

DRAFT

SHEET PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRPERSON: Ron Dark

CLERK: Jenny Hollington

**Minutes of a Meeting of Sheet Parish Council on 8th September 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 Dave McKinney
Gail Martin

In Attendance: County Councillor, Russell Oppenheimer (towards the end of the meeting)
Clerk, Jenny Hollington

There were 6 members of the public present at the meeting.

The Chairman noted the very sad news of the death of the Queen which had been announced shortly before the meeting was due to start – Sheet Parish Council’s condolences and thoughts are with members of the Royal Family at this very sad time.

The Chairman also noted that Cllr. Wilton has been taken ill and is in hospital – he is wished a speedy recovery.

22/125 Apologies – Apologies had been received from Cllr. Chris Wilton and District Councillor, Nick Drew

22/126 Minutes – The Minutes of Parish Council meetings held on 14th and 21st July were approved and signed.

22/127 Matters Arising from the Minutes:

- Leaking shed roof - Cllr. Bird has investigated the problem and hopes to be able to fix it over the next weekend.
- Bins at the Queen’s Head – The landlord is aware of the concern and will ensure that bins are only put out on the day of collection.

22/128 Declarations of Interests – Councillors were reminded of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary interest on any item on the agenda – none declared.

22/129 Public Comment –

- A framed photograph of the Village Jubilee Street Party has been donated to the Parish Council by local resident, Eddie Hunt - it will be hung at the Village Hall for all to enjoy.

22/130 Planning

- (a) Pre-Application by Kebell Homes – Proposals for a development of 8 family homes on land behind Shear Hill had been circulated prior to the meeting and were discussed. The traffic report by local resident Gethin Morgan-Owen had also been circulated and this draws attention to the impact the development would have on the small roads around the site, especially when considered alongside the impact of traffic and car parking generated by the local school. The build-up of housing from this and other developments already in the pipeline will have a very negative impact on the local infrastructure especially Pulens Lane which is already very dangerous to walk or cycle along due to the speed and volume of traffic. It was agreed that Sheet Parish Council would write to Kebell Homes to express these views.

(b) Planning – To discuss current applications:

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--|---|---|
| SDNP/22/0 3391/CND | Variation of condition 11 of SDNP/21/01833/FUL – to allow substitution of approved plans | Remount, Pulens Lane, GU31 4DB | No objection |
| SDNP/22/0 3733/LDE | Lawful Development Certificate for Existing Use – Use of Summer House as independent unit of accommodation (C3 Dwellinghouse) | The Summer House, 23B Pulens Lane, GU31 4BZ | Strong objection as per previous response to EHDC |

22/131 Finance –

- (a) **Audit 21-22** – The external audit of the accounts for the financial year 21-22 has now been completed and “no matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met”. The notice of completion of the audit will be advertised via the website and noticeboards.
- (b) **Insurance** – The renewal of the insurance policy with Zurich was noted – Sheet Parish Council are part way through a 5-year long term contract.
- (c) **Grant Application** – The application by the Sheet & Tilmore Allotment Association for £50 to be used to buy a gift voucher for the best kept allotment at Sheet was fully supported.
- (d) **Quarterly Figures (April – June)** – The following points were noted:
- **Village Hall.** Income at £1,800 is half of budgeted level as it is taking time to recover the level of bookings lost during Covid. The provision for repair and repainting of the exterior woodwork had been £10,000 but the actual cost was £4,305 because the condition of the timber was better than anticipated, and most could be repaired rather than replaced.
 - **Village Green** - The unbudgeted spend of £584 relates to maintenance on the posts round the green and not tree maintenance . This misclassification will be corrected.
 - **Allotments** - No transactions of note have yet taken place. Most of the income comes in during October when allotment tenancies are renewed, and expenditure is erratic over the year.
 - **Capital Expenditure** - No capital expenditure has yet taken place and the provision for adult gym equipment of £10,000 will now not be required following abandonment of the scheme.
- (e) **Bank Reconciliations** – The bank reconciliations for July and August were approved and signed.
- (f) **Cheque Payments for August** – Regular cheque payments had been approved by cheque signatories during the summer break as follows:

| Chq No. | Amount | Payee | Service |
|--------------|------------------|-------------------|--|
| 301361 | £40.46 | Castle Water | V. Hall |
| 301362 | £840.00 | Michael Smith Ltd | Grass Cutting contract + Allotment grass |
| 301363 | £65.90 | Robin Forrest | Refund - Millennium Field Padlock + keys |
| 301364 | £520.00 | Sheet Music | Caretaking and cleaning the V. Hall |
| 301365 | £90.60 | HMRC | Tax - Clerk |
| 301366 | £726.23 | Jenny Hollington | Clerk - August |
| Total | £2,283.19 | | |

