

**MINUTES OF SPARKWELL PARISH COUNCIL VIRTUAL MEETING**  
held on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021

**Present:** Cllrs May, Harvey, McEwing, Milford, Peacham  
Dawn Johnson (Clerk)

**In attendance:** Cllr Thomas (SHDC), Mrs Helen Webb (for co-option interview) Mr Duncan Smith, x1 Member of the Public (MoP)

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

**022/21 Apologies for Absence**

Cllr Ansell (work), Cllr Pearson-Bunt (family matters) Cllr Lee (family commitments), Cllr Hart (DCC)

**023/21 Agreement of the Agenda between Parts I and II**

Councillors noted that two items of business would be considered in Part II of the meeting.

**024/21 Declarations of Interest**

None

**025/21 County Councillor's Business**

The Clerk delivered the report received from Cllr Hart:

- (a) The plans for the new Lee Mill slip road are going to the County Council cabinet meeting on Friday. He is expecting them to be passed and they will then have to bid for the money to build it. There was 98% support for the plan which is the best result ever recorded by highways.
- (b) They are finalising the County Budget for 21/22. This is going to the same Cabinet Meeting on Friday. There is nearly £600 million for the running of DCC with about the same again for Education and Schools,
- (c) Cllr Hart advises anyone offered a Covid19 injection to have one ; he had his last week. At last, the vaccination is catching up with the virus, the number of residents being referred to hospital have been dropping over the last 7 days. However, there are still a lot of people in intensive care in hospital.
- (d) Cllr Hart urges everyone to please be careful, keep your distance, wash your hands regularly and wear a mask when needed.

**026/21 District Councillor's Business**

Cllr Thomas delivered his report:

- (a) There is a full Council meeting on Thursday to agree the budget for 21/22. There is a proposal to put funds into the "green pot". Cllr Thomas is putting forward a proposal that all councillors have a pot of £5000 they can allocate for green projects (similar to

the sustainable community locality fund). He also wants the District to support planting a tree for every person in the district.

- (b) With regard Boringdon Camp, we still need to have a meeting with Mr Sekula of SHDC but this cannot take place at the moment due to Covid restrictions. Cllr Thomas supports the PC's plans.
- (c) Further to Cllr Peacham's request for a directory of officers at SHDC, he has asked the Deputy Chief Executive for a hierarchy of responsibility for Parish/Town Councils.
- (d) A group has set up looking at the Moor to Sea Yealm Corridor. He has flagged up that the Yealm runs through Sparkwell Parish and suggested they contact us to get involved.

### **027/21 Public Form**

MoP said that they wanted to hear the Neighbourhood Planning agenda item. They had also been talking to the Clerk about possible projects for the Smithleigh verges and funding; this is probably for the next phase later in the year. They will liaise through the Clerk and would like to get involved in the wildlife and wildflower projects and bring Lee Mill and Smithleigh areas into it.

### **028/21 Neighbourhood Planning**

Mr Duncan Smith addressed the Parish Council. He had already sent the Planning Roadmap document which is a good document to use.

- Why Prepare a Neighbourhood Plan?

The Joint Local Plan (JLP) will give reasonable protection so why do a Neighbourhood Plan (NP)? A NP gives an extra layer of protection against development that we do not want. There are no settlement boundaries in the JLP. The JLP specifies indicative targets for dwellings in the area (30 Sparkwell, 20 Lee Mill), a NP would allow us to allocate the sites ourselves rather than the development process imposing them upon us.

There is a problem in that there are applications already in, 25 in Lee Mill and 20 units at Seaton Orchard and developers will be relying on the JLP figures to get their consent. If approved, that takes up the balance of what is required.

Alongside control of housing, the NP will include local green space that should be protected for ever in planning terms. By allocating sites for green spaces, they have significant protection.

- What Neighbourhood Plans have been and are being prepared in South Hams?

Over 15 plans have gone through the process including Bickleigh, Ivybridge, Ugborough and Brixton.

- The Role of SHDC

Their role is to advise. It is the PC's plan, so the PC produces it. It cannot go against the JLP and has to be in line with European legislation which is still in place. At the end of process, SHDC has powers if it jars with the JLP and are not happy with it. The plan goes through an

independent examination which can iron out issues and problems.

- What are you letting yourself in for: The work necessary to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan?

It is a considerable amount of work and takes up to 3 years to produce. We would have to produce significant evidence base for the proposals being put forward.

- What help can you get: Financial/ Expertise?

There is £10,000 available from locality and this can be spent on expertise. There are also technical grants available. There is a lot of help but despite that, it is a lot of work.

Cllr May thanked Mr Smith for his input and asked, if we cannot go against the JLP, in our particular situation where nearly all our allocation has gone, would we gain very much for the amount of work needed? Mr Smith said you always get rogue applications, and it would prevent the speculative applications.

The Government is looking to change the planning legislation in 2/3 years' time, and it is likely that the JLP area will have to be subject to a review. If we have a plan in place, we have a better argument. There may also be local green spaces that we do not have now but we would be able to allocate.

Cllr Thomas said that he had suggested we invite Mr Smith to the parish meeting after the Lee Mill application was taken to development management and was lost. If there had been a NP, then it is most likely that we would not have chosen the site selected by the developer.

A NP is an opportunity to redefine the boundaries. For example, Lee Mill Industrial estate is part of Ermington and yet Lee Mill as a NP area, would need to include the Industrial Estate. This would need to be agreed with Ermington but there are a lot of opportunities in Lee Mill that could arise.

The Parish does not have to cover the whole area as we may not see pressures arising in some areas.

Cllr Peacham said that having read through the document sent out, despite all the work it would take, it is possibly the most important thing we can do for the parish. We would not then be following developer demands but thinking about what we want and where we want it.

Mr Smith left the meeting at 7.38pm

Cllr Peacham stated that if we could allocate areas as green space, we could protect these important spaces. We could influence smaller developments rather than 20 house developments and allocate land for genuine self-builders for their first home.

The MoP present said that we don't have to do it all ourselves, we can involve people who have knowledge, and this is encouraged. They would be delighted to be involved. We should try to find someone in the community to take the lead on it and identify key people to become involved.

The MoP and Cllr Thomas left the meeting at 7.44pm

**Action** – Clerk to contact absent Cllrs and ask them to read through the information sent and add this as a regular item to the Agenda.

### **029/21**

At this point the Chair asked Cllrs if we could move the Co-option interview as Helen Webb had to leave the meeting before Part 2

**RESOLVED** that the Co-option interview be moved.

### **030/21 Climate Change projects**

#### **(a) Boringdon Camp**

We had already had an update from Cllr Thomas regarding a site meeting. Cllr Peacham said that there have been stories about the gate going into the camp being vandalised and dogs getting in and killing the sheep. The Forestry Commission has repaired the gate. Cllr Harvey said that if the PC decided to take the site on, then it should be cost neutral rather than it being a liability to the Council. We could hold re-enactments and events. The Clerk said that that once a site meeting had taken place a report will be prepared for Council and will include costs and possible income.

#### **(b) Wildlife initiative**

The clerk read a report from Cllr Pearson-Bunt saying that actions were in hand as previously reported and all of the budget will be spent.

Cllr May thanked Cllr McEwing, Pearson-Bunt and Ansell for their work.

### **031/21 Hemerdon Mine**

#### **(a) Cllrs May and Peacham attended the informal meeting with the mine last week so they can update the PC.**

TW had not been drilling on site since Sept, they stopped before Christmas and are waiting for the analysis of that material. The boreholes are not going to get done.

They had given us the prior notification of planning notices referred to later in the agenda.

They are hoping to get a feasibility study out in March, and get up and running in Q2 of 2022 subject to finance.

The Environment Agency (EA) has deemed it as a high interest site so will be liaising with the PC and hopefully the public as well. They deem the EA as a threat to the business as they do not to have a number to work to for the LFN. The concern is that if they do all they say they are going to do and there are still problems with noise, then the EA can pull the permit to operate.

Cllr May said that with regard to the planning applications, he would like the technical issues to be dealt with at the liaison meetings; Cllr Peacham has the knowledge with his background, and he asked that the PC delegate powers to Cllr Peacham to deal.

**RESOLVED** that Cllr Peacham be given the powers to deal with the technical issues on behalf of the Parish Council.

- (b) The response from the Environment Agency had been circulated by the Clerk. Cllrs May and Peacham will draft a response.

Helen Webb left the meeting at 8.30pm

#### **032/21 Fibre Broadband project**

The clerk read a report from Cllr Pearson-Bunt saying that an update as reported at our last meeting had been posted on our website and Facebook page. Swaps for core subscribers have been achieved/are in the process with DCMS and we are still on track for April access to the system, as far as we know.

#### **033/21 Langage Power Station Liaison**

The clerk read a report from Cllr Pearson-Bunt saying that contact had been made and regular virtual meetings with the manager are in the diary. Cllr Pearson-Bunt will take any messages/questions back to him. He is positive about being in touch. There is no impact on us from the outage listed in his update (circulated).

#### **034/21 Bus Shelters**

- (a) Lee Mill bus shelter on A38 slip road

After our last meeting, the Clerk had contacted Jeremy Bishop Haulage asking whether they would contribute towards the cleaning of the bus shelter on the A38 slip road. They had generously offered to cover the total annual cost of the cleaning of that shelter (£195.00) and had in fact already sent us the funds. The Clerk has passed on our grateful thanks.

- (b) Cllr Milford had obtained a quote for repair on Hemerdon bus shelter; however it was difficult to provide a quote as there is a lot of ivy and undergrowth to be cleared first. The quote for clearing was £100.

**RESOLVED** to accept the quote for £100 to clear the ivy and undergrowth. Contractors can then have a better look and we will then obtain two quotes for the remedial work.

*Action – Cllr Milford will arrange for the clearing.*

### **035/21 Speed Monitoring**

The Clerk referred to the DCC information circulated to Councillors. The Clerk had had correspondence with DCC Highways in March 2020 when it was explained that the first part of the process is to establish if there is a speed problem which would then be put through the SCARF (speed compliance action review forum) process. DCC can arrange to put out data speed and volume data collection devices but there is a waiting list of sites at the moment.

If the data shows there is a speed issue the SCARF process will identify the appropriate level of action which can be from no action to traffic engineering in the worse cases.

If we would like a speed and volume survey carried out, we need to let DCC know where in the village. Data is then considered by the Speed Compliance Action Review Forum.

If ultimately there is a proven speeding issue and the Parish Council decided to pursue the self-purchased VAS then there are data collecting options but they can be expensive.

Perhaps we could look at a grant application to the Solar Fund.

However, the Clerk reminded the Council that in May 2019 the Police had monitored the traffic at different times and locations due to Speed being an issue through the villages.

One was completed at approx. 1400hrs at Sparkwell one afternoon, in the hour a good number of vehicles passed none were over 30mph and the majority were at 20mph. We subsequently established that 20mph is an enforceable limit.

**RESOLVED** to request DCC to put out data speed and volume data collection devices when possible.

### **036/21 Future Meetings**

#### **(a) Annual Residents Meeting**

The Clerk explained that this is held in March and this year we could still hold the meeting using Zoom before the usual monthly Parish meeting.

**RESOLVED** to hold the annual residents meeting using Zoom with a start time of 6.15pm

#### **(b) Meetings post 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

The Clerk had recently circulated the advice received from DALC regarding the continued use of virtual meetings, specifically that the legislation does not allow for this after 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and that thereafter we would have to meet face to face. Everything is moving so quickly and there is no way to second guess what the situation might be in May.

**RESOLVED** that:

- The annual AGM will be moved forward to Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and will be a virtual meeting
- Cllr Clare Lee shall have delegated authority to make planning decisions on behalf of the council if face to face, virtual meetings or a discussion using email has not been

possible. Any decisions made under this delegation must be recorded in. This delegated authority ceases when the Council deems that it is no longer required.

### **037/21 Minutes**

Councillors considered the minutes of the meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021

**RESOLVED** unanimously that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021 be approved and signed at a later date.

### **038/21 Planning**

(a) Planning Application [0100/21/FUL](#)

Description: Construction of 1no 15000ftsq business unit and 2no 10000ftsq business units (Class uses B1(a)(b)(c), B2 & B8) in place of previously planning approved site layout (reference 1878/19/FUL)

Address: Land at SX 5688 5556, South of Langage Business Park Plympton PL7 5HQ

**RESOLVED** that the Parish Council has no objection

#### **Prior Notifications**

(b) DCC/3823/2015

Hemerdon Mine

New ore sorter building

To be dealt with by Cllr Peacham (Minute (031/21(a)) - Support

(c) DCC/3823/2015

Hemerdon Mine

Extension to the 110-area building (Primary and Secondary Crushers) and new linked plant

To be dealt with by Cllr Peacham (Minute (031/21(a))

(d) DCC/3823/2015

Hemerdon Mine

Temporary mobile Primary Crusher

To be dealt with by Cllr Peacham (Minute (031/21(a)) We would like the clause to operate at night and weekends withdrawn.

(e) Hemerdon Mine

New office block

**RESOLVED** that the Parish Council would like to see more detail of the green areas and planting to mitigate the building, together with deer fencing. Cllr Peacham will feedback.

### **039/21 Road and Snow Warden**

Cllr Peacham reported that Cllr Harvey had taken delivery of salt for his area, we now have 2 tonnes with Cllr Harvey and 2 tonnes at Hemerdon.

Cllr Peacham had inspected the road/pothole reported on the Community Facebook page. It had not actually been reported but he has now done so and has taken photographs and sent to DCC. It is not a pothole as such but the end of a drain, so it needs a grating.

#### **040/21 Chairman's Business**

Cllrs May and Peacham had visited Fairway Gardens at the weekend because residents have had issues with gardens being so wet. Mr Martin from Blue Cedar came to visit today and Cllr May had met with him. Blue Cedar are going to instal a gully and proper land drain at the back of all the gardens. They are also going to have a look at sorting out the drainage in the individual gardens as well.

#### **041/21 Correspondence**

- (a) The Custodian of the Sparkwell Parish Hall defibrillator is no longer able to complete the monthly check and submit the report to the South West Ambulance Service. The Clerk had thanked him for his assistance and asked whether a Cllr living in Sparkwell could take this on. Cllr May said that he would do this.
- (b) We have received the letter of engagement for the Annual audit. It will be a remote audit again this year and the auditors have offered a two stage submission of documents which the clerk has confirmed.
- (c) Devon County Council Road Closure Notice  
Tuesday 16 February 2021 for a maximum of 5 days – anticipated finish Tuesday 16th February 2021.  
Roads affected Blacklands Cross to Stert Bridge, Sparkwell. Alternative route will be signposted.  
Replacement BT poles. BT Openreach
- (d) Devon County Council Road Closure Notice:  
On Monday 1st March 2021 for a maximum of 5 days  
Roads affected West Park Hill, Plympton. The alternative route will be signposted.  
Work on overhead cables. BT Openreach
- (e) Devon County Council Road Closure Notice  
From Monday 8th March 2021 for a maximum of 5 days until Friday 12th MARCH 2021  
Roads affected road from Hemerdon to Newnham Road. There is no alternative route  
This temporary restriction is considered necessary to enable -  
1 joint hole in tarmac footway and 24m trenching in tarmac footway, tarmac road and grass verge for new supply. Western Power Distribution.

#### **042/21 Finance**

- (a) Councillors present considered the budget analysis report and bank reconciliation for January 2022

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



(b) The Clerk reported that the VAT refund has been submitted in the sum of £464.12

**043/21 Payments and Receipts**

(a) Cllrs reviewed and **RESOLVED** to approve the list of payments for January 2021

**044/21 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on 9<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm (after the Annual Residents Meeting at 6.15pm) - remote meeting using Zoom.

Meeting closed at 9.30 pm

This is a true and accurate record of the meeting

Signed .....

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