

Shapwick Parish Council
Minutes of a meeting held on 17 January 2023
at 7.00pm at Shapwick Village Hall, Shapwick

- 22/23/111 Present:** Steve Campion, Graham Croucher, Lesley Gaskell, Moray McGowan, Nikki Polden and Paul Rogers
- 22/23/112 In Attendance:** Sue Williams (Clerk)
- 22/23/113 Also Present:** 3 Villagers
- 22/23/114 Apologies for Absence**
Apologies were received and accepted from Frank Barnard.
- 22/23/115 Declarations of Interest**
There were no declarations of interest.
- 22/23/116 Minutes of the Meetings held on 15 November 2022 and 4 January 2023**
The minutes were agreed and duly signed.
- Villagers' Open Period**
- 22/23/117 District and County Councillors Reports**
District Councillor and County Councillor not present.
- 22/23/118 Highways**
- a) Ditch and Drainage Maintenance**
Graham Croucher, Paul Rogers and Sue Williams met with Liam Gill, Assistant Highway Service Manager, and his colleague to discuss the responsibilities of Somerset Highways in relation to ditches and drainage which was followed by a tour of the village looking at problem areas.
- Culvert – High Lane: Highways confirmed that this culvert is the responsibility of Somerset Highways. It was agreed to get a volunteer working party to assist the landowner in clearing the ditch/channel preceding the culvert. Once this has been carried out Highways will jet the culvert.
- Northbrook Road Culvert: In need of remedial work. The culvert is the responsibility of the landowner Reinstatement of the ends of the culvert with strong piping is required with a finishing of stone/concrete to protect the edge. Once this work has been carried out Highways will repair the eroded highway.
- Northbrook Road (vicinity of Northbrook Farm): The dips in the road suffer flooding during periods of rain. In the new financial year Highways will install a concrete channel to drain water directly off the road into the ditch. Channels will also be made in the embankments to drain surface water.
- Coppice Gate Farm Corner: Damage to embankment/verge due to HGVs and farm vehicles. Ditch requires remedial work to increase volume capacity.
- Kent Lane: Damage to embankment/verge due to HGVs and farm vehicles. Channels need cutting in the embankments to ensure surface water can drain – Highways to organise.
- Mill Lane: Heavy traffic damaging verges.

22/23/118 cont'd

Clerk to contact Highways to obtain responsibilities document so this can be disseminated to villagers via Shapwick News.

b) Village Footpaths

Dog Waste Bin: A new bin at the junction of Mill Lane/High Lane has been installed. Thanks to Steve Polden for supplying and erecting the post. Positive article in Shapwick News alerting villagers to the risk posed by leaving dog waste.

Vicarage Lane to Chestnut Lane Footpath: Lesley Gaskell reported that one of the stile posts is unstable. Steve Campion confirmed this had been reported 6 months or so ago and is on the list for repair. Steve Campion agreed to report the problem again as well as finding out what Parish Councils can do regarding repairs to stiles.

Permissive Path: Graham Croucher to contact Rich Tweedy for a progress report.

c) Other Matters to be reported to Highways

High Lane junction with Shapwick Hill: Road markings need improvement due to recent near misses reported by villagers. Clerk to liaise with Highways and Paul Rogers.

Station Road Sewage Pumping Station: Wessex Water has been out and inspected site last week – heavy rain causing overflow issues.

22/23/119**Acquisition of Land behind Village Hall**

a) Working Party Update Due to the confidential nature of the process a working party was set up to work through the paperwork and has met on two occasions.

The chair went through a summary of work carried out to date and this filed as an appendix to these minutes.

Salient points to note:

Two phases 1. Acquisition of the land and 2. Development of the village green

Although the time frame will be depend on the speed of the necessary processes the aim is to able to hold an opening event on Coronation Weekend.

It was agreed that Lesley Gaskell will obtain an independent land valuation as part of the process and the Clerk will contact Sedgemoor District Council in respect of legal services.

Funding sources already identified – Valencia and Clarks Foundation. Further funding sources being investigated.

Grass Cutting Maintenance – Paul Rogers obtaining quotes

Community Engagement – Started in Shapwick News and contact is being made with local groups/organisations.

b) Grant Applications Two funding sources for the acquisition of the land and development of the village green have been identified. Preparatory work for the applications has been started.