(g) **Cheque Payments for September** – These were approved as follows:

| Chq No. | Amount | Payee | Service |
|----------------|------------------|------------------------------|--|
| 301367 | £660.00 | Michael Smith Ltd | Grass Cutting contract |
| 301368 | £1,186.71 | Zurich Municipal | Annual insurance premium (5 year contract) |
| 301369 | £40.00 | The Information Commissioner | Data registration |
| 301370 | £720.00 | E.R. Amesbury Ltd | Grass Cutting the Millennium Field |
| 301371 | £76.32 | Elite Playground Inspections | Quarterly play inspections (Rec + BMX) |
| 301372 | £114.91 | Castle Water | Allotment water rates |
| 301373 | £360.00 | PKF Littlejohn | External Audit 21-22 |
| 301374 | £90.60 | HMRC | Tax (Clerk) |
| 301375 | £733.22 | Jenny Hollington | Clerk |
| 301376 | £520.00 | Sheet Music | Caretaking & Cleaning - V Hall |
| 301377 | £50.00 | STAA | Grant application |
| Total | £4,551.76 | | |

22/132 Church Field – A proposal received from Peter Cleveland at Henry Adams who is acting for the landowner had been circulated prior to the meeting. In view of the parking issues around the village, they had suggested two options, either of which could be progressed by way of a pre application submission by the Parish Council:

- A proposal for car parking and small number of houses to facilitate and fund delivery of the parking spaces
- A standalone scheme for just the parking element

The proposals were noted but whilst Councillors were in favour of exploring options for obtaining access to car parking on some of the site for the use of the village, they felt unable to consider the first option, as this would involve the Council in a planning application for both parking and an element of housing. Apart from the cost, which is considerable, this would mean the Council would effectively be intimately linked to an unspecified housing scheme which would ultimately profit a private developer. This is contrary to our role as an independent consultee on planning issues.

In respect of the standalone scheme for parking alone, it was felt that such large expenditure could not be considered on land not owned by the Council.

Councillors were reminded that when proposals for the land were previously discussed, back in 2015, Sheet Parish Council's view was that if a limited development took place of one dwelling of exceptional quality and merit, then a firmly linked proposal for parking on land to be owned by the village, would clearly rank as a planning gain, and would influence the view of such a development. All agreed that this remains the view of Sheet Parish Council. A response reflecting this view will be sent to Peter Cleveland.

22/133 Mill Lane –

Sewage – S.E. Water has now carried out an extensive survey of the drains in Church Field - a detailed report is awaited.

Riverbank – It was agreed to drop the proposal to provide a structure to enable access to the River Rother on the piece of land owned by the Parish Council. Unfortunately, an exemption from the considerable formalities involved in building riverine access would only be approved by the Environment Agency if there are no structures within 50 m of the access, and this is not the case.

22/134 Roads and Traffic

Community Funded Initiatives – Up-dated plans and costings are expected in the next couple of weeks from Alistair MacAdam at Hampshire Highways

Request for Road Re-surfacing – Love Lane – The patchwork condition of the Lane was noted and will be brought to the attention of Hampshire Highways. The Clerk was asked to respond to the resident who had raised this issue asking them to note any specific issues via the Hampshire website.

22/135 County Councillor’s Report - Cllr. Oppenheimer’s monthly report had been circulated prior to the meeting. He attended towards the end of the meeting and highlighted the following items:

- The Death of a Monarch – HCC has a plan for this event which will now need to be activated – Cllr. Oppenheimer awaits advice.
- Solar Panel Scheme – Cllr. Oppenheimer said he was particularly pleased to report that SDNPA have supported a grant of £80,000 from S106 funding towards the installation of solar panels and battery storage in the affordable housing managed by PHA at Tanners Reach in Sheet.
- Broadband – There is mixed news – 82% of East Hampshire homes are expected to receive full fibre, including most of Petersfield but there are still hard to reach properties which are out of scope of any planned infrastructure process.
- A32 Closure – Progress has been slower than expected which means that the A32 will be opening again in mid-September but will be closed again next year to enable the work to be completed.
- Hitting the Cold Spots – A free advice line is open from 9.00-5.00 Monday to Friday – 0800 804 860. Advisors will talk through the best possible solution for each caller.
- Solar Together – HCC runs a group purchasing scheme which has just opened for a second round. Residents can sign up until 27th September.
- Dementia Support Service – Cllr. Oppenheimer shared details of a new charity – Dementia Support Hampshire & IOW. Website – www.mydementiasupport.org and Helpline – 0344 324 6589. The charity offers support from the first signs of memory loss to end of life.

