

SHEET PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRPERSON: Ron Dark

CLERK: Jenny Hollington

Minutes of a Meeting of Sheet Parish Council held on Tuesday, 12th July 2016 at 7.30 p.m. at Sheet Village Hall

Present: Cllrs. Ron Dark (in the Chair) Will Glancy Robin Forrest
Gail Martin Vaughan Clarke Tony Clear
Alan Biddlecombe Brian Bird

In Attendance: Nicky Noble, District Councillor
Paul Bridgman, 6A Vision Homes
Jenny Hollington, Clerk

There were 13 members of the public in attendance throughout the meeting.

16/133 Apologies – No apologies had been received.

16/134 Minutes – The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 14th June 2016 were approved and signed.

16/135 Declarations of Interests – The Chairman reminded Councillors of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary interest on any item on the Agenda. Cllr. Clarke declared an interest in item 5(b) on the Agenda – the planning application for Stocklands – as his home adjoins the site.

16/136 Public Comment on items not covered on the Agenda

- A complaint and photographic evidence with regard to the amount of debris left by Network Rail contractors at Sheet Level Crossing was received. It was agreed that the Parish Council would write to Network Rail about this matter.
- The District Councillor confirmed that an independent agricultural report for Broadlands Meadow has now been received by the Case Officer at EHDC and will be made available via the South Downs National Park website.

16/137 Planning –

- (a) **Presentation – 3 detached 2-storey dwellings (following demolition of existing dwelling) – 39 Innans Lane, Sheet** – The Chairman introduced Mr. Bridgman from 6A Vision Homes and explained that although consultation for the proposal has now been received by the Parish Council, the presentation was for information only – the application would be formally considered at a separate meeting to enable the Parish Council more time to look at plans. Mr. Bridgman apologised for the fact that the current owner of the site had refused the Parish Council access, and thanked the Parish Council for the opportunity to present the proposals. Detailed photographs of the site and proposals were circulated to members of the Council for use in their considerations. Mr. Bridgman confirmed that 6A Vision Homes has worked with SDNPA and EHDC Officers in considering various options for the land – an initial plan for 6 semi-detached homes had been proposed but planners felt that 3 large individually designed houses would fit better in respect of density and settlement. The houses are designed in a traditional style to match surrounding properties and there is no overlooking between the 3 houses which are sunk well down within the site. Residents in neighbouring properties have been consulted. Access to the site is via the adopted highway and existing driveway - in response to a query regarding parking, Mr. Bridgman said that the possibility of incorporating additional visitor parking by widening the drive could be explored, subject to Hampshire Highways comments. Following questions Mr. Bridgman was thanked for coming to the meeting and providing detailed information.

- (b) **To discuss current applications: - SDNP/16/02854/FUL – Five 2-storey detached dwellings with garages, access road and landscaping after demolition of existing dwelling and former riding school buildings – Stocklands (formerly known as Remount, Pulens Lane, GU31 4DB.** Cllr. Clarke left the room for this item. Detailed plans for the site had been presented at the March Parish Council meeting. The proposal is for 5 modern, low profile dwellings in a well screened site, via the existing access off Pulens Lane.

Members of the public raised concerns in regard to the following – the fact that development of the site has previously been overruled by the Government Inspector at public enquiry, the proximity of the development and potential overshadowing of Mill Cottage, and concerns over access to the site. In discussing these issues, the Chairman reminded those present that the site had been accepted by the South Downs National Park as suitable for development as part of the SHLAA (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment) exercise and that the applicant has worked with SDNPA officers in producing the plans. Hampshire Highways have not objected to the proposed access.

It was agreed that whilst the Parish Council had no objection to the construction of the 5 houses on this site, they did have concerns with regard to the design, appearance and impact of the brick walls abutting the properties (obviously designed to give residents privacy) which detracted from the open environment and views of the River.

