

DRAFT

SHEET PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRPERSON: Ron Dark

CLERK: Jenny Hollington

Minutes of a Meeting of Sheet Parish Council on 10th March 2022
at Sheet Village Hall at 7.00 p.m.

Present. Cllrs. Ron Dark (in the Chair) Alan Biddlecombe Brian Bird
Tony Clear Robin Forrest Gail Martin
Chris Wilton

In Attendance: County Councillor, Russell Oppenheimer
District Councillor, Nick Drew
Clerk, Jenny Hollington

There was 1 member of the public present at the meeting.

The Chairman announced the very sad news that long-standing Parish Councillor, Will Glancy, had died at the weekend. He will be very much missed by all at Sheet Parish Council.

22/36 Apologies – None received.

22/37 Minutes – The Minutes of the Meeting held on 10th February 2022 were approved as a correct record of the meeting and signed accordingly.

22/38 Declarations of Interests – Councillors were reminded of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary interest on any item on the agenda – none declared.

22/39 Public Comment – The following queries have been recently:

- Several people have queried a rumour that access to Sheet Common is to be closed – the source of the rumour is unknown, but it was confirmed that Sheet P.C. has no intention of closing any access to the Common.
- E-mail correspondence has been received from a resident concerned about the loss of the hedgerow in the Millennium Field car park and the impact this will have on wildlife – Cllr. Clear confirmed that the brambles were cut back hard because they had been encroaching the car park, but they will soon grow back.
- A Village Street resident had asked the Parish Council to note damage caused to his property by the refuse lorry – the Chairman has responded to explain that it is hoped the up-coming CFI project to narrow the entrance to Village Street at the Farnham Road, will cut down the number of large vehicles in the street.

22/40 The Queen's Platinum Jubilee – Following discussion at the February meeting, Sheet Parish Councillors were pleased to note from the flyer circulated with the Sheet News that residents are now able to book a table and bring their own lunch to the Street Party to enable them to keep costs down. This being the case, Sheet P.C. is willing to reimburse the cost of non-food and drink related items to SCVT – e.g. tables, chairs, table cloths, bunting, insurance and other incidentals. It was also agreed that the Village Hall could be used for lunch preparation on Sunday, 5th June.

22/41 Planning – Land to the rear of Shear Hill is reportedly no longer protected under the SDNPA Local Plan and is subject to potential development. It was suggested that one way to protect this land would be to carry out a Neighbourhood Plan which is something that has been discussed with residents in the past but had not won support. Sheet P.C. will keep an open mind on this issue and await any planning application.

22/42 Finance

- (a) Zurich – Correspondence about under insurance of assets was noted – it was agreed the Clerk should follow up on this and ask a surveyor for up-dated re-build values for the Village Hall and the Old Billiard Room.
- (b) Bank Reconciliation - The February bank reconciliation and copy bank statement had been circulated and this was approved and signed
- (c) Cheques - Cheques for March payment were approved as follows:

Chq No.	Amount	Payee	Service
301305	£375.00	Jessica Kiddle	Sheet Sign restoration
301306	£347.80	Castle Water	Allotments
301307	£76.32	Elite Playground Inspections	BMX track and Recreation Ground
301308	£69.40	Tampen & Tampen	Dishwasher supplies - V. Hall
301309	£25.00	The Owen Kenny Partnership	ref Mike Rapley deceased (allotment refund)
301310	£50.42	Ron Dark	Refund of costs for materials - Sign/BMX
301311	£151.20	PTC	Bin contract - Jan
301312	£30.00	R. Forrest	Refund - thank you gift P. Caines - sign
301313	£200.00	Ginkgo Landscaping	Storm damage - Allotments (tree & fence)
301314	£520.00	Sheet Music	Caretaking and cleaning - V Hall
301316	£82.58	HMRC	Tax - Clerk
301317	£734.25	Jenny Hollington	Clerk
301318	£220.00	James Rapley	New gate post - Millennium Field
Total	£2,881.97		

22/43 Audit 21-22 – The following documents had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting for review:

- (a) Financial Regulations – The Clerk confirmed there have been no changes to the Financial Regulations during the year and the document was approved.
- (b) Standing Orders – Item 10(b) – Financial Matters – “E.U. procurement rules” will be amended to read “appropriate procurement rules”. With this small amendment, the Standing Orders were approved.
- (c) Risk Register 21-22 – No additional risks had been identified during the year. The Risk Register was therefore approved unchanged.
- (d) Statement of Internal Control 21-22 – There have been no changes to internal controls during the year and the Statement of Internal Control 21-22 was approved.
- (e) Asset Register – Once the cost of the new village gates has been ascertained, the Asset Register will be up-dated, and the insurance company informed (the actual cost of the gates is not itemised within the total cost for the whole project to narrow Village Street).

22/44 Mill Lane

- (a) Sewage – S. Water’s investigations have ascertained that there is a blockage in St. Mary’s Field due to a build-up of silt - further investigations are required – this will be followed up via the residents involved and more feedback provided at the April meeting.
- (b) Riverbank – A letter has been sent to the owner of the small piece of riverbank which has recently been hedged in, but no response received. In the meantime, initial enquiries have been made of the Environment Agency to find out what (if any) permissions are required to enable access steps to the water.

22/45 Grass Cutting Contract – The contract is currently being advertised and the Clerk is aware of various interested parties. A working party meeting will be arranged after the closing date for applications, to discuss and approve a new contractor to ensure that this is in place for the beginning of April.

22/46 Roads and Traffic

- (a) Community Funded Initiative to narrow the Village Street/Farnham Road junction - Alastair MacAdam continues to work on the project in conjunction with Ian Janes and hopes to have the plans available for the April Parish Council meeting. As well as the narrowing of the Village Street/Farnham Road junction, they will focus on resolution of the current parking/traffic flow issues.
- (b) Bridge Cottage – There has been no response from the local engineer.
- (c) Village Street/London Road Hedge line – Hampshire County Council has confirmed that the trees were removed for safety reasons, and they don't intend removing the stumps or clearing the area further. The area will be left as it is for now to allow the hedge line to revert for wildlife.

22/47 EHDC Welcome Back Grant –

- Restoration of the Village Sign – The Village sign has been repainted and looks very smart - it is back in position thanks to help from Peter Caines and his tractor.
- Verge Planting – The new hedging and turf at the new junction of School Lane/Farnham Road will be completed in the next couple of days to enable the funding to be claimed.

22/48 County Councillor's Report - Cllr. Oppenheimer's monthly report had been circulated prior to the meeting and the following items were noted:

- HCC has expressed solidarity with the people of Ukraine and is ready to support the UK Government with the unfolding humanitarian crisis.
- Storms Eunice and Franklin in February had been challenging for HCC who received over 2000 incident reports and over 1000 trees down. The clear up operation is ongoing and the bill for the response will run to seven figures.
- HCC's precept for the financial year beginning 1st April will increase by a total of 2.99% of which 1% will go specifically towards adult social care. This equates to an increase of just over £40 a year for a band D property but will generate an extra £21m towards delivering essential County Council services.

Cllr. Oppenheimer offered to chase the local engineer about the unresolved roads issues (flooding at Bridge Cottage and the condition of Mill Lane). He confirmed he has seen initial drawings for traffic calming in Pulens Lane which include pinch points as well as a mini roundabout at the Durford Road crossroads – funding is in place and there will be public consultation on proposals in the summer.

Cllr. Oppenheimer's full report is appended to these Minutes and can be found on the Parish Council website – www.sheetparishcouncil.gov.uk

22/49 District Councillor's Report – Cllr. Drew reported on the following items:

- February Storms – Cllr. Drew thanked all those who had helped during the storms, especially local farmers who were out in all weathers and are often unsung heroes.
- 31 Inmans Lane – Planning issues continue and a new planning application has been requested. The situation has been very stressful for the neighbours.
- Waterstones – Cllr. Drew made it clear that EHDC has not acted in a negative manner towards Waterstones Bookshop – EHDC continue to liaise with the company about their lease.
- Ukraine – EHDC are waiting for Government and County guidance on what will be required to help those seeking refuge in East Hampshire.
- Grants – Cllr. Drew confirmed that he has approved a grant towards the Sheet Street Party to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. He will have new grants available from the beginning of April.
- Refuse issues – Cllr. Drew offered to chase up recent incidents of bins being left in the middle of the road. The temporary halt on green waste collection will be re-imbursed to residents affected.

22/50 Sheet Assets

Sheet Common – Concerns that the BMX track User Group are quarrying soil from outside the track to enlarge jumps which are now very close to the boundary posts were noted. However, the metal post which had been recently uncovered has been very speedily removed. Cllr. Biddlecombe has written to the Group outlining concerns and a response is awaited - a close eye will be kept on the situation. Cllr. Biddlecombe said he is also keen to see the plastic sandbags replaced with hessian to improve biodiversity.

Millennium Field – The gate post has been repaired and the hedge line cleared.