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

22/136 District Councillors Report – Cllr. Drew was unable to be present and no report had been received.

22/137 Sheet Assets

Sheet Common –

- **BMX Track** - Now that Cllr. Clear is fit and well again, the meeting with the BMX User Group to up-date the risk register and discuss the condition of the track will be organised by Cllr. Biddlecombe. Cllrs. Forrest and Dark will also attend.
- **Maintenance** - The Hampshire Monday Group volunteers have cut back the bracken to encourage more flora within the canopy and are booked to return on 12th December. Cllr. Clear confirmed that the grass is due to be cut towards the end of the month.

Millennium Field –

- **Long Grass** – Cllr. Clear reported that local farmers are reluctant to cut and use the long grass for hay – their machines are getting bigger and the access to the land is not easy. In addition, the hay is not good quality being full of dog faeces. It is not ideal for long cut grass to lie on the surface of the field. This year, the problem has been resolved via George Amesbury who has done an excellent job in cutting the grass finely. Although it was time consuming (as is reflected in the cost of £720), it was felt extremely worthwhile.
- **Community Orchard** – It was noted that during the very hot summer one of the trees has died and several are distressed. It was agreed to replace the dead tree and continue to monitor the other trees to see how they do.

- **Proposal for bird and bat boxes to be installed** – Following discussion, it was agreed that the ideal place for bird boxes would be at the allotments. It was agreed that the Parish Council could purchase a number of bird boxes and offer them to tenants at the allotments for them to install on the side of their sheds. It was felt that the Millennium Field would be too light for bats.
- **Proposal for a sunflower border** – Following discussion it was felt that the Millennium Field is more appropriate for wildflowers and suggested that, again, the allotments might be a better place for a sunflower strip – perhaps around the boundary (although if weather is dry, watering would be an issue). It was noted that many plot holders already grow sunflowers and suggested that perhaps a prize could be offered for the best display of sunflowers? The ideas will be discussed with the Allotment Association representative.
- **Hedge** – A resident had expressed concerns about the damage to the boundary “hedge”. Cllr. Clear confirmed that the boundary had become hugely overgrown by bramble and nettles which had been encroaching onto the car park – however, there has never been a hedge (it used to be stock fencing). It was agreed that next year, only 50% of the overgrowth would be cut back, to retain some greenery for wildlife.

Sheet Recreation Ground – Despite regular watering and mulching, a couple of the newly planted trees have died over the summer - they will be replaced by Cllrs. Bird and Clear.

Sheet Allotments –

- **Allotment Association Barbeque** – Because of the hot dry weather, the Association had felt it appropriate to cancel the event this year.
- **Annual Rent** – It was agreed that rent should remain at the same level (£5 per rod) for the financial year 23-24 (12 months’ notice of any increment is required).

Old Mill Lane – It was noted that the wooden posts around the green need to be renovated - Cllr. Biddlecombe will seek a quote from Matthew Weaver (who renovated the posts around the Village Green).

Village Green – Cllr. Bird continues to liaise with the family about a bench to be installed in memory of Will Glancy. Details of design and installation will be circulated via e-mail for approval at the October P.C. meeting.

Sheet Village Hall –

- **Broadband** – No feedback received – to be discussed further at the October meeting.
- **Stage Repair** – It appears that the repair has been carried out.
- **Fire Risk Assessment** – It was agreed to ask ALE Fire Services to carry out the review at a cost of £150.00.

The Old Billiard Room – The Council has been reviewing possible alternative uses for the Old Billiard Room. The property currently generates a minimum income but if sold, the proceeds can only be used for capital projects. Further to this, Cllr. McKinney had circulated a detailed report on his investigation into the possible refurbishment of the Old Billiard Room (Appendix B) and highlighted the following:

A local architect has visited the building and produced 2 options for a single dwelling for consideration – Option A utilising maximum use of the ground floor and Option B providing a mezzanine floor above the kitchen area at the rear of the property.

