bank Account Change	Bacs
13.02.2025	2.61	HMRC	Bacs
13.02.2025	200.00	Citizen Advice Grant	Bacs
28.02.2025	6.00	Bank Account Change	Bacs
Total	214.61		

**Income:**

Date	£	Detail
Total	0.00	

The above was read out at the meeting.

**16) Items for Information. Items emailed out to Councillors.**

All items sent to Councillors were on this agenda.

**17) Items to be included in the agenda for the next meeting.**

**The next meeting will be held on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025. The Annual Parish Meeting will be held first followed by the Parish Council Meeting.**

MOP asked if the safety of the entrances to the park could be discussed at a Parish Council meeting as children can easily run out into the road. Also to discuss the pottery picture on the wall at the entrance of the park.

Cllr Ansell asked Clerk for an update on the ordering of the bench, Clerk and Cllr Ansell discussed delivery options.

Cllr Ritson has checked the benches on the riverbank and he is happy with the condition of them.

MOP asked if the Village Shop could be an agenda item as it is coming up to a year and the trial time ends soon. This would be a good item for the Annual Parish Meeting.

Meeting Closed 7.53pm

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