

MINUTES OF SPARKWELL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
held on 11th October 2022 at Hemerdon Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Peacham, Serpell Denman, Hartley, May, Webb, Millford, Hutton-Fellowes, McEwing, Sophie Jones (Clerk)

In attendance: Cllr Hart (DCC), Cllr Baldry (SHDC), Angie Scott (Tungsten West), 3 MOP's

Part 1 (Open to the Public)

148/22 Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Pearson-Bunt, Harvey

149/22 Agreement of the Agenda between Parts I and II

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

150/22 Declarations of Interest

None

151/22 County Councillor's Report

Cllr Hart presents update from DCC. They are gradually bringing spending down but still need to reduce it by a further £20 million. There is very little money available to spend over the next 18 months. Inflation is affecting the cost of materials, etc – estimated to be up by 20% to 25%. General inflation is up 10%, wage demands are costing £7 million, possibly £10 million. Two out of three Unions agreed on wage demands, just need the third Union to accept. The original budget was set when there was no war in Ukraine and fuel was less than £2 per litre. DCC are currently working with hospitals to reduce the number of well patients who remain in hospital due to not having access to a care package. 10% of care homes are closed to new patients as they have outbreaks of Covid. Cllr Hart encourages residents to get the Covid boosters. There are still a small number of people who haven't had a Covid vaccine at all, they make up 50% of the people currently in intensive care. Studies have also found that people who have had Covid vaccinations are recovering faster than those who haven't.

Cllr Hart explains that DCC are currently without a Chief Executive and would like the post filled by the end of February 2023. DCC are the third largest local authority in the country, tenth in population, with a budget of £1.5 billion.

Regarding updates within the local community, the council are looking into methods to stop lorries parking on the bridleway by the cattlegrid (just past Tungsten West mine). They have tried soft 'No Parking' signage, but these are being thrown away. The next step will be to install some permanent solid blocking to prevent the damage being caused from lorries parking there.

Cllr Hartley asks Cllr Hart if there is still room in the budget to fund the work at the Lee Mill slip road. Cllr Hart says the work will still be done but he can't give a definite date. Cllr

Hartley explains that he previously had an email detailing an announcement regarding the special bid for the slip road, which will be made in August. Cllr Hart said that it'll most likely be October, or at least before December. Cllr Hartley says that Sir Gary Streeter MP looked at the road and has described it as an accident waiting to happen. Especially with the planning application at Screwfix which will bring more traffic to the area. Cllr Hart says he can ask the question; they are intent on doing the work, but he just doesn't know when. Cllr Hartley asks how can planning applications be approved within the area when the improvement work hasn't been done on the slip road, making the whole area unsafe. Cllr Hart was unaware that planning applications had been approved in Lee Mill, he will investigate this.

Cllr Peacham asks if the improvement work for Deep Lane will still be done. Cllr Hart explains that aspects of the Deep Lane project is being discussed, such as whether to create a pedestrian/cycle path across the bridge. The improvement works on the junction was deemed sufficient.

Cllr Hart says the Freeport bid was the best bid out of the nine made nationally. He received a letter from Ministers in London detailing their intention to give the opportunity for investment to County Unity Councils and top Local Authorities. There is a meeting on Thursday 13th October 2022 to have an Investment Status approved. He said there are a couple businesses in talks to occupy the Freeport.

Cllr Webb asks Cllr Hart about his previous point regarding Derriford Hospital and the problem with care packages. Cllr Hart explains that the ICS (Integrated Care System) says all areas should be working together; government, GP's, hospital services, etc. When people can't see a GP, they go to A&E which is already full. The government has put a lot of money into ICS and despite the frontline services working very hard, their back office is very heavy. For example, they tend to provide a lot of paperwork at meetings, which in turn swallows a lot of money. Cllr Baldry says that 6 in 10 patients are stuck in hospital without medical need. Cllr McEwing says that there is nowhere to send the people who are acutely ill. The Mental Health services have been shut down completely. Many of the wards are full of people with mental health issues which the nurses cannot deal with when there are ill people/elderly dementia sufferers there too. There are 50,000 vacancies for nurses, they aren't paid enough and are expected to work longer hours. Cllr Hart says there was a loss of £300 million a year over the last 10 years. He says when they do employ people, they aren't paid enough to live down here. Cllr McEwing hopes the Cllr Hart will reiterate that to Parliament, he says he has already done so.

Cllr Peacham says the next step will be to cut tax and cut public expenditure. This has been going on for a decade. It's been cut beyond the point where it can work. Surely mental health patients wandering the streets and dealing with the police will cost the government more money. Cllr Hart says he does realise all of this and that these are questions for Members of Parliament. A new system is needed with local government for the health services.

Cllr Hart left the meeting at 19.40.

152/22 District Councillor's Report

Cllr Baldry presents update from SHDC beginning with waste and recycling. The waste service is back in-house and has been for a week and a day. To date it is going well, better than expected. He gives his commendations to the staff for their planning and hard work.

On week 1, they failed one collection on Monday, two on Tuesday and none since. FCC failed on half. Now just starting week 2, they are reviewing the rounds and asking parishioners whether there are any difficult/tricky areas. Please let the team know via the SHDC website if any residents know of any hard-to-reach collections within the parish.

Cllr Baldry also discusses the cessation of the garden waste collections. All residents have been sent a letter and the final collections will be end of October/November 2022. There is a contractual obligation that any one who subscribes to the new service has their waste collected. If they miss/fail to make the collection then there will be a refund, or collection will be rearranged. There will be fewer vehicles on the roads which is better for the environment, plus more people will have to compost. Cllr Baldry is expecting an uptake of 40% based on figures from West Devon. Staff from FCC have moved across to the new in-house team and seem positive regarding the changes.