A local estate agent has valued the property in its current state at £200,000. If the property were refurbished to a high standard, it was thought it would be valued at around £350,000. Open market rental for option A would be £950 per calendar month.

Cllr. McKinney had also investigated the option for offering the unit as affordable housing via a grant from SDNPA. In order to qualify for the grant, the property would need to remain as affordable in perpetuity and the Parish Council would need to become a registered provider unless they wished to use a Community

Land Trust or similar organisation to manage the property. The maximum grant available would be £30,000.

A local builder had provided a rough estimate of refurbishment as £175,000 + VAT (although a second estimate has been sought).

It was agreed to see what the second builder's estimate for refurbishment comes in at but looking at the figures involved there was concern about the high costs involved at this financially risky time in the housing market. A refurbishment based on these figures would increase the value of the property by less than the cost involved. It would also use all the reserves of the Council, including those currently earmarked for other projects and this would be imprudent.

It was noted that the building insurance needs to be increased and that the lease with the Lion & Unicorn Players needs to be renewed if the property is to remain as is. There is also a concern about the integrity of the clay tiled roof - a survey of the roof will be required.

Cllr. McKinney was thanked for his very thorough work on this project, which has been rumbling on for quite some time. This item will be re-visited at the October meeting.

22/138 Correspondence

- Option to opt out of the SAAA central external auditor appointment arrangements – It was agreed that Sheet Parish Council would remain in the current system for external audit.
- SDNPA – Withdrawal of publicity for submitted pre-application – The intention to cease publicising pre-application proposals was noted with concern (especially in light of the recent application by Kebbell Homes).
- Email/phone calls re use of Village Hall as a “warm space” – An enquiry about a regular hire of the Village Hall to provide a warm space for residents to gather for refreshments and to socialise in response to concerns about spiralling energy costs was noted. The group hope to obtain funding from various sources to finance the hire charge.
- E-mail correspondence from residents at Tanners Reach – Correspondence had been received from a resident concerned about the grant towards the solar panels at Tanners Reach due to an on-going dispute with the Management Company. The resident had been asked to address these concerns via SDNPA/PHA.

22/139 Date of next P.C. Meeting – The next meeting of Sheet Parish Council will take place on Thursday, 13th October at 7.00 p.m.

The meeting closed 8.50 p.m.

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT
TO
ALL PARISH COUNCILS
IN PETERSFIELD HANGERS
1 SEPTEMBER 2022**

1. Broadband report

The annual update meeting for Damian Hinds MP with the HCC Superfast Broadband Team took place last week on 27 August 2022. I organised this meeting and other County Councillors were also in attendance.

The principal aim of the superfast broadband projects is to get speeds of over 30 MBps to all homes (that is the OFCOM definition). Superfast speeds are often referred to as “Full Fibre”. A lot of us currently have “Fibre from the Cabinet” which means we get around 20 MBps. This is adequate but with Full Fibre it means we will get speeds of up to 500 MBps which will feel very different.

The update meeting this year contained mixed news. We learned that 82% of homes in East Hampshire are expected to receive Full Fibre through commercial deployment, including most of Petersfield. This includes the Community Fibre Partnerships. A further 13% of homes are within the scope of Project Gigabit and this means they are subject to a central government procurement process which commenced in August 2022. What is less positive is the news that Openreach have decided not to bid during that procurement process. It is unclear at this stage whether an alternative supplier will put forward a satisfactory bid; we shall have to wait and see. The first Project Gigabit contract was awarded to Wessex Internet for a rollout in Dorset earlier this week.

There are still 5% of hard-to-reach properties in East Hants which are out of the scope of any planned infrastructure process. At this time it is not clear how these 5% of homes will get Full Fibre. The technology is changing fast and the regulatory framework could also change. I would look to the new DCMS Ministerial team to negotiate a way through the current unsatisfactory situation with Openreach and we will be teaming up with Hampshire’s MPs to lobby for a clear infrastructure delivery plan. I hope that by next year we will have clarity on the completion of the superfast broadband deployment for all homes in East Hampshire.

2. Congratulations to all pupils and schools on GCSE and A Level results

I would like to congratulate pupils and schools on their results this Summer. Pupils faced disrupted learning due to the pandemic and I think they all deserve huge credit for their resilience. Although comparisons are tricky this year I am confident that Hampshire pupils will have outperformed the rest of the country as usual.

