

Sheepwash Parish Council

Parish Council Meeting
Wednesday 11th March 2026, 7pm
at Sheepwash Village Hall

MINUTES.

Present, Cllr Ansell (Chairperson) Cllr Fairall, Cllr Ritson, Cllr Hutchings, Cllr Moys, Cllr Etherington, District Cllr Wheatley, Selina Woollacott (Clerk), six Members of the Public.

1) **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Crossley.

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 members of the public wished to speak at this time. Local pub landlord sent his apologies as he was hoping to come to the meeting.

4) **Minutes – the Minutes of the meetings held on 14th January 2026 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.

The Taw and Torridge River Champions (TTRC) meeting took place on Saturday 7th March from 10am at the Lib Dem office at Chingswell Street then onto Kenwith Stream and carry out our water quality tests for our database and nature statistics. No doubt some of you have seen the excellent channel 4 3-part series entitled Dirty Works. It has been streamed on Channel 4 and is an eye opener and a must watch! There has been much media and public awareness of the current plight of the awful state of our rivers, streams, estuaries, beaches and coastline and the need to get it cleaned up! I am in the process of collating some data and information reference sewage spillages in Sheepwash regarding a Combined Sewage Overflow (CSO) located in West Road (ID SWW1044 which carries discharges a mixture of wastewater and rainwater typically prevent sewage backing up to homes. The receiving water body is the River Torridge. The overflow Southwest Water ID SWW1044 at Sheepwash WTTW ((Wastewater Treatment Works) not far away from the bridge has experienced 233 spillages this year to present date. Presently have managed to collate data from 11/12/2025 to present 11 March 2026. It's encouraging that we are making some progress yet there is still much to be done. The next meeting of TTRC in April to be confirmed.

Cllr Ansell asked what are the Environment Agency doing with regards to the sewage overflows?

Cllr Wheatley replied not a lot. We plan to press SWW for answers and action with the figures and information we have.

A member of the public stated that this needs to be raised when planning applications are submitted as SWW always states there is room and no sewage issues.

The present situation with ongoing recycle vehicle spillages appears to be less frequent for now! We are continuing to monitor some of the lanes particularly along hedge and roadsides in Petrockstowe, Newton St Petrock and Merton.

We are continuing to see improvements and please either contact me if there are future spillages or report to the Waste/Recycling Team on the Council. Fortunately, the new operations centre where our bins, recycling vehicles and street cleaning are based is now operational in Bideford OSCAR - (Operational Services Centre, Alverdiscott Road).

The staff and working conditions have improved greatly at OSCAR.

Full Council. I attended the Full Council Meeting where the Torridge District Council Climate commitments were on the agenda and initially, we had three public speakers and a presentation from our Climate and Sustainability Officer who presented the Report to review progress of the Councils climate commitments and ambitions. There then followed a debate with questions and comments. It was eventually agreed to update the Councils target to be NET ZERO by 2030 and to reduce our carbon footprint from a practical perspective whilst balancing priorities that are important to residents. Funding targets may not be met due to significant funding requirements though likely offset by renewable energy incomes and savings.

A vote took place and was carried For - 21, Against -6 and Abstention -1.

Full Council - Budget Special Meeting. I attended the Budget Special Meeting where we discussed and voted for £70,000 for planting trees on TDC land. Sites identified by treeconomics are Bideford, Bradworthy, Holsworthy and Northam. Fortunately, the vote though very close was FOR by one vote and carried and veery pleased this goes ahead at the following locations- Bideford-Abbotsham Road, Chudleigh Fort, Ford Rise, Oaklands, Pollyfield Skate park, Victoria Park, East- of-the -Water and Higher cemetery. Bradworthy - Tuckers Park, Holsworthy - Holsworthy cemetery, Northam - Great Barrow Road.

Additionally on the Agenda was - Budget 2026/2027 Financial Strategy, Council Tax Resolution, Capital Programs, Treasury Management Report and Capital Strategy, Pay Policy

Local Government Reorganisation. As a reminder All Parishes should have received the link to the government website via Gov Delivery reference LGR public consultation which is open until 26th March 2026 and provides links for people to respond.

6) **Clerk's Report.**

Bin bags, BT wires North Street, P3 Funding. Play Inspection. Clerk's Appraisal.

Large number of bin bags and rubbish collection issues. As far as I know, and I spoke to Cllr Ansell the other week about this issue, that all seems to be ok and collections are happening and there are currently no issues.

BT wires North Street. BT Openreach Engineers have been to the site and assessed the trees, branches and wires. The outcome is that they have no concerns. No further action will be taken at this time.

P3 Funding. I will be completing the forms in the next few weeks. No one has reported any issues with signs, bridges, steps, stiles etc to me. Cllr Ritson asked that the local farmers are contacted with regards to keeping crops low or off the footpaths. Cllr Ansell would like a post put on the Facebook page asking if any walkers have seen any issues with gates, stiles etc.

