

Sheepwash Parish Council

Parish Council Meeting

held in the Village Hall

Wednesday 10th September 2025 at 7pm

Minutes

Present: Cllr Ansell (Chairperson), Cllr Moys, Cllr Fairall, Cllr Etherington, Cllr Hutchings, District Cllr Wheatley, Selina Woollacott (Clerk), 9 members of the public.

1) Apologies for Absence: Cllr Crossley, Cllr Ritson.

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.

The Clerk had two written requests from members of the public (MOP) who were unable to make the meeting.

The Shindig Committee would like to ask the Parish Council for permission to use the Jubilee Park for a Shindig on 8th August 2026. The 2025 Shindig was a great success and raised money for the Air Ambulance and the Village Hall. Cllr Fairall asked if there will be one every year as originally it was bi-annual? A member of the committee was present and answered. This year was a great success so we would like to organise one for next year after that we will see if we go back to bi-annual. All Councillors agreed that the Jubilee Park can be used on the 8th August 2026 for the Shindig.

The second one is if the shop can put a small wooden box of flowers on the Square next to the shop sign. Cllr Fairall asked if the box will be taken in at the end of the day with the sign. Cllr Ansell said she expects so. All Councillors agreed a small wooden box with flowers can be put next to the shop sign.

MOP asked if the Parish Council can ask the Park Farm developers/owners to remove the machinery from the site as there is no work being undertaken on the site and to clean up the site. Phone number given to Clerk to contact them and ask.

MOP2 there are still parking issues with cars being parked too close to the junction and drivers not being able to see down the road. The vehicles coming in from North Road are out in the middle of the road to avoid the parked cars. MOP feels it would be safer if the cars parked the other side of the road. The Parish Council have taken note of this issue.

4) Minutes.

The Minutes of the meetings held on 9th July 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.

District Councillors report short version read out at the meeting by District Councillor Wheatley. This is the full version.

Community And Resources Committee

We are pleased to announce that Councillors voted to award £40,509 to Pollyfield Community Centre in Bideford for the play area to be upgraded along with improvements. Over the last couple of years, we have seen a growth and resurgence especially with the football club. The play zone/area will only enhance that potential.

Globe Hotel Community Project - Torrington

Very pleased to announce the target of £230,000 for the Globe was achieved along with an extra £10,000! Therefore, over half a million of funding has been released by central government. Now the hard work begins of restoring the Globe! This will open the doors to more needed funds in the future to complete the restoration.

Atlantic Raquet Centre - Bideford

A loan of £100,000 for the ARC (Atlantic Raquet Centre) was voted for unanimously by members. The Loan to be repaid over as 10 years for completion of phase 6 development.

Currently there are 5,500 users per week of the ARC and its many facilities. ARC is awaiting extra 100K funding 106 money. Phase 6 development will entail a Community Hub and Learning Space within a multi-use hall and community cafe.

Councillor Climate Change Working Group

Donna Sibley Climate Officer updated our group, and we discussed and recommended some minor changes to our TDC Carbon Environment and Biodiversity Plan. We operate a traffic light system for indicating and tracking progress and made amendments to the Plan which covers Energy, Transport, Planning, Biodiversity, waste, and recycling.

Donna Sibley Climate Officer updated the Group regarding Treeconomics involving tree planting proposals for the continuation of developing plans and undergoing site assessments, though an initial cost would be £6000. Donna stated that actual tree planting would be cheaper due to available grants.

Free expert support to help businesses and farms thrive

North Devon Plus - economic delivery agency for North Devon Council and Torridge District Council - is inviting local businesses and farmers to take advantage of two fully funded support programmes. The Business BOOST and Farm BOOST programmes are designed to help businesses grow, adapt, and succeed in today's challenging environment.

On the Business BOOST programme, participants will receive up to 12 hours of fully funded, one-to-one support from an experienced Business Support Advisor. This tailored support is designed to meet the current needs of your business and can include:

- strategic business planning
- financial forecasting and budgeting
- marketing and digital presence advice
- growth and scaling strategies
- navigating funding opportunities
- HR and staffing guidance
- sustainability and green business practices

The Farm BOOST programme offers specialist support for farmers and landowners, providing:

- help understanding and applying for schemes such as Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI). Please note that DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) has a new appointee Emma Reynolds, MP and DCC supported by some MPs and others are leading to get clarification of the new revised SFI scheme due in 2026!? Many farmers are left without new agreements and uncertain about future funding from government. Capital Grants, Countryside Stewardships, Farming in Protected Landscapes, Farming Equipment and Technology Fund, Animal Health, and Welfare Pathway
- business planning and diversification advice
- guidance on compliance, sustainability, and future-proofing your farm
- nutrient management support from FACTS qualified advisors

North Devon Plus's Programme Delivery Manager, Louise Adam said: "We know how busy local businesses and farmers are, that's why we've made it simple and flexible to access support—whether online, by phone, or in person. We're here to help you make progress without adding to your workload."