Nikki Polden proposed that the Parish Council make applications to Valencia and Clarks Foundation to support the acquisition of the land behind the village hall and its development as a village green. Seconded by Lesley Gaskell. Unanimous. Graham Croucher to progress the Valencia application and Steve Campion the Clarks Foundation application.

22/23/120**2023/2024 Precept**

The Clerk explained the precept calculations distributed prior to the meeting.

Consideration for on-going commitments as well as new commitments with acquisition of the land have been taken into account. Workings for various levels of precept and the impact on Band D properties tax base were shared.

Lesley Gaskell said whilst she appreciated that there is a cost of living crisis costs faced by the Parish Cost are also increasing which should be reflected by an increase in the precept.

22/23/120 cont'd

The chair asked Councillors for comment.

Nikki Polden said she agreed that the precept, which has been at the same level for a number of years, should be increased. Paul Rogers said the precept should be increased in order to keep up current level of services.

Moray McGowan agreed with comments made by other Councillors.

Steve Campion said he agreed but the Parish Council should be mindful of the cost of living crisis and not increase the precept by too much.

Lesley Gaskell said the Parish Council precept element is a small percentage of overall Council Tax.

Graham Croucher said that with the increase in village activities and benefits of those activities to the community the precept should be increased. Recognising that there are a number of new groups – history, sustainability, community land trust etc. the Chair asked Councillors whether the Parish Council should consider supporting the groups with hall hire for a period of time. Steve Campion said support new groups should be encouraged. Lesley Gaskell suggested support for the first two meetings would be appropriate. Steve Campion proposed that the Parish Council support venue hire for the first two meetings of new groups. Seconded by Lesley Gaskell. Unanimous.

Graham Croucher suggested that the precept for 2023/2024 be increased to £11,000 to take account of price increases and new commitments. Steve Campion proposed that the 2023/2024 precept be set at £11,000. Seconded Lesley Gaskell. Unanimous. Clerk to submit paperwork to Sedgemoor District Council.

22/23/121**RLT2 Funding**

The application for the purchase of an outdoor table tennis table using RLT2 funds of £793 has been approved by Sedgemoor District Council. Clerk and Nikki Polden to liaise regarding the purchase ensuring completion by the 31 March 2023 deadline.

22/23/122**Coronation Event**

Councillors agreed this should be a community organised event. Moray McGowan proposed a Coronation Event should be discussed and organised through the Shapwick Community Group meetings. Seconded by Lesley Gaskell. Unanimous.

22/23/123**Website**

a) Hosting of Website The Clerk and Chair had met and discussed the hosting of the website and the benefits that could be gained by moving to Webglu Ltd. Service from current provider has been patchy. Nikki Polden proposed that the Parish Council move website hosting to Webglu Ltd. Seconded by Lesley Gaskell. Unanimous. Clerk to organise.

b) New Website – A working party of Paul Rogers, Nikki Polden and Steve Campion was set up to investigate a new website to include community organisations as well as the Parish Council.

22/23/124**Finance**

a) Request for Funds i) A request was made to the Parish Council from the newly formed history group for support with a filming project. The group want to interview Doctor Michael Costen, Honorary Research Fellow with the University of Bristol's department of Archaeology about his work on the Shapwick Project. Paul Rogers said he belonged to the history group and withdrew from the discussion. Lesley Gaskell suggested that local media students could be used - the group felt this would not work. Moray McGowan said the Parish Council needed to be mindful of setting a precedent. Steve Campion said it would enable a legacy for the village on this important project to be captured. Steve Campion proposed a donation of up to but not exceeding £150. Seconded by Nikki Polden. Unanimous

22/23/124 cont'd

ii) A request had been received for £54 to frame the Platinum Jubilee village photo for hanging in the village hall. Moray McGowan proposed this is supported. Seconded by Steve Campion. Unanimous.

b) Cheques for Signature Graham Croucher £70.00 (Chq 958, Community Christmas Tree), Shapwick Village Hall £84.00 (Chq 959, Hall hire), HMRC £299.00 (Chq 960, PAYE Months 4-9) and Mrs Sue Williams £607.56 (Chq 961, Salary and expenses).

22/23/125

Date of Next Meeting

Date of next PC meeting will be Tuesday 21 March 2023 7.00pm Village Hall

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.40pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