The HCC **Hampshire Futures** service has a wealth of information to guide school leavers on their next steps. Through this service young people can find out about courses, work experience and apprenticeships. Here is a link:

<https://www.skillsandparticipation.co.uk/course/index.php?categoryid=210>

3. Update on A32 closure

I wanted to provide an update on the progress of the Farringdon and Chawton flood alleviation scheme.

Owing to unexpected ground conditions, and difficulties with material and resource availability, progress has been slower than planned. This has impacted on the start date for the proposed drainage improvements between the access to Farringdon Industrial Centre and north to the village cross-roads and extended the amount of time needed for the delivery of this element.

In the light of the challenges experienced, Hampshire Highways have had to review their plans and move some of the drainage work into next Spring (2023) where we propose that it joins up with some potential planned maintenance work which is already in the programme.

This means that the A32 will be opening again in mid-September (2022). On the positive side this is much earlier than the original plan for the road to be reopened in October and this will provide some respite for those affected by the closure - residents, businesses and users of the A32. A road closure will be required to enable the remaining works to be completed next year but Hampshire Highways will make every effort to keep disruption to a minimum and maintain access for businesses and residents, as far as possible. I will provide further information about the works planned for next year as soon as I have that information.

4. Hitting the Cold Spots

As we enter the colder months, and with the energy crisis showing no sign of abating, I wanted to highlight once more the helpful HCC initiative known as Hitting the Cold Spots. This is a free advice line open from 0900 – 1700 Mon-Fri.

0800 804 860

The phone advice line is open to all Hampshire residents. Advisors will be able to talk through the best possible solution for each caller. Services include:

- assistance to switch your energy provider or tariff to help you save money on your fuel bills
- signposting and referrals to other organisations, such as: benefits and debt advice and safe and well visits by Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service
- eligibility check for the Warm Home Discount and local energy efficiency schemes
- home visits from our Advisors offering advice and practical support
- support with temporary heating measures if you are without heating
- help to access to funding, where available, for boiler repairs and replacements. Delivered through trusted 'Buy With Confidence' contractors
- If you live in a rural area of Hampshire we have additional resources to help.

If you are aware of a family or individual who is struggling to keep warm and well then please encourage them to contact Hitting the Cold Spots today.

5. Solar Together scheme open once more

HCC runs a group purchasing scheme called Solar Together. This scheme has just opened for its second round and you can sign up until 27 September. The scheme provides an opportunity to get a really good deal on solar panels. It also takes some of the stress out of the process and provides a reliable installation.

With energy prices at such high levels, the payback time for solar panels has come down from 12 years to 6 years. Participants in the scheme can also contribute to the energy security of the country and to the tackling of climate change! I would be grateful for any help Councillors can give promoting the scheme. The website address to learn more and sign up is: www.hants.gov.uk/solartogether

6. SDNPA supports innovative Solar scheme in Sheet

In August the SDNPA approved £80,000 of Section 106 funding to the Petersfield Housing Association for the installation of solar panels, storage batteries and associated infrastructure at four existing affordable homes in Sheet. This makes a meaningful contribution to local decarbonisation efforts. It will also make a massive difference to the occupants of the homes who will benefit from lower energy costs. I think the SDNPA deserves credit for supporting this innovative scheme and I hope it will provide a template for similar installations elsewhere.

7. New Dementia support service

I would like to raise awareness of a new charity: Dementia Support Hampshire & IOW. This charity was set up to address the need for better access to information, signposting and emotional support for anyone and everyone living with dementia in Hampshire & the Isle of Wight. Services are delivered on-line via a website and social media, over the phone - via a helpline that is available 8am-6pm Monday-Friday, and face-to-face at weekly support groups located in the community.

Website: www.mydementiasupport.org

Helpline: 0344 324 6589

The charity offer support from the first signs of memory loss to end of life, for anyone and everyone impacted by dementia. Be it the person with dementia, their family, friends, or caregivers. They provide emotional, physical, social, intellectual, and practical support and activities to improve and enrich the lives of people living with dementia including, counselling and therapies, financial planning and financial support information and help to complete relevant forms, and peer support social groups. The charity is keen to form local groups in our area and this may be of interest to some Parish Councillors.

I hope some Parishes will also consider mentioning the service in their newsletters or in their communications with other local groups.

RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER
County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers