

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF SHEPTON MONTAGUE  
PARISH HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL, SHEPTON MONTAGUE ON THURSDAY  
9<sup>th</sup> MAY 2019 AT 7.30pm**

**Present:** Paul Williams (Acting Chair), Margaret Hill (Clerk) and 8 members of the Parish.

1. **Apologies** for absence had been received from Richard Ellis and Anna Groskop, County Councillor.
2. **Minutes** of the last Annual Parish Meeting were approved as a correct record.
3. **Matters Arising:** None
4. **Parish Council Chairman's Report for the year 2018-2019**  
Richard Ellis was unable to attend the meeting so Paul Williams read out his Parish Council Chairman's report for 2018/19:

Planning: This has been an interesting year where there have been a couple of planning applications about which residents have held strong views. The applications are likely to bring change, with a range of unquantifiable outcomes to the village and people have understandably shown their concerns.

There is an expression in Sicily which effectively says : "if we are to carry on in the same way, we need to change". Some 20 or more years ago there was a major development in the centre of the village which at the time was strongly resisted and which caused anger and resentment. However this development has brought in new people, with new ideas; people who are making a real contribution to village life. The Emily estate or The Newt, too represents change. It has already had a dramatic effect on the lives of dozens of local people. The amateur cider maker, now operating a highly sophisticated process with 3 new assistants; dozens of local builders and contractors, wall builders , gardeners, local farmers, cheese makers and producers of prime beef have all benefitted financially and have the chance of developing their skills and businesses. Young people are now getting professional training in the restaurant world without having to leave the community and go elsewhere, there are an abundance of jobs that are giving local people of all ages opportunities as well as employment. This list could obviously go on. The money that goes into local pockets spills over into local pubs, and shops; Cary and Bruton are beginning to thrive again when not that long ago they seemed to be in terminal decline.

There have been genuine inconveniences, heavy lorries driving through the village disregarding the law and blindly following their Sat Navs. I believe these inconveniences of this type will only be temporary. There will be more traffic through the village and hopefully the pub will benefit from it. Who knows we might even get a village shop! What I am sure of is that in 30 years when many of the current residents will have moved elsewhere there will continue to be a thriving, growing and even more youthful community in Shepton Montague.

Finance: We have increased the precept slightly this year with a view to meeting the ever increasing demands put on local parishes. This is probably the last year we will receive free salt and grit for the winter roads. We have also undertaken to put monies aside for future

repair to finger posts once the current work is completed. We have even found a little to add to the Parish Clerks stipend.

Highways: Traffic in the village continues to be a problem with more cars breaking the speed limit than are actually keeping to it. The actual volume of traffic at the moment seems reasonably constant, the difficulty is finding a longterm solution that will slow it down and which the council are prepared to pay for.

Andrew Wiley and John Hill along with others are doing a superb job on repairing and replacing the existing finger posts. Their efforts have been helped by several very generous donations which have made it possible to pay for the work.

Doug and Rande Barrowman continue to improve the old telephone box but we have yet to find a suitable use for it. All suggestions welcomed.

Chair: I have thoroughly enjoyed my time on the Parish Council, but I feel it is time for a change. The new council look to be well balanced and more than capable of taking care of the village. I would like to thank everyone for their contributions. We are a rural community and the village and landscape that we all enjoy has largely been created by the farmers and the estate that continue to be the constant factors in its development. It is important that their views are supported as well as challenged by the PC. I would particularly like to thank Anna Groskop and Mike Beech for their help and advice which is so valuable to us.

Lastly I would like to put on record the huge debt of thanks we owe to Margaret Bowden who has worked tirelessly for the last (13?) years to keep us up to date with changes in procedure, changes in the law, and the never ending flow of council gobbledegook. She has always been a steady and reliable adviser, always there to help with good council, and clear understanding of our rights and responsibilities. The rambling conversations which pass for discussion are synthesised into something that resemble clear thought and reproduced for our approval within hours. Documents are always ready for signing, accounts balanced and approved. Letters to the council, the local police, the planning department and others have just the right blend of assertiveness, tact and clarity to see them acted upon. All of these activities take considerable time, patience and clear thinking which Margaret has given unselfishly and willingly.

Margaret should be enormously proud of the contribution she has made to the village, largely unseen and unrewarded.

Many thanks.  
The Chair

- 5. Presentation of Parish Council accounts (unaudited)** Copies of the accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 were distributed. £3,645.67 was carried over into the financial year 2019-20. The only items not originally budgeted for were the donations and expenditure relating to the restoration of village fingerposts and the cost of GDPR training for the clerk. The accounts were signed off as a correct record, matching the balance in the bank account.

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2019**

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>2018/19</b>
Bal B/F	£ 2,988.94	SALC	£ 50.47
Precept	£ 1,935.00	SALC GDPR Training	£ 25.00
Donation	£ 250.00	Village Hall	£ 100.00
Donation	£ 500.00	CAB	£ 20.00
		Clerk annual pay	
		Zurich Insurance	£ 257.60
			£ -
		Churchyard	£ 750.00
		Fingerposts	£ 330.20
			£ -
			£ -
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£ 5,673.94</u></b>	<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£ 1,533.27</u></b>

**Income minus Expenditure equals** **£ 4,140.67**

**Balance as per bank statement @ 31st March 2019** **£ 4,140.67**  
 Less unrepresented cheque - clerk's pay **£ 495.00**

**Balance as per cash book @ 31st March 2019** **£ 3,645.67**

**6. Open discussion**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.40 pm.

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_