

MINUTES OF SPARKWELL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on 9th January 2024 at Hemerdon Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Hartley, May, Nicholson, Webb, Lee, Hutton-Fellowes, Serpell Denman, Sophie Jones (Clerk)

In attendance: Cllr Hart (DCC), Cllr Thomas (SHDC), Marica Lyndon (Tungsten West)

Part 1 (Open to the Public)

001/24 Apologies for Absence

None

002/24 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.

003/24 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

004/24 County Councillor's Report

Cllr Hart presented a brief to the Sparkwell Parish Council. He discussed the Devolution bid; there has been plenty of support and they are expecting confirmation. There is a special Cabinet meeting in February. The bid was put in at the very beginning, and we are the only tier 2 that was accepted by the government out of a possible 9. We will get extra responsibility and money.

Regarding the budget, the council tax will be increased by 4%, £44 million additional. This year there was a joint discussion on budgets, the District Council and police came to the meeting, and pressures were discussed.

Cllr Hart also noted that the Freeport is going from strength to strength.

Cllr Nicholson asked if the future budget will allow for an improvement in highways and how they are dealt with. He also raised concerns regarding the Lee Mill sliproad. Cllr Hart said that the sliproad is the decision of Highways England, but he is still following it up on a regular basis. There has been money allocated to roads, with it based on road length. Cllr Hart reassured that any potholes reported will get fixed, and the quality of roads is checked frequently.

Cllr Webb asked if the Devolution bid involves more admin, and if so, how is that funded.

Cllr Hart said most of the work they will be doing themselves. Devolution will bring more money to the county, responsibility for business, training, and skills. The money can be spent on green issues. One of only 9 in the country, once in that position there will be a direct line to Homes England. They have failed in the last 4 or 5 years – spent only one third of their allocation. They've given £1.5 billion back to Treasury.

Cllr Nicholson raised the decision to look at speed reduction measures as part of the Tungsten West Section 6 application. He asked if the parish council will be involved in how

those measures are implemented? Cllr Hart said the road in question is a Sparkwell road. They can get a double camera installed on the road in a strategic place, the electric cable will be supplied via Tungsten West. He said he'd endeavour to involve the Sparkwell Parish Council, prior to signing on the dotted line. Cllr Hart asked if SPC would like to be involved in the pipeline for Hydrogen? This will go to the Clayworks, as an alternative supply to running their machines. Langage have progressed with the funding, with the planning decision being made by the DCC, and SPC will be involved.

Cllr Hartley asked for confirmation regarding the Lee Mill sliproad, and the fact that it's not in the current budget. Cllr Hart confirmed that it is not in the budget, designs were drawn up and questions raised by Highways England. Cllr Hartley would like someone to revisit the sliproad. PC Wills is due to visit. Cllr Hartley has asked for a temporary speed restriction measure to be placed in the meantime, as it's been 25 years and vehicles are still speeding dangerously down the road.

Cllr Hart left the meeting at 19.33

005/24 District Councillor's Report

Cllr Thomas presented the monthly brief from South Hams District Council. There has been positive feedback on the waste and recycling service. Cllr Hutton-Fellowes agreed, but noted some residents are having trouble with the lids of their bins blowing off. Cllr Thomas said they need to be clipped in properly, which will prevent this from happening.

Cllr Webb asked why can Plymouth just put everything in one bin, rather than the separate containers as used in Sparkwell parish? Cllr Thomas said it's due to the contamination rate. In Plymouth it is significantly higher, and everything contaminated will need to be burned. The final recycled product is better with the system the parish is using, the effort is worth it. He noted that the biggest problem is storing the boxes, but there are assisted collections for anyone struggling.

Cllr Nicholson asked if there are figures to show the reduction in food waste. Cllr Thomas said he can provide figures for the council wide area.

Cllr Lee also praised the waste and recycling team, remarking that they have been very helpful and respectful.

006/24 Public Forum

No public present.

007/24 Hemerdon Mine

Marica Lyndon presented an update from Tungsten West. She said there have been no further movements since that last meeting, and they are still waiting for Mine Waste Processing. There have been allusions at receiving a response by the end of January 2024. TW have also been granted some additional funding, which will put them in a good position for the next 6 months. Marica said there hasn't been any developments with the feasibility study, and they don't plan on revising it until they know if they are able to get the permit.

Cllr May asked why there has been a delay with the permit. Marica said that an apology was sent, and the outcome will be issued by the end of January 2024. A draft permit will then be

issued. TW have meetings with Highways and the Police. They are happy to share any plans with SPC.

Cllr May asked if they are able to start producing aggregates. Marica said all the stockpiles have been used up, there is nothing onsite as everything is on hold. There is only 13 members of staff, 5 people keeping the site safe. Marica also asked if she could send documentation prior to future SPC meetings to discuss any questions that may arise. Cllrs agreed, feeling this would be very useful.

Marica left the meeting at 20.00

008/24 Planning

a. 3986/23/FUL – Conditions requested

Cllr Thomas left the meeting at 20.22

009/24 Minutes

Councillors considered the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 12th December 2023

RESOLVED – unanimously that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 12th December 2023 be approved and signed.

010/24 Climate Change and Biodiversity

Cllr Hutton-Fellowes will be attending the River Yealm Water Quality Group meeting on Thursday 18th January 2024, and will report back. There are currently 4 sampling stations for Sparkwell parish, Cllr Webb has one for Lee Mill, Cllr Lee has one for Smithleigh and the other 2 are with the RYWQG.

Regarding footpaths, Cllrs and Paths Partnership Committee members have been walking the paths, assessing them, putting up waymarkers and signs. They will continue to submit findings and issues.

Cllr Hutton-Fellowes noted that Smugglers Copse keeps getting vandalised. The council are reluctant to plant any more trees due to this. It was suggested the Plymouth Tree Partnership may help, as community involvement in the project has been low.

Cllr Nicholson asked if SPC could start an initiative for a 'Parish Spring Clean'. Community litter picking, tidying the area, community skip – anything to encourage a parish spring clean. This was received well and will be revisited in May.

Cllr May left the meeting at 20.40

011/24 Road & Snow Warden

Cllr Hartley has noted there was snowfall recently so checked the grit bins nearby. There is some remaining and the bins won't be refilled until it's empty. It was suggested that a grit

bag could be place on the junction at Hemerdon. Cllr Hartley will investigate the remaining grit we have and if there are any bags available to place around the parish.

012/24 Tree Warden

No update.

013/24 Parish Assets (Bus Shelters, Benches, etc)

Cllr Hartley informed the council that the Lee Mill bus shelter is proving expensive to run, ideas for funding are encouraged.

014/24 Chairman's Business

The Cllrs and clerk discussed action points raised in previous meetings and how to complete any that are outstanding.

Cllr Nicholson suggested arranging a working meeting to discuss what the SPC would like to achieve over the next couple of years.

015/24 Correspondence

Clerk raised the following points;

- I. The Hemerdon defibrillator needs new pads and a battery, the Lee Mill defibrillator needs a first aid kit.
- II. The chain basketball hoop is missing in Bottle Park play area. This was purchased by the SPC less than 8 months ago. Cllrs agreed not to purchase a new one, and to leave the basketball hoop without the net.
- III. Peter Honeywell has offered to clean 2 bus shelters in Lee Mill for the next 12 months for a fee of £320. Cllrs reviewed and **RESOLVED** to terminate the contract for window cleaning services at the 2 Lee Mill bus shelters.

016/24 Finance

- a. Cllrs reviewed and **RESOLVED** to approve the budget analysis report and bank reconciliation for January 2024.

017/24 Payments and Receipts

- a. Cllrs reviewed and **RESOLVED** to approve the list of payments for January 2024.

018/24 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at **7pm on Tuesday 13th February 2024** at **Sparkwell Parish Hall**.

Meeting closed at 21.45

This is a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed

Name Date