Play Inspection. Email received from the company; please accept our apologies we are currently running slightly behind schedule with your inspection. All work outstanding is a priority to be completed, and we are doing our utmost to get anything outstanding inspected ASAP.

Clerk's Appraisal. Last year's Clerk Appraisal took place in April, Cllr Fairall conducted the Appraisal, the Council needs to agree who will conduct it this year and I will arrange a time with them. The Council agreed to Cllr Fairall conducting this year's appraisal. Cllr Fairall and the Clerk agreed.

7) **Chair's Report.** No Report.

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

Cllr Ansell gave the following update. The Community Hall site which is land owed to the Parish as part of the Section 106 agreement for the Lukes farm development is still not complete. On the 2nd March a formal complaint was submitted to TDC by the Parish Council. The points of the complaint are Torridge District Council (TDC) has failed to secure the transfer of the Village Hall land and have failed to enforce the obligation. TDC poorly drafted the S106 and have failed to enforce the S106. We are going through the formal process, which starts with a Stage 1 complaint then a Stage 2 Complaint if needed and then to the Ombudsman if a satisfactory outcome has still not been reached.

Cllr Wheatley stated that he and Cllr Cottle-Hunkin have sent emails with regard to this transfer and they get the reply that it is still in hand, and they will be informed when it is completed.

9) Benches in the Square.

Cllr Fairall and a member of the public have inspected the benches. The Councillors are sure that one bench has been repaired and is currently being stained. The second bench not sure on yet. The Parish Councillors agreed if the second bench is beyond repair a new bench will be purchased. Clerk had provided 3 different options. The Councillors agreed to have the same bench that was purchased before which is the Balmoral Park Bench 1.8m £420. £40 delivery due to it being less than £600 and if a plaque is needed it will cost £35. Clerk will be informed if a new bench needs to be ordered.

10) Jubilee Park topsoil and grass seeds.

Cllr Ritson informed the meeting that a group of 11 people had levelled the Jubilee Park ground with topsoil and sown grass seeds. A sign asking people to keep off the area has been put up. A big thank you to all the people who helped. The total cost of topsoil and grass seed was £134.95

11) PLANNING:

11a) Planning Applications.

1/0062/2026/FUL Erection of single storey garage to front of property 5 Edgefield, Sheepwash, Beaworthy. Comments by 13th March 2026. Councillors were sent the planning information prior to the meeting, and the Clerk had the plans open on her laptop at the meeting. Councillors agreed to comment No Objections. Clerk to submit the comment before 13th March.

11b) Planning Decisions.

1/0988/2025/FUL Construction of 1no. dwelling, Land Rear of Lime Court, South Street, Sheepwash. Granted Permission. Read out to the meeting.

11c) Planning Appeal.

TDC Ref E/20/0096/UND. Appeal Reference APP/W1145/C/24/3356368, Clinton House. Decision made 18th February 2026. The full decision is accessible to the public online. The appeal is allowed, the enforcement notice is quashed, and planning permission is granted.

12) FINANCE:

12a) as at the 2nd March 2026:

Main Account £20,622.12
Saving Account £19,054.94

Expenditure:

Date	£	Detail	Transfer
23.01.2026	269.84	DCC installing Sheepwash Sign. (Locality Grant used)	Bacs
23.01.2026	200.00	Grant to Citizens Advice	Bacs
23.01.2026	24.75	M Ritson. New padlock and keys	Bacs
31.01.2026	6.00	Bank Service Charge	DD
25.02.2026	34.20	M Ritson. Shedcoat for shed	Bacs
20.02.2026	6.00	Bank Service Charge.	DD

Total	540.79		

Income:

Date	£	Detail
Total	0.00	

The above was read out to the meeting.

13) Items for Information. Items emailed out to Councillors.

Local Government Reorganisation in Devon. Public Consultation.

14) Items to be included in the agenda for the next meeting. The next meeting will be on 13th May 2026.

Annual Parish Meeting will also be held on 13th May 2026.

Cllr Ritson suggested teas and coffees at the Annual Parish Meeting, other Councillors did not agree. The meeting will be highlighted in the Chronicle and Cllr Ritson plans to make everyone aware of the meeting.

Cllr Etherington asked about putting the information on the sewage outflows on the Facebook page. It was agreed that Cllr Etherington would draft an article for the Chair, which would then be checked by District Cllr Wheatley before being put on the Facebook page.

Member of the Public commented on the daffodils looking nice on North Street, however, should the No Dog signs be there, isn't the land owned by Highways? Plus, reports of sharp sticks being stuck into the ground. Clerk to investigate this.

Meeting Closed 7.38pm

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