16/138 Finance

- (a) Internal Audit – The accounts 2015-16 have been signed off and sent to BDO, External Auditor. A report on matters arising from the Internal Audit had been circulated to Councillors, and the Chairman had discussed responses with Cllr. Biddlecombe and the Clerk. The following actions were agreed:

- Minute Authorisation – every page of the Minutes should be signed (and the last page signed and dated) – it was agreed that all pages, not just the last, will be signed in future.
- Contract approval – The Council has reviewed contracts in confidential session when using the “Contractor A, B, C” method may be better for transparency – it was agreed that anonymised contracts will be reviewed in open session in future.
- Internal Auditor – The Council did not confirm its appointment of internal auditor during the year – the Council should confirm who it plans to use for the coming year. It was agreed that once it is clear whether the usual Internal Auditor is well enough to be considered for the coming year, a decision will be made and minuted.
- Reserves – The reserves of the Council are higher than best practice of 3-6 months revenue – the Council should clearly identify, quantify and assess any earmarked projects – Reserves are earmarked to cover the level of maintenance potentially required by the large asset base.
- Risk Assessment – The assessment in use by the Council does not appear to cover all the criteria in the guidance – the document should be updated from the BDO extranet pro forma and approved within 2016/17. It was agreed that the annual review of the risk assessment will revisit the guidance to ensure all criteria is covered.
- Bank Reconciliation – It is good practice to record the total bank balance held by the Council at each meeting. This was noted and will be included in future.
- Bank Statement – It is good practice for the Council to initial the bank reconciliation back to the actual bank statement regularly – this should be done by each member of the Council in turn. It was agreed that this will be carried out in future by finance committee members.
- Electronic Banking – The controls of the Council are such that electronic banking would add to efficiency and effectiveness – the Clerk should have read access to the bank account and payments set up over the coming months. This was noted – it was agreed to seek read access straight away, and to consider whether electronic payments would give as much security as current system.
- Income receipts – All invoice payees from the Village Hall and Allotments should be encouraged to pay by electronic means – bank details should be added to all invoices from

now on. It was agreed to amend the Village Hall invoices once read access is set up. Consideration will be given to changing allotment invoices if the Council is satisfied sufficient information is given to identify source.

- VAT Return – the Council reclaims VAT annually rather than during the year – the amount in 2015-16 was substantial and it would aid cash flow to claim 3 or 4 times a year – It was agreed to retain the annual return to minimise the admin load on the Clerk.
 - Wages – It is good practice to minute on an annual basis the rates of pay, hours and terms of all employees as part of the budget setting process – this was noted for inclusion in future budgets.
 - Members’ interests – The Council website does not include the register of members’ interests – it was agreed that this should be actioned immediately.
- (b) Correspondence from the Pension Regulator – The Chairman outlined regulations with regard to pension schemes for employees earning over £10,000 per year. It was noted that this was not relevant to the Clerk, although if requested, the Council would be obliged to set up a scheme.
- (c) Grant Request from Victim Support – Correspondence received from Victim Support outlining the service they offer and requesting financial support was discussed. However, it was felt that the service was not specific to Sheet and agreed that the request should be declined.
- (d) Renewal of Gas Contract for Sheet Village Hall – a price comparison had been circulated to Councillors and was discussed. It was agreed that as there is no standing charge with CNG which makes them the cheapest option, the contract with them should be renewed for a further 2-year period.
- (e) Bank Reconciliation - The bank reconciliation for June had been circulated prior to the meeting and was approved and signed. The cash book balance is £73265.21 following refund of VAT from HMRC.
- (f) To approve cheques – the following cheques were approved for July payment:

Chq No.	Amount	Payee	Service
300558	£43.06	E-on	V. Hall - electricity
300559	£27.23	Contract Natural Gas	V. Hall - gas
300560	£320.00	Do The Numbers	Internal Audit
300561	£1,518.00	A.W. Clear	50% total cost of grass cutting + V. Hall front area
300562	£72.00	Quarterly inspection	Elite Playground inspection
300563	£410.00	N. Rook-Blackstone	Allotment - spraying/clearing/grass cutting
300564	£624.00	Sheet Music Ltd	Caretaking/cleaning - v. hall
300565	£50.48	HMRC	Clerk - Tax/NI
300566	£707.70	J. Hollington	Clerk - July (+ exp post/ink)
Total :	£3,772.47		

- (g) August payments – As there is no Parish Council meeting in August, cheques payable in the normal course of business will be approved by the Finance Committee/bank signatories. The Clerk will prepare a list of cheques and circulate to all Councillors as normal - the cheques will then be formally approved at the September Meeting.

