

MINUTES OF SPARKWELL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on 14th June 2022 at Sparkwell Parish Hall

Present: Cllr Peacham, Pearson-Bunt, May, Lee, Hutton-Fellowes, Hartley, Webb, Serpell, McEwing

In attendance: Sophie Jones (Clerk), Cllr Thomas (SHDC), Angie Scott (TW), 1 MOP

Apologies for Absence: Cllr Millford, Cllr Harvey, Cllr Baldry (SHDC)

Parish Council Meeting

Part 1 (Open to the Public)

109/22 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.

110/22 Declarations of Interest

Cllr McEwing has a Planning Application in item 14 b. of the Agenda.

Cllr Hartley is aware of the applicant for Planning Application in item 14 c.

111/22 County Councillor's Report

No update

112/22 District Councillor's Report

Cllr Thomas presents the monthly brief with an update on the waste issues. There was a momentous meeting with FCC and it became clear that a legal letter will be sent from district to FCC that they have until a certain date to resolve the ongoing issues. Within Sparkwell parish, the recycling and black bin collections are working reasonably well. The brown bins aren't being collected as the FCC don't have enough drivers due to factors such as Brexit and Covid. Representatives from FCC have placed the blame on geography and the size of the roads within parish. Cllr Thomas apologises and says that if a brown bin collection is missed then they unfortunately won't be back to collect it soon. There is a legal obligation for FCC to collect black bins due to the public health hazard but no such thing for the brown bins.

Cllr Pearson-Bunt asks Cllr Thomas about the quality of the in-house officers and if there should be a more robust relationship with future contracts to ensure this doesn't happen again. Cllr Thomas relays he has every faith in the current management team as they only inherited the contract agreed between FCC and the previous team.

Cllr Thomas informs SPC that a planning matter which the council objected to has been sent to full committee, and requests that Cllr Lee attend as an objector.

Cllr Lee also asks if there are any updates on the ongoing issues at Larch Grove. Cllr Thomas is aware that formal complaints have been made to Mr Bates.

Cllr Thomas left the meeting at 19.27

113/22 Public Forum

A MOP spoke to SPC regarding the issues her family is experiencing at Choakford Farm. She explains they are experiencing huge amounts of dust pollution. She notes that there was a retrospective planning application agreed but none of the plans are being adhered to. More trees have been removed than planted. She feels the issues are being overlooked and asks why. Cllr Peacham explains it hasn't been overlooked as he himself and Cllr Lee have in fact visited the site.

The MOP says there was a healthy bat population on site which will be affected by the new chimney that has been installed. The dust is also affecting the health and wellbeing of the horses in the field. Cllr Hartley asks if any noise monitoring equipment has been offered. MOP says yes but they felt it was too much to organise and set up. Cllr Hartley says it will be fitted for them so is worth doing and should be installed for a generous amount of time to ensure an accurate reading. Cllr Lee advises they install dust monitoring equipment too. Cllr Pearson-Bunt advises the MOP writes to Cllr Thomas directly and he will follow it up. Cllr Lee recommends that two departments will need to be involved - the EA due to the adverse effects on the bats, trees and soakaway, and also the Planning team.

114/22 Hemerdon Mine

Angie Scott presents her monthly brief from Tungsten West. Following their previous announcement, they are still working on revised plans and will have news released at the end of June. The new plans are the opposite to the original and screens will no longer be involved. There is currently a recruitment freeze, and they have lost staff due to redundancies and resignations. The exact figures will be known next month when the HR team calculate them, they estimate there has been 18 redundancies. TW have listened to the community regarding the aggregates and taken it on board, there will be a revised proposal released at the end of June. TW will inform SPC of the details prior to submitting it on their website.

Loss time to injury figure remains at zero. There has been one complaint submitted onto the website from DCC regarding lorries parked in a bridleway overnight. TW investigated and discovered the lorries aren't theirs. It's been recommended that if anyone sees the lorries parked overnight in the bridleway at Shaugh Prior, please take a photo and send it to Sue Penaluna.

Angie also informs SPC that TW now have the go ahead to look at a community investment fund to support community activities. SPC will let her know of any activities planned within the parish. She will provide an update next month when the details are pinned down.

Regarding the new complaints and interactions policy, TW are waiting on the regulators. The complaints are still being managed in the meantime, but the new policy will streamline reporting.

Cllr Peacham asks if the LLG meeting has been postponed until August. Angie says it has as this is the soonest date they can plan it for. If there is anything specific that needs to be discussed prior to the meeting then please contact Angie direct.

Cllr Peacham also asks if there is an update on the recruitment drive previously mentioned. Angie will speak with HR to discuss when they are planning to recruit again.

Angie left the meeting at 19.42

115/22 Minutes

Councillors considered the minutes of the meeting on 10th May 2022

RESOLVED – unanimously that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10th May be approved and signed

116/22 Climate Change and Biodiversity

- a. Cllr McEwing and Cllr Hutton-Fellowes updated the council on the progress with the woodland at Sparkwell. The four silver birch trees have been planted and the plan is to let them establish themselves before proceeded any further. The money that has been spent will be covered by grants. The scouts will be visiting the woods soon to assist with the tidy up.

The Cllrs congratulated Cllr McEwing and Cllr Hutton-Fellowes on the progress so far.

- b. No update.
- c. Cllr Peacham has been sending emails regarding Boringdon Camp so will update next month.
- d. No update.

117/22 P3 Scheme Footpaths

Cllr McEwing has updated SPC on the footpaths. A gentleman from Venton will take on eight footpaths. The scheme is in the initial stages, and they will have it underway by the next meeting. Cllr Webb says lots of repairs and maintenance will be needed. These need to be reported and then handed over to DCC.

118/22 Neighbourhood Planning

Cllr Hartley is looking into possible extensions of twelve months and if additional funding can be obtained. He has doubts whether there will be enough time to get a Neighbourhood plan finished even if an extension is granted.

119/22 Road & Snow Warden

No update.

120/22 Tree Warden

Cllr May updates SPC on a larch tree which is dangerously leaning over the road. There was an exemption granted on the TPO on the condition that it is replaced with a Larix Decidua.

121/22 Parish Assets (Bus Shelters, Benches, etc)

Update provided at the next meeting

122/22 Planning

- a. 1220/22/FUL; Agree
- b. 1409/22/VAR; Agree
- c. 1417/22/HHO; Object

123/22 Chairman's Business

Cllr Peacham discusses the Yealm River Group and that the SPC have agreed in principle to contribute funding, but more information is needed first. They are in the very initial stages of the project and have no funding so far. There are seven parishes involved and the other six have agreed to contribute. Cllr Peacham reveals that there are currently sixteen untreated sewerage spills for an average of three hours per day. The rivers lead to a watering hole which has been tested and deemed as less than sufficient for bathing. He will be involved in the testing of two sites within the rivers, needs a volunteer to test the third. Cllr Peacham will undergo training for this.

Cllr Hutton-Fellowes has asked how this affects the blue flag status for local beaches. Cllr Peacham said DEFRA have approved no sites to swim in but the hope is that the Yealm Group River Project will highlight these issues. If a sewerage treatment is working correctly then it collects 95% of the microplastics. Cllr Lee has agreed to assist in testing the water.

RESOLVED – All agreed that the SPC will contribute £1,058 to the Yealm Group for the water testing equipment needed.

Cllr Peacham feels the SPC should have a wishlist of things to accomplish, as suggested by Cllr Hutton-Fellowes. A few examples would be; refurbishment of the Sparkwell Village sign, refurbishment of the bench at the bottom of Birchland Road, cleaning of the phone box at entrance to village car park, removal of Japanese Knotweed.

ACTION – Cllr Hutton-Fellowes to contact Rob Atkins regarding fixing the bench.

ACTION – Clerk to contact Peter Honeywell regarding cleaning the phone box.

ACTION – Clerk to contact Highways regarding the removal of Japanese Knotweed.

Cllr Webb has confirmed Ella Peters will do an assessment within the Sparkwell parish to check how Dementia friendly the village is. Cllr Webb will assist in Hemerdon but needs volunteers within each village.

ACTION – To put notices online/magazines asking for volunteers to assist.

124/22 Correspondence

The Clerk has forwarded on all correspondence via email prior to the meeting.

125/22 Finance

- a. **RESOLVED** – Unanimously that the budget analysis and bank reconciliation for May 2022 be approved
- b. **RESOLVED** – Unanimously that the SPC Finance Regulations be approved
- c. **RESOLVED** – Unanimously that the SPC Statement of Internal Control be approved
- d. **RESOLVED** – Unanimously that the SPC Risk Assessment Management be approved
- e. **RESOLVED** – Unanimously that the End of Year Bank Reconciliation has been agreed

126/22 Payments and Receipts

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

127/22 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at **Hemerdon Village Hall** on **12th July 2022** at **7.00pm**.

Meeting closed at 21.45

This is a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed

Name Date