

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF SHEPTON MONTAGUE PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, SHEPTON MONTAGUE ON WEDNESDAY 7th MAY 2014 AT 7.50pm

Present: Mr R Ellis (Chair), Mr P Williams, Mr P Costen, Mr R Reed, Mrs J Robinson, Mrs M Hill (Clerk), Mike Beech (District Councillor) and four members of the Parish.

1. **Apologies for absence:** None received.
2. **Election of new Chair and declarations of acceptance of office:** Paul Williams nominated Richard Ellis to serve another year as Chair and this was seconded by Peter Costen and all agreed. Richard proposed Paul as Deputy Chair and this was seconded by Richard Reed and all agreed. Declarations of acceptance of office were duly signed.
3. **Minutes:** The minutes of the last Parish Council meeting (5.12.13) were approved as a correct record.
4. **Matters Arising:** Peter Costen reported that the knotweed had been cut down but is fast re-growing.

The salt bins in Shepton Montague had been filled but not the one in Stoney Stoke.

Traffic issues to be covered in item 5.

5. Traffic issues: Richard Ellis gave the following report of the recent meeting with Colin Fletcher, Area Traffic Engineer, concerning the traffic signs in Shepton Montague.

'Those present: Richard Ellis; Paul Williams, Peter Costen, Janet Robinson

Having done a walk through the village with Paul on the previous weekend we felt that there were various signs that needed upgrading and others that needed moving.

We started at the NE end of the village on the crossroads by the pub and reviewed the signage as we progressed down through the village. We discussed the following :

1. *30 mph signs at crossroads to be moved back towards Bruton by approx 50 yds. Village name to be attached. 'Roundel' to be placed in road.*
2. *Weight limits signs to be renewed on crossroads.*
3. *White lines at junction to be repainted.*
4. *White lines at edge of road, emphasising narrow section, running from bus shelter down towards the old post office to be repainted and extended, roundel 'slow' to be placed in road*

5. *White lines at junction of Verrington lane to be repainted*

6. *30 mph sign to be moved 75 yds towards Welham at point where slip road branches off towards Wincanton.*

Colin Fletcher was entirely supportive of the suggestions made and appreciated the need for upgrading the signage.'

Colin Fletcher has subsequently sent an email confirming all the actions to be taken and advising that the work is being programmed and will hopefully be completed during the summer period.

Richard also reported that they had taken Colin to the accident black-spot in Stoney Stoke, where there was actually another accident two days later. Larger chevrons and more signage were agreed.

6. **Appointment of Footpaths Officer:** Richard Ellis agreed to take over the role of Parish Paths Liaison Officer. The clerk provided a map showing the footpaths and bridleways in the village.
7. **Somerset Levels and Moors Flood Action Plan:** Feedback was being sought by the District Council on the Plan and its future funding. The clerk had received comments from Paul Williams which she read to Council. It was agreed that the comments reflected the views of all Councillors. **Action:** Clerk to return the following feedback to SSDC in response to the question 'Should the residents of Shepton Montague help fund flood relief for fellow villagers within the county?'

'Council considers that it is a national matter for central government to fund, via the Environment Agency. If local responsibility is taken for geographical anomalies we may create a 'council tax blight' in those counties with susceptible areas such as flooding, coastal erosion etc.'

8. **Risk assessment and approval of Annual Governance Statement:** Council considered the details of the Annual Governance statement as required by the annual audit. The Statement was approved and signed by the Chair.
9. **Finance: Approval of Accounting Statement (Annual return for 2014/2015)** Members approved the accounts to the end of the financial year as a correct record and these were duly signed by the Chair.

Renewal of insurance: A cheque was signed for £ 243.80 to renew the existing policy with Zurich. A query was raised as to whether there is overlap between the Parish Council insurance policy cover and that of the Village Hall Committee. **Action:** Clerk to look into and report back.

A cheque for the SALC affiliation fee for 2014/5 was signed for £50.97.

10. **Correspondence:** Request for support from Sevenoaks Parish Council for a proposal submitted to government under the Sustainable Communities Act, "That the government take the necessary action to allow a percentage of Business Rates to be paid direct to Parish and Town Councils for the benefit of local economic growth." Council considered this proposal and concluded that although government would doubtless take any such monies back in other ways, it agreed with the proposal in principle and agreed to lend its support. **Action:** Clerk to respond accordingly.

S.I.D.: The clerk read out an email received from Dave Grabham with proposed start dates for the next two installations of the speed indicator device: 14th July and 17th November. Dave Grabham also drew the attention of Council to the possibility of its taking over management of the device but it was unclear from his email exactly what would be involved. **Action:** Richard Ellis to obtain clarification from Dave Grabham.

11. **a.o.b. Churchyard maintenance:** Jeremy Collyer advised that this could no longer be carried out by Steve Crabb and an alternative person had been found. The cost to the parish for 2014/15 would be £750. Council were happy with this and an increased cost had been budgeted for.

Journeyman: Peter Costen advised that it is possible to hire a Journeyman to carry out jobs in the parish, through 'Streetscene'. The fee is £17 per hour.

Richard Reed advised that the drains need clearing from Welham (the bottom of Cary Edge Lane) right up to Lily Farm, on both sides. (The Welham culvert was cleared by residents last winter.) It was noted that the County Council is responsible for various work e.g. clearing gullies, so there is no need to pay for this particular job twice by hiring a journeyman.

Action: Clerk to notify County Council to request that the drains are cleared.

South Cottage: There was concern expressed that works are in progress for a small extension to the back of South Cottage (footings have gone in). Mike Beech advised that this was probably within permitted development. Richard Ellis said he would email Sam Fox to take a look. Mike Beech asked to be copied in.

12. **Open discussion**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.37pm.