

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SHEPTON MONTAGUE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL, SHEPTON MONTAGUE ON WEDNESDAY 9th NOVEMBER 2016 AT 7.30pm

DRAFT MINUTES SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT MEETING

Present: Richard Ellis, (Chair), Paul Williams, Richard Reed, Janet Robinson, Andrew Wiley, Margaret Hill (Clerk). Also present were Anna Groskop, County Councillor and three members of the Parish.

1. Apologies for absence: Mike Beech, District Councillor

2. Declarations of Interest: None

3. Minutes of last meeting: These were approved and signed as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising:

- A dog waste bin has been installed at the requested spot in the lane at a total cost of £202.65.
- Nothing further had been heard about the stile repair.
- The clerk had written to David Hall at County Hall regarding superfast broadband but had received no reply. Richard Ellis had information regarding the progress of superfast broadband in Charlton Musgrove and would raise this in a.o.b.

5. Audit 2015-2016:

The clerk reported that the external auditors had completed their review of the annual return and issued the certificate. They had also raised two matters to be brought to the attention of Council. These were 1) that in future there should be different dates and minute references for the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of the audit return) and the Accounting Statement (Section 2) in order to demonstrate that the Annual Governance Statement had been considered and agreed first, and 2) that the clerk had been unable to supply two pieces of documentation the auditors had requested in relation to the 2014-15 audit as she had not kept copies. The clerk will do so in future.

6. Finance: The clerk advised that since the last meeting cheques had been written and sent off for the purchase and installation of the dog waste bin (£202.65) and for the SALC affiliation fee (£49.63). A cheque was signed in payment of the invoice received from Mr Hibberd for mowing the churchyard this year (£750). Council were happy for Mr Hibberd to carry on this work next year. **Action:** Clerk to send off payment and advise Mr Hibberd accordingly.

7. BT payphone in village: Since the last meeting BT had notified their intention to remove 68 public payphones in South Somerset including the one in Shepton Montague. Comments from parishioners had been invited by placing this information on the village website and the clerk had subsequently received several comments which were reported to the meeting. One person felt that the phone should be retained in case of emergency as mobile reception coverage in the village is poor. Everyone who commented wanted to retain the box for community use of some sort, even if BT removed the phone. BT had advised that this payphone has not been used at all in the last twelve months and in view of this it is difficult to find reasonable justification for keeping it as a working telephone. The owners of The Old Post Office (outside which the box sits) have cleaned the box periodically and offered to keep it clean and tidy, and even paint it (though the appropriate red paint would have to be obtained). Anna

Groskop advised that the Parish would have to insure it and maintain it should it be 'adopted' once the phone had been removed. Council decided to apply to 'adopt' the box and then consider options for its use. **Action:** Clerk to notify BT and follow up on 'adoption' procedure.

- 8. Parish Plan;** Members had reviewed Brewham's Parish Plan and found it impressive. It was felt that it would be useful to obtain a clearer idea of the views of local people so that the Parish Council can best represent these. A Shepton Montague plan could be a brief document expressing parishioner's views on what they value in the area and what they would like to see in the future in terms of housing, employment, countryside etc. Such a Plan would have no legal standing but in making future planning comments for example, Council would be able to state definitively that local people had been consulted and these were their views. A questionnaire would be needed in order to canvass local opinion.

Anna Groskop advised that Tim Cooke would be helpful in drawing up a Parish Pan and helping with grants for this. Andrew Wiley offered to follow this up with him.

9. Correspondence:

- **Speed Indicator Device:** Recent results from the Speed Indicator Device show that the new white lines and 30mph signs do not seem to have had any impact on the speed of traffic through the village. There are still some vehicles that approach the village at over 50mph. It was noted that some vehicles over the weight limit are going through the village at night.
- **County Councillors:** A poster had been received inviting applications for County Councillors as elections take place on 4th May next year.
- **Somerset Community Justice Partnership:** had requested donations. Council did not feel able to contribute.
- **Winter Service:** Salt/grit bags were again available for collection for use within the parish. Andrew offered to collect 10, 20kg bags and Paul offered to store them. Salt/grit bins in the parish are still full from last year.

- 10. A.o.b.** Richard Ellis advised the meeting that Superfast Broadband was being introduced in Charlton Musgrove by Wessex Internet. This could possibly be rolled out to Shepton Montague as well. As the parishes of Charlton Musgrove and Shepton Montague are largely excluded from the 'Connecting Devon & Somerset' Superfast Broadband programme, our properties will not benefit from any upgrade in speed that will become available to other areas in Somerset. An external provider is our only realistic option for affordable Superfast broadband in the near future. 'Connecting Devon and Somerset' are offering £500 vouchers to individual houses to spend on obtaining their own fast internet from external providers such as Wessex Internet, if they cannot currently receive download speeds of 2Mbps. The voucher scheme ends at the end of November so residents need to respond quickly to obtain their vouchers. Richard will contact Shepton Montague webmaster to get this information put on the village website.

11. Open discussion

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.28 pm.

Chairman _____ Date _____