"BOOST is already helping businesses across the region—from small businesses growing their customer base to farmers securing funding and planning for the future. Workshops and webinars are led by local entrepreneurs and industry experts, offering practical advice and opportunities to connect with others facing similar challenges."

Anyone who is interested can speak with an advisor or book a free support session by calling 01237 428 834, or emailing:

Business BOOST: boost@northdevonplus.co.uk Farm BOOST: farming@northdevonplus.co.uk

This programme is funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund via North Devon Council and Torridge District Council.

6) Clerk Report.

Sheepwash Bridge, Sheepwash Village sign and 30mph signs, West Road Hedge, Asset Checking report.

Sheepwash Bridge. WSP, a company that work in Partnership with Devon County Council (DCC), have been completing inspections on the bridge. The inspections are because DCC are looking into the possibility of installing some preventative measures. As the bridge is listed, it may require listed building consent. I have phoned DCC Bridge and Structural department, and I am waiting an update from them on what WSP have found with their inspections. I have also phoned WSP and left a message with them. It took several calls to get through.

Sheepwash Village sign and 30mph signs. The new 30mph signs are in place. I see that the return to national speed limit signs need to be removed from the original set of 30mph signs, I will take photos and report to Highways. The Sheepwash sign is up in the most suitable location.

West Road Hedge. The hedge opposite The Glebe. I have reported that the hedge needs cutting back a number of times to Highways, who say it does not. I have reported it again with photos and it will be assessed before 6th October. I have sent the photos and the reply from Highways to our County Councillor. I noticed as I drove in to the Village this evening that part of the hedge has been cut. Cllr Hutchings thinks the landowner had someone cut the hedge, but the hedge trimmer broke before the work was completed. I will try and contact the owner on the number provided to me and ask for the rest to be cut.

Asset Checking report. I have completed the Asset Checking, which means there are a few agenda items this evening with regards to assets. I have checked the Grit Bins in the Parish: all are full and in a good state of repair.

7) Chair's Report. Pottery Picture at Jubilee Park entrance.

The Alphabet village letter pottery plaque, which is at the entrance of Jubilee Park, has been removed to have a new wood surround and a tidy up of the pottery. A member of the public is doing the work and purchasing the wood at no charge to the Parish Council. The Parish Council are very thankful to the gentleman for doing this.

8) Community Hall, Section 106.

Progress has been made, on behalf of the Parish Council the planning subcommittee have said they are content with the agreement and transfer deeds. The transfer of ownership from the Landowner to TDC is near completion. The next stage, which should be more straightforward, is TDC to the Parish Council. The Parish Council had a quote from Dave Hockin Plant Hire in November 2023 for the building of an entrance to the community hall site. He has held the quote at the same amount all this time. He has been to look at the site again as since the last time he looked there is now a drainage pipe which may mean additional work. The closure of the Sheepwash Community Shop in 2024 meant the committee decided to split the funds remaining after the closure approximately 50/50 between the Village Hall and the Parish Council. The amount to the Parish Council was to be used on the new Community Hall site. Part of these funds will be used on the entrance. The subcommittee are doing all they can to get this completed as soon as possible.

9) Goal Post.

The Play Inspection company stated in the report that the goals are classed as not suitable for use in a public facility. The Insurance company will not give me guidance on what goals to have as they will follow what is said by the Park Inspection company. After considerable research I found that the goal posts would need to be permanently secured when in use and compliant with BS EN 16579 or BS EN 15312. We considered removable goals, but the smallest available are a pair of 12x6ft, costing over £800.. The Parish Council agreed that the solution was to remove the goals from the PC assets and donate them to the Sheepwash Youth Football Club.

10) Tree in the Square and the area around the tree.

From the Clerk asset checking and reports from Councillors. The tree in the square needs the lower branches removing. I have got 2 quotes; one is £120 to trim the lower branches to a clearance of 9ft and remove the debris from site the other is £200 - £250 to general tidy up the tree and remove all the waste. Cllr Ritson emailed to say he would be able to prune the tree. Councillors agreed that Cllr Ritson can help with other work needed in the Village and to go with the £120 quote.