Sheet Village Hall – A letter has been received from the W.I. explaining their difficult decision to move to Herne Farm after 70 years at Sheet. The Chairman has responded to express Sheet Parish Council's regret at losing them - the Clerk will liaise with the Chair to arrange for their cupboard to be cleared.

Sheet Recreation Ground – The entrance gate post is unstable – Cllr. Forrest will investigate whether a new post is required.

The Old Billiard Room – Cllrs. Forrest and Dark have removed the worst of the Ivy from the walls and dug out the air vents. The down pipes will need attention but apart from that it appears that the building is in pretty good condition. Cllr. Biddlecombe offered to investigate a possible change of use via EHDC and report back at the April meeting.

22/51 Annual Parish Assembly – It was agreed to invite the Police & Crime Commissioner, Donna Jones, to speak on the issues of speeding and motorbike noise locally. The APA will be held on either 5th or 12th May, depending on her availability.

22/52 Forthcoming Meetings – The dates and time of the following meetings were noted:

- SDNPA Parish Workshop – 16th March via Zoom
- HCC Parish and Town Council event – 17th March 2022
- EHAP&TC – 17th March via Teams

22/53 Date of Next Sheet Parish Council Meeting – **Thursday, 14th April 2022 at 7.00 p.m.**

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT
TO
ALL PARISH COUNCILS
IN PETERSFIELD HANGERS**

2 MARCH 2022

1. Ukraine: HCC Leader's Statement

Hampshire County Council has expressed solidarity with the people of Ukraine and has stated its preparedness to support the UK Government, if called on, to help with the unfolding humanitarian crisis.

Leader of Hampshire County Council, Councillor Keith Mans said: "As the world watches events in Ukraine, across Hampshire we all send our thoughts and prayers to the Ukrainian people, including those who are living in Hampshire. None of us would have expected to have seen such hostilities in Europe in these modern times, and we condemn the attacks on Ukraine's innocent citizens.

"Hampshire County Council, in common with the rest of the country, is watching the concerning situation in Ukraine and stands in solidarity with the Ukrainian people and communities affected by this conflict. Should Government seek our support, we will assist as needed - building on our experience of supporting refugees and evacuees from previous conflicts."

I am sure all Councillors will share this sentiment from the Leader. Incidentally Keith Mans will be standing down in May 2022 and this has been reported in local newspapers. HCC will therefore be under new leadership in May following an election process within the Conservative Group.

2. Storms put Hampshire Highways to the test

The consecutive Storms Eunice and Franklin in February were extremely challenging for everyone at Hampshire Highways. We had over 2,000 incident reports and over 1,000 trees down. The clean-up operation is ongoing and may take another week or two. The bill for the response will run to seven figures. When the ground is wet, it is always more likely that trees will come down in storms. Councillors will be aware that the ground is still unusually saturated and so

we are currently vulnerable in the event of further high winds. I would advise people to be very cautious about driving during storms when the ground is so wet.

Sadly there was a fatality in Alton which shows how dangerous these storms are. The bravery and commitment of our Highways teams cannot be overstated. We all rely on our highways to live our lives and these frontline workers are doing a great job this winter, showing considerable resilience. We owe them our profound thanks.

3. 2022/23 Budget is approved by Council

Hampshire County Council's council tax precept for the financial year beginning 1 April 2022 will increase by a total of 2.99%, of which 1% will go specifically towards adults' social care. This equates to an annual charge of £1,390.86 for a Band D property – an increase of just over £40 per year. This recommended increase will generate an extra £21m towards delivering essential County Council services in the next financial year, especially in the care of the vulnerable.

Hampshire still has one of the lowest Council Tax rates in the UK, alongside Somerset. This year's increase has to be seen in that context. Price inflation and demand growth in social care (both adults and children) have put pressure on budgets and mean that a Council Tax rise is the most responsible decision.

Alongside revenue budget plans, the County Council has approved a capital programme worth £556.2m over the next three years to boost jobs, build schools and cycle paths, and improve the quality of the environment. This provision for Hampshire's infrastructure brings the County Council's four-year total investment in the fabric of Hampshire, to £832.6m. Our prudent financial management and strong reserves has made this investment possible. Very few County Councils in the UK have the capacity to embark on such a substantial capital programme.

Nevertheless, the financial challenge facing Hampshire County Council over the coming years looks to be considerable. At HCC we are lobbying the Government to use its review of Local Government Finance to increase funding and to provide a multi-year settlement so that we can plan services effectively.

RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER
County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers