

**MINUTES OF SPARKWELL PARISH COUNCIL VIRTUAL MEETING**  
**held on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

**Present:** Cllrs May, Harvey, Lee, McEwing, Milford, Peacham, Pearson-Bunt, Dawn Johnson (Clerk)

**In attendance:** Cllr Baldry (SHDC), x4 Members of the Public (MoP)

**Part 1** (Open to the Public)

**001/21 Apologies for Absence**

Cllr Ansell had emailed the Clerk earlier and was having problems with her internet. She will hopefully join the meeting later.

Cllr Hart

**002/21 Agreement of the Agenda between Parts I and II**

Councillors noted that one item of business would be considered in Part II of the meeting.

**003/21 Declarations of Interest**

None

**004/21 District Councillor's Business**

Cllr Baldry delivered his report:

- (a) Just when they were getting into restoration and back to normal, the new lockdown came in with the new variant which is spreading rapidly
- (b) SHDC had agreed that unlike first lockdown public lavatories will be kept open
- (c) South Hams staff are not immune so they are expecting sickness and isolating. They are looking at how to keep essential services going and may have to suspend some services

Cllr Lee joined the meeting at 7.09pm

- (d) They are keeping services going as much as possible and diverting staff from other duties to issue grants to residents and businesses
- (e) SHDC is just about to go into the round for budgets, but things are not looking too bad at the moment.

Cllr Pearson-Bunt said that she had been approached by a few residents who were interested in the Solar together Devon initiative run by DCC and SHDC. She asked whether this scheme would get slowed down due to the demand on services? Cllr Baldry replied that he had not heard that it has been slowed down but it is the sort of scheme where staff working on it would be good at working on grant applications if needed.

Cllr Peacham asked whether there are similar initiatives for insulation, heat pumps etc? Cllr Baldry was not aware.

Cllr Peacham said that it was difficult to find contact information the SHDC website and that a directory would be useful.

Cllr Harvey joined the meeting at 7.10pm

Cllr Milford asked when the new recycling system will start? Cllr Baldry explained that it is going to be rolled out round by round starting on the 8<sup>th</sup> March and should be complete by the end of April.

### **005/21 Public Form**

x3 MoPs had joined the meeting by telephone and explained at length to the Council the difficulties they had experienced over the years living next to Choakford Farm and their concerns with the planning applications. Cllr Baldry said that the applications had been approved.

The issues were:

- The noise from forklifts and lorries reversing and the reserving beeping 5 ½ days per week making life intolerable
- The smoke from the lorries
- They were concerned about the traffic volume and vehicles weights
- They believed there would be a serious accident due to traffic
- There is a heavy grinding noise of heavy cement mixer going half the day
- They do not understand how it is allowed to go on as they have been complaining about the expansion of the site for the last four years
- The shed that has gone up is 3/4 metres high and not the 1.5 metres required
- They had continually complained to SHDC Environmental Health and were not aware that they could also come to the Parish Council
- They feel let down by SHDC in approving applications

Cllr May explained that we would have been supportive of issues if we had known and was sad they were in the position they were.

Cllr Baldy explained that he and Cllr Thomas had previously been on site, and the main issue at that time was traffic. However once highways didn't support the objections, SHDC did not think they could oppose it.

Cllr Baldry said that representations were made, the planning officer visited the site more than once and came to the conclusion to grant approval as the main objections were to do with Highways; they took account of all representations.

There are two ways going forward, the first is to keep an eye to ensure conditions are fulfilled. If not then it can be referred to enforcement. If noise levels are intolerable then it is a matter for Environment Health. There is no appeal on granting of permission.

Cllr May re-iterated that it is a public health issue.

Cllr Lee said it was important to think of a way forward. For breach of planning then it is enforcement at South Hams. If they don't have any joy, then they should come back to the PC and we can see how we can help. For the noise and burning then it should go to Environment Health.

Cllr Peacham explained that if someone is lighting fires and causing a nuisance then nobody is allowed to do this; even if have planning permission they don't have a right to be a nuisance. With regard to the problem of the reversing beepers, these can be replaced with silent alarms. Perhaps if a couple of Parish Councillors came to visit and they could make that kind of representation to replace the beepers.

Cllr Lee will look at the conditions within the permission to see whether they are currently breaching the conditions.

Cllr Lee explained that the PC has a limited amount of power compared with the power that a District Councillor has. Cllr Baldry said that both he and Cllr Thomas went on site and have listened to their problems. As a result of his visit the owner had to put in an application for retrospective planning permission.

x3 MoPs left the meeting at 7.52pm

**Action** - *Cllr Peacham said that he would like to visit the site when safe and allowed within the restrictions, Cllr Baldry is happy to accompany him. He would be willing to speak to the owner to replace the beeper if this is a nuisance.*

## **006/21 Climate Change projects**

### (a) Boringdon Camp

Cllr Peacham said he is still waiting for Cllr Thomas to arrange a meeting. Cllr Baldry has not heard anything but believes that site meetings are out for the time being due to restrictions. There is not much we can do until we have a meeting.

### (b) Wildlife initiative

Cllr Pearson-Bunt said that Cllr Ansell has put the tree planting back to March which is sensible; it is difficult in current restrictions and finding people fit enough. There will be more activity in February and March but the ground is cold now. She and Cllr McEwing are growing plug plants from seed.

### (c) Hedgerows

The Clerk updated the PC saying that she had sent an email to 3 local landowners encouraging them to leave some hedges to nature. We had received very positive responses from two so far.

Cllr Peacham encouraged other Councillors to come up with names that we could contact. Send on to the Clerk.

### (d) Community Action Group

Cllr Peacham had requested to have an item on the agenda discussing how we could encourage residents to form a climate change action group.

Discussion and suggestions on how we could assist:

- Publicity
- Finance – hall rental
- Chair
- Terms of Reference

It was decided to postpone any plans until later in the year due to the current restrictions.

(e) Wind Turbines on Lee Moor

We had received a letter from Devon Energy Collective CIC who want to start a conversation about the potential for a community wind farm project at Lee Moor (circulated).

After discussion, it was decided that this was not something the PC would become involved with at this time.

**Action** – Clerk will reply.

#### **007/21 County Councillor's Business**

The said that she had just received an email from Cllr Hart with a report which she read out:

- (f) Cllr Hart wished to pass on good wishes for the new year to the members of the Parish Council
- (g) The consultation on the new road at Lee Mill went well and a planning application should be coming forward shortly
- (h) There is now a race between the Virus and the Vaccine. Devon is doing very well against other Councils in England as shown on the map in the Sunday Times this week
- (i) An amended target budget for 2021/22 putting more money into the system to cover expected increase Covid-19 costs is going to Cabinet for approval tomorrow.

#### **008/21 Hemerdon Mine**

There was no representation from the mine this evening and no liaison meeting last Thursday either.

Cllr May confirmed that the letter had been sent to the Environment Agency. The letter asks to get some base lines on LFN and general noise in place prior to the operation starting again. We will wait to see what comes back in response.

Cllr Peacham said that the drilling was finished before Christmas; they were 15 holes short of what they planned to drill. There is now a machine reinstating the area. The footpath diversion will remain for up to 6 months to grass over before it will be used again.

Cllr May had received an email from MoP regarding the state of the path. He had replied saying that we were aware of the situation and were on top of it. They were not aware of the mine operations, there is no communications officer and people do not know what is going on.

Cllr Peacham has been approached by several people locally who are alarmed at what is going on.

The PC is disappointed to see how extensively the wild planting has been disturbed by the current works and hope that particularly the bluebells which have been a historic feature of the area will be sympathetically reinstated.

#### **009/21 Fibre Broadband project**

Cllr Pearson-Bunt reported that the go live date promised mid-April although it had been said that they hoped to do it in February. However, there were road closures coming up and one is the 1<sup>st</sup> March so it is unlikely to go live before then. Cllr Pearson-Bunt has been told that the actual fibre connection is all ready; the work from the poles to the premises is still to be done. There had been expressions of interest from other villages who want to do the same and she is liaising with them to help.

Cllr Baldry left the meeting at 8.28pm

#### **010/21 Cllr responsibilities**

Councillors discussed and approved the list of Councillor Responsibilities.

***Action** – the Clerk will publish this on the website*

#### **011/21 Policy reviews**

- (a) Grievance Policy
- (b) Disciplinary Policy

Councillors reviewed and approved the Policies which included an additional clause for procedures during a pandemic.

#### **012/21 Bus Shelters**

- (a) Cllr Milford had inspected the bus shelters on 10<sup>th</sup> December and reported that they appear to be structurally sound. There were a couple of issues:  
Sparkwell – the seats need to be cleaned and is ideal for a mural.  
Hemerdon - needs vegetation clearing and a small amount of rubbish removed.

Cllr Peacham said that there were slates missing and the gutters were blocked. He and Cllr Milford said they would go and clear the vegetation, but we needed engage the services of a handyman for the rest of the work.

***Action** – Pass details of handyman on to Clerk to that we can obtain a quote for the sales and gutter works.*

- (b) Cleaning of the Lee Mill bus shelters. The annual cost for this is £300 which covers fortnightly cleaning of the shelter on the A38 slip road (and they also clear cans etc) and monthly cleaning of the shelter opposite the Westward Inn.

The Council **RESOLVED** to continue the cleaning contract. It was suggested that we contact the company whose lorries cause most of the dirt on the road and ask them to contribute towards the cost of cleaning.

*Action – Clerk to make contact.*

### **013/21 Grant Application**

The Clerk had circulated a grant application from Ivybridge Park & Ride for £350.

After discussion, the Council **RESOLVED** to unanimously to approve. It was said that Park and Ride should be encouraged to publicise their services in the Parish Pump.

*Action – Clerk to contact Park and Ride.*

### **014/21 Minutes**

Councillors considered the minutes of the meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020

**RESOLVED** unanimously that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020 be approved and signed at a later date.

### **015/21 Planning**

(a) Minute 152/20 update

Cllr May had said that he had been on the road to the Recycling centre at Lee Mill at the weekend and Dorton lorries were using the road. He did not believe this was allowed. The Clerk confirmed that in the Operational Conditions of the planning the site shall only operate between the hours of 0730 to 1800 on Mondays to Fridays and 0800 to 1300 on Saturdays, with no operations on Sundays or Public Holidays.

(b) [4185/19/OPA \(App A\)](#)

[4181/19/OPA \(App B\)](#)

Woolwell Planning Applications Reference, update for Parish Councils. Woolwell is included in Bickleigh so is of interest to us. The Council had last considered this in February 2020. Not available to comment upon yet, but documents are already available. Cllr Lee said she will have to distribute the work around the Cllrs.

(c) Planning Application [Ref: 3631/20/FUL](#) Comments by 14 January 2021

Address: Eagle House Eagle Road Langage Business Park Plympton PL7 5JY

Description: New canopies, entrance lobby, external bike shelter, roof and covered external storage area to existing industrial building. New internal partitions and mezzanine floor to existing building. Replacement of existing fence with new 3m high security fencing.

**RESOLVED** that the application is supported by the Parish Council subject to the issues raised being resolved by the Planning Department.

(d) [Planning Application Ref: 3929/20/FUL](#) Comments by 21 January 2021

Address: Welbeck Manor Sparkwell PL7 5DF

Description: Erection of 4no detached dwellings with garages

After a full discussion, the Council **RESOLVED** that the application is not supported by the Parish Council due to over-development, height of the houses, access issues, too many cars, parking for current users of the site.

x1 MoP left the meeting at 9.20pm

#### **016/21 Road and Snow Warden**

Clr Peacham reported nothing to report apart from a small amount of the salt was used recently.

The Clerk reported that she had recently spoken to our Lengthsman who said that he had been out to clear the sand/mud/debris from the drains after the recent heavy rain.

#### **017/21 Chairman's Business**

- (a) A few people had mentioned cars speeding through Sparkwell and asked what we could do about it. It was decided to add this item to the Agenda for February.

#### **018/21 Correspondence**

- (a) We received an email from a resident of Lee Mill praising the work of the lengthsman and also raising questions about the state of the road surface of New Park Road. They had reported the potholes on DCC site. The Clerk had contacted Highways, DCC who said that there are no plans for any resurfacing works on New Road and all potholes reported are inspected by a full time inspector and if they don't meet the criteria for a defect are assessed and prioritised for a more suitable repair on a non-urgent basis. The Clerk had reported back to the resident.
- (b) Devon County Council (South Hams HATOC) (Traffic Regulation) Amendment Order reference IMR/B13524-5810  
Only reference to Sparkwell is PLYMPTON: No Waiting At Any Time on specified lengths of Western Wood Way. Comments by the 21st January 2021

**Action** – Clerk to circulate Amendment Order.

#### **019/21 Finance**

The Clerk explained that there was an error in the Budget Report submitted and considered in December; the 15% increase the effect on each household was correct, but the associated figures were not (£11,313 was stated and voted on, whereas it should have read £11,873). The Council therefore needs to either confirm the precept demand to match the agreed budget or alter the budget to meet the agreed precept demand.

The Clerk had re-submitted the amended Budget Report and requested that the Council confirm the precept demand to match the agreed budget.

- (a) Councillors present received and considered the amended Budget for 2021/22 which had been circulated.

**RESOLVED** unanimously that the report be approved.

- (b) Councillors present received and considered the amended Precept Demand for 2021/22 which had been circulated.

The Parish Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Precept Demand at **£11,873**.

- (c) Councillors present considered the budget analysis report and bank reconciliation for December 2020

**RESOLVED** unanimously that the reports be approved.

**020/21     Payments and Receipts**

- (a) Cllrs reviewed and **RESOLVED** to approve the list of payments for December 2020

**021/21     Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 7pm - remote meeting using Zoom.

Meeting closed at 9.43 pm

This is a true and accurate record of the meeting

Signed .....

Name ..... Date .....