The cobbles under the tree are being pushed up by the tree roots. The Parish Council will investigate and see what can be done, without damaging the tree or changing the look of the area.

11) Bench in the Square.

From the Clerk asset checking and Councillors monthly checks. The benches in the square need to be repaired or replaced. The cost of the last bench was £500 with plaque and delivery. Councillors would like to look at the cost to repair the benches. The Bridgeland Trust may be able to help towards the cost. The person who does carpentry work at the Half Moon would be a good person to ask for a quote. Cllr Fairall will ask him.

The Noticeboard the door is not shutting on one side. Councillor agreed to ask Cllr Ritson if he is ok with plaining the door to make it fix and any other maintenance needed on the Noticeboard.

Cllr Ansell asked the Clerk to ask Cllr Ritson if he is still able to put the Agenda and Minutes up in the noticeboard. Cllr Etherington can if Cllr Ritson cannot.

12) Gazebo, park bench and other repairs. Set aside funds.

In the park there are three wooden picnic benches and only two on the asset list. Of the three, two are of the same age and style. The third needs a lot of repairs. I would recommend removing this picnic bench. The Gazebo needs a new top board on one section. Cllr Ritson has said he could remove the picnic bench and repair the board on the Gazebo. The Councillors agreed that Cllr Ritson be asked to do this. Councillors would like to see what funds are available at the end of the financial year to see if a third picnic bench can be purchased.

13) PLANNING:

13a) Planning Applications. No Planning Applications.

13b) Planning Decisions.

1/0428/2025/FUL Erection of agricultural barn Land at Upcott Avenel, Sheepwash, Beaworthy.
Application was granted permission. Read out at the meeting.

13c) Planning Appeal.

TDC Ref E/20/0096/UND. Appeal Reference APP/W1145/C/24/3356368, Clinton House.

In progress, no decision yet. Clerk checks regularly will update when a decision is publicised.

14) FINANCE:

14a) as at the 2nd September 2025:

Main Account £17,776.83

Saving Account £18,843.63

Expenditure:

Date	£	Detail	Transfer
30.06.2025	6.00	Bank Account Service Charge	DD
17.07.2025	0.39	HMRC	Bacs
17.07.2025	10.27	Paper and A4 folder	Bacs
25.07.2025	47.00	ICO Annual payment	DD
31.07.2025	6.00	Bank Account Service Charge	DD
18.08.2025	189.92	Land Documents for Asset Folder	Bacs
18.08.2025	100.00	Grant to Dartmoor Search and Rescue	Bacs
18.08.2025	500.00	Grant and Hall Hire to Sheepwash Village Hall	Bacs
31.08.2025	6.00	Bank Account Service Charges	Bacs
Total	865.58		

Income:

Date	£	Detail
Total	0.00	

The above was read out at the meeting.

14b) Remembrance Wreath.

Cllr Ansell is using her Chair's Allowance of £30 to purchase materials to make a waterproof, solid and long-lasting poppy wreath. The Parish Council have in the past purchased a medium poppy wreath which cost £19.99 from The Royal British Legion. The Parish Councillors agreed to donate £25 to The Royal British Legion in place of purchasing a wreath.

14c) Dipper Mill Flood Watch site.

Shebbear Parish Council pay for a Flood Watch Service and website. The Flood Watch Service monitors the height of the river at Dipper Mill and the website, which is accessible to all, shows a graph showing if the river at Dipper Mill is flooded. In the past the Parishioners of Sheepwash have said they do use the website and the information as it is a good indicator of the level of the river at Sheepwash and Black Torrington bridges. In 2021 Sheepwash Parish Council granted £50 to Shebbear to help towards the fees of the Flood Watch Service and website. Members of the public at the meeting said that they do use the website. Councillors agreed to grant £50 to Shebbear Parish Council towards the cost of the fees.

15) Items for Information. Items emailed out to Councillors.**Torridge District Council - LGR Presentation Slides (Local Government Reorganisation Engagement Event)**

MOP, there is a large shrub growing out of the bridge that needs digging out. This is the bridge which has been inspected by WSP for DCC.

MOP, explained that the Knit and Natter group are make a display from knitted and crocheted poppies. They have about 800 to thread onto the display if anyone can spare time to help thread them on. It is likely the display will be set up on the Friday before Remembrance Sunday. The large poppies need to be put up on the lamp posts.

16) Items to be included in the agenda for the next meeting. Meeting dates for 2026. Half Year Accounts. The next meeting will be held on 12th November 2025.

Meeting Closed 8.04pm

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