16/139 Flooding – Dr. Dart at Southern Water has not contacted Mr. Shore as promised and has not responded to the Clerk. Mr. Shore will ensure that any further problems are reported via the Environment Agency. It was agreed that this item should be taken off the Agenda until there is any further up-date.

16/140 Community Resilience – A Working Party consisting of Cllrs. Martin, Glancy, Dark, Clear and the Clerk met to discuss a Community Resilience Plan for Sheet which will identify potential risks and how to prepare for them. An initial draft is in production - a list of useful local emergency contacts is required and will be compiled over the summer. The Working Party will meet again in September.

A grant application to SSE for a flood pod to store artificial sand bags in case of flooding of the River Rother is in the process of completion and will be submitted once all relevant information is received.

16/141 Roads and Traffic

- (a) Village Signage – Cllr. Martin confirmed that the new signs have been ordered.
- (b) Road signage at entrance to Village Street – Cllr. Martin will continue to chase the remaining work.

16/142 Developer's Contributions for Sunnymede – The East Hants Solicitor dealing with this issue has been off sick and it has therefore been in limbo. The Clerk confirmed that it has now been passed to the Litigation Department for consideration.

16/143 Sheet Allotments – The un-tended plots have been tidied and sprayed and the grass paths have been cut – the site is now looking much improved. It was agreed that hedges along the Farnham Road will be cut back again in the autumn.

16/144 The Lengthsman Scheme – It was agreed that the Lengthsman and his team had done a very good job clearing the foliage and debris from the wall at the corner of School Lane. In addition, the hedge opposite the School had been cut back and the footpath cleared in Town Lane. It was noted that the work had taken 28 hours and £600 of the £1000 allocated to Sheet has therefore been used for this work.

Other work for the Lengthsman was discussed as follows –

- clearance of the untidy boundary and ditch alongside Sheet Common (A3/A272) – any difference in cost to be met by Sheet P.C.;
- sweeping/clearing the area around the bus shelter;
- clearing the entrance path to Sheet Recreation Ground
- The triangle on the corner of Town Lane/Farnham Road is very overgrown.

It was agreed that these proposals would be discussed further at the September meeting.

In the meantime, Cllr. Clear was asked to liaise with Nick Rook-Blackstone (the Lengthsman) with regard to the possibility of him spraying the Japanese Knotweed – for which he holds the appropriate licence – and perhaps sharing the cost of Azulox with other parishes in the cluster/SDNPA.

16/145 Sheet Recreation Ground – It was agreed that the broken lights outside the Scout Hut should be repaired with something more robust. The Clerk was asked to obtain quotes.

16/146 Sheet Common –

- BMX Boundary – Quotes for new posts have not yet been received and will be chased by Cllr. Forrest;
- New Gate – Cllr. Forrest will obtain quotes for a new gate in time for the September Meeting;
- Signage – Cllr. Biddlecombe will liaise with Cllr. Clear in respect of installation.

16/147 Invasive Plants – South Downs National Park Volunteers have cleared the area alongside the Ashford Steam of Himalayan Balsam. Cllr. Biddlecombe will continue to chase HCC with regard to the Japanese Knotweed on the wall by the sluice gates at Old Mill Lane. Japanese Knotweed has also now been spotted at Mill Lane and School Lane

16/148 Sheet Village Hall

- (a) Installation of AED Defibrillator – The grant application to the British Heart Foundation has gone forward for final approval.
- (b) Replacement Roof Tiles – This work has not yet been started. The Clerk will chase DNE Services.
- (c) Repair of the back wall – Cllrs. Glancy and Bird have liaised with various builders and will chase quotes to be discussed in September.

16/149 County Councillor Report – The County Councillor’s report for July is appended to the Minutes.

16/150 Clerk’s Annual Leave – the Clerk’s request for annual leave from 4th – 9th September was approved.

16/151 Date of next Meeting – Because of statutory consultation timescales, a Meeting of Sheet Parish Council will be held to discuss the planning application for 39 Inmans Lane on Wednesday, 20th July at 7.30 p.m.

The next scheduled meeting of the Parish Council is Tuesday, 13th September 2016 at 7.30 p.m. at Sheet Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

Signed (Ron Dark, Chairman)