Regarding the aggregate's consultation, Cllr Baldry attended the SPC public meeting and raised further points with the EA.

Cllr Baldry left the meeting at 19.54

153/22 Public Forum

Two MOP's gave an insight into future planning application at Venton. Cllr Lee and Cllr May will visit the site in due course.

154/22 Hemerdon Mine

Angie Scott presents the brief from Tungsten West. She informs the council that the new screens are due to arrive this month. If any councillors would like to see the new screens then she could tie in a visit with the Local Liaison Group meeting in November. The old screens are being decommissioned; she isn't sure what will be happening with the 2 screens on the ground. They won't be removed from the site as it's too expensive. Cllr Peacham says that the original reassurance from Max Denning was that all 4 screens would be removed – now it seems like 2 of the screens will be retained. Angie says the new screens will be replacing the ones that were originally there. She asks if a site visit would reassure the councillors as they can be talked through the process/plans.

Cllr May shares his concern that he has heard about TW 'starting small and ramping up production', which fills him with horror. He asks what they are planning on ramping up to? Angie asks if the councillors need reassurance that the screens will go. She thinks they will but the building will need to be taken apart for them to be removed so money will be an issue. She asks if SPC are worried the screens will be turned back on. Cllr May says yes, unless they are removed completely from the site. Angie feels it will be worth a site visit to see it all, and encourages the councillors to come to the LLG meeting.

Cllr May asks if TW are assuming they will get the permit and asks if they've been promised that they will get it. Cllr Peacham feels that what he is seeing and hearing is just to appeal to investors as what is in the planning application cannot be achieved. Angie says she wouldn't tell SPC anything that's untrue and the aggregates is another thing entirely. She asks how she can make the councillors feel more comfortable about the screens. Cllr Peacham feels that there has been a loss of trust between the SPC and TW. Cllr May says that if the old

screens stay in place, there is nothing but their word that they won't be switched back on. He says there are already about 400 to 500 objections to the current TW planning application. Angie is aware and knows the list is substantial having read through most of them. She feels it's important for the councillors to attend the next LLG meeting. Cllr Peacham says SPC will discuss whether to attend or not as they aren't sure if it is constructive for them to attend. Angie says her intention of being at the SPC meeting is to get the views of the council and residents and represent them truthfully. She wants to make a difference, whether that's meeting halfway and/or compromising. She will relay the concerns regarding the screens and can suggest chopping them up. Cllr Lee feels that would be an appreciated action and wants to reassure Angie her presence at the monthly parish meetings is appreciated. Cllr May would like a newly designed plan so the SPC know where they are regarding the consultation and application. Angie reassures the council that she hears their concerns. She will pause the engagement for the meantime while the application is ongoing.

Cllr Peacham thanks Angie for attending and listening.

Angie left the meeting at 20.44

155/22 Minutes

Councillors considered the minutes of the meeting on 12th July 2022

RESOLVED – unanimously that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12th July 2022 be approved and signed

156/22 Climate Change and Biodiversity

- a. Cllr Hutton-Fellowes says the Woodland project is ongoing. There will be another meeting in October, then monthly from then on. There has been issues with vandalism and fence posts being pulled out. Some have been replaced already but a tree has been snapped and destroyed. Cllr McEwing feels that money should be spent on a contractor to come and help. They would also like to plant some daffodils.
- b. On hold for the minute.
- c. Cllr Harvey has been in contact with Rob Sekula about a site visit. Will continue to chase up.
- d. No updates.
- e. No longer needed on Agenda.

157/22 P3 Scheme Footpaths

Cllr McEwing says all the surveys have been completed and they are arranging to see Ros Davies from DCC in December to discuss the next steps.

158/22 Neighbourhood Planning

Cllr Hartley says most of the forms have been completed. He'd like to meet with Cllr Peacham to go through the rest of the forms.

159/22 Road & Snow Warden

No update from Cllr Harvey. Cllr Hutton-Fellowes asks if we can get hold of a digitised speed monitor to check the speed of vehicles driving through the village. The SPC discussed proposing a traffic calming scheme to Nick Coulton as there has been a lot of close-call accidents.

ACTION – Clerk to investigate borrowing/purchasing a speed monitoring flashing sign.

160/22 Tree Warden

No update this month.

161/22 Parish Assets (Bus Shelters, Benches, etc)

No update this month.

162/22 Planning

- a. 2555/22/HHO; Object
- b. 2787/22/FUL; Object
- c. 2556/22/HHO; Object

Cllr Serpell Denman left the meeting at 21.06

163/22 Chairman's Business

No updates this month

164/22 Correspondence

Clerk asked the council if they'd like to purchase a Poppy Wreath for Remembrance Day.

RESOLVED – unanimously that the Clerk purchase the wreath and claim back on expenses.

Clerk also mentioned that an engineer has been arranged to fix the swings in Bottle Park.

RESOLVED – unanimously that the engineer proceed with the works and invoice SPC on completion.

165/22 Finance

- a. Cllrs reviewed and **RESOLVED** to approve the budget analysis report and bank reconciliation for August 2022 and September 2022.

166/22 Payments and Receipts

- a. Cllrs reviewed and **RESOLVED** to approve the list of payments for August 2022 and September 2022.

167/22 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at **Sparkwell Parish Hall** on **Tuesday 8th November 2022** at **7.00pm**.

Meeting closed at 22.15

This is a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed

Name Date