

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SHEPTON MONTAGUE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD via ZOOM ON TUESDAY 18th August 2020 at 7.30pm**

Draft minutes for approval at the next meeting

Present: Paul Williams (Chair), Andrew Wiley, Oliver Dowding, Julia Hunter, Jay Bunyan (Clerk), Anna Groskop (County Councillor), Robin Bastable (District Councillor) and 13 members of the Parish

- 1. Apologies for absence:** were received from PCSO Tim Russell, Sarah Maude, Richard Reed
- 2. Declarations of Interest:** Oliver Dowding re. Items 4 & 5
- 3. Minutes of last meeting:** these were agreed to be a correct record.
- 4. Matters Arising that are not agenda items:**
 - Premises licence – Apple HQ. AW updated the meeting on his contact with Planning and is still waiting for a satisfactory answer. He believes that there are faults in the original planning response. As a last resort, the Planning Ombudsman could be approached. OD did not believe he had been intransigent – AW responded that it was Planning not OD. There were no further constructive comments.
 - Wessex Internet – OD reported that WI were still progressing the case and were looking at other routes and everything should be signed up by the end of the year. Sue Hester queried availability of government funding - RB confirmed that this was available. The WI provision is Stoney Stoke is excellent.
- 5. Tyre Dumping:** AW updated the meeting on his contact with the Environment Agency. OD confirmed that EA had been in contact with him today and had set a deadline of 3 months for him to take action. Whilst he understands that people are upset, only one person had actually approached him about this problem. Others had resorted to social and other media to complain. OD plans to sheet the tyres and then a permanent home will be found for them. Great crested newts and a pregnant adder had been found at the site. A lively and sometimes heated discussion followed. PW concluded that there is obviously a lot of feeling about this but the Parish Council had done all it can and closed the discussion.
- 6. Rail to Trail:** Sonia Kundu updated the meeting on the project. There had been an encouraging response to their survey and there was a possibility of extending the trail into Mendip DC area. They were still dependent on permission from landowners which, in the Shepton Montague area, had not so far been forthcoming. **Action** – further update at next meeting
- 7. Footpaths:** OD, in his capacity as Footpaths Officer, has cleared a lot of footpaths and noted that someone had replaced a couple of stiles. Not surprisingly, SCC are slow to carry out repairs. PW suggested that others could help and that OD keeps in touch with the appropriate people at SSC (still Eve Wynne?) **Action - OD**
- 8. Planning:**
 - Stoke Farm – PW reported that several redundant buildings were to be converted into 5 properties. As this was a permitted development the Parish Council had not been notified – he had received a letter as a neighbour on 3.8.20. **No further action required**
 - 20/02144/HOU – erection of single storey extension to rear of Penham House, East St, Shepton Montague. Whilst the PC have no objection as such it was noted that work had already started and the extension was

large and unattractive. **Action:** Clerk to notify Planning

9. Highways:

- Grove Cross junction – AW reported a lack of progress and nothing heard via Robin Bastable. Anna Groskop said it was an ongoing problem and would pursue with SDC Highways.
- Pitcombe junction – AW reported that the fingerpost was in a dangerous condition. He had requested a site visit with Highways but this had not yet taken place.

10. Fingerposts. There was nothing new to report though further sponsors would be welcome. As AW will be moving, PW is taking over responsibility for the project, assisted by John Sykes.

11. Accounts:

- JB reported that the required accounts had been sent to the external auditors
- It was agreed to pay the £30 fee to SALC for JB's finance course. The course handout will be circulated to councilors as it is also appropriate to them

12. Correspondence:

- JB reported that most of the recent correspondence had been Coronavirus related. Where appropriate this had been forwarded to councilors/website.
- PCSO Tim Russell had submitted his report, stating that there had been no reported crime in the village over the past 3 months.

13. AOB:

- **Unitary Authority** – Robin Bastable informed the meeting that from April 2021SSDC will no longer exist. The government wish to push forward plans for a unitary authority (similar to Wiltshire and Dorset) and it should be in place for elections in April/May 2022. RB will resend a recent explanatory article for posting on the village website.
- **Vote of thanks** – Anna Groskop proposed a formal vote of thanks to Andrew Wiley for his huge contribution to the village. Endorsed by all.
- **Steve Fereday** asked if OD should be asked to stand down as a councillor. Neither PW nor AW felt any criminal act had been committed and the PC had no power to dismiss an elected officer. PW declared the matter closed although Sue Hester was unwilling to accept this.

14. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 6th October was proposed and accepted – hopefully this meeting will take place in the Village Hall.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.21 pm. AW was thanked for setting up the meeting

Chairman _____ Date _____