

DRAFT

SHEET PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRPERSON: Ron Dark

CLERK: Jenny Hollington

Minutes of a Teams Meeting of Sheet Parish Council held on Tuesday, 8th December at 7.30 p.m.

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

In Attendance: District Councillor, Nick Drew
 Clerk, Jenny Hollington

There were no members of the public present

20/152 **Apologies** – Apologies had been received from Cllr. Tony Clear and County Cllr. Russell Oppenheimer.

20/153 **Minutes** – The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 10th November 2020 were approved as a correct record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chairman after the meeting.

20/154 **Declarations of Interests** – The Chairman reminded Councillors of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary interest on any item on the Agenda – none declared.

20/155 **Public Comment:** It had been agreed that during the coronavirus pandemic public comment could be sent via e-mail as some residents haven't got the appropriate equipment to join Teams meetings. The following comments had been received:

- A resident living close to the corner of Pulens Lane where the large pampas grass on the verge in front of the houses was destroyed by fire, has asked if he can replace the damaged stump with trees and shrubs. It was agreed that whilst Sheet Parish Council would have no objection to the pampas grass being replaced with low shrubs so as not to impact sight lines, they do not own or maintain the verge which is the responsibility of Hampshire so are unable to give permission.
- A request from residents living close to the Village Green, to be allowed to invite people to produce a laminated Christmas Card to be suspended from the Horse Chestnut on the Village Green was approved.

20/156 **Planning** – Current planning applications were discussed as follows:

SDNP/20/04 798/HOUS	Detached outbuilding and alterations to boundary treatments	Chimney Cottage, 27a Pulens Lane, GU31 4BZ	No objection although concern re position of steps and height of fence
SDNP/20/05 160/TCA	Horse Chestnut Tree – Overall crown reduction of 2m and careful thinning of outer crown	Sheet Village Green, Sheet	Application by the Parish Council to preserve the health of the tree
SDNP/20/04 486/FUL	Retention of structure/enclosure to serve as temporary overflow area for serving of refreshments	The Queen's Head, Village Street, Sheet, GU32 2AH	Amended description– no further comment
SDNP/20/05 129/TCA	Various tree works	Sheet House, Village Street, Sheet GU32 2AQ	No Objection

20/157 Finance

- (a) External Auditor’s Report – Confirmation has been received from the External Auditor (PKF Littlejohn) that the Audit for the year 19-20 has been completed and that the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern. The notice of completion of audit is currently being displayed on the website and village noticeboards.
- (b) Risk Register – Following correspondence from the Internal Auditor, the Risk Register has been amended to reflect the financial risk associated with Covid-19. It was noted that the Council have a sufficient general reserve to cover a full year with no village hall income. The amended document was approved. It was noted that there are two outstanding actions on the register and these items will be addressed at the January meeting.
- (c) Budget 21-22 – The draft budget proposal for 21-22 had been circulated prior to the meeting and the Chairman explained the workings in arriving at the end of year figures and the budget for the following year. The main items to note were:
- Provision of £5,000 has been made for repair and painting of Village Hall frontage. After discussion this was raised to £10,000
 - There is an assumption that Village Hall income will be 50% of pre-Covid levels
 - £19,000 has been budgeted for the Community Funded Initiative to narrow Village Street at the London Road and Church end of the lane and an additional £10,000 for costs involved with the new configuration at the junction of School Lane (although it is hoped CIL funds will cover this)
 - There is an increase to £20,000 in the reserve for refurbishment of The Old Billiard Room

Following discussion, the budget proposal 21-22 was approved.

- (d) Precept 21-22 – Historically, Sheet Parish Council has kept the charge per household at the same level each year. However, each year reserves have increased, and it was queried whether there should be a reduction in the precept per household for 21-22? Following discussion, it was agreed to reduce the precept by 1% per household which will equate to a precept request of £40,475 for 21-22.
- (e) The November bank reconciliation had been circulated prior to the meeting – the reconciliation was approved and will be signed by the Chairman
- (f) Cheques for December payment were approved as follows:

Chq No.	Amount	Payee	Service
301167	£1,225.00	Hampshire County Council	Phase 1 Traffic Management - admin fee
301168	£230.00	Bill Robinson	clearing leaves on Village Green
301169	£72.00	Elite Playground Inspections	BMX track and Recreation Ground
301170	£85.00	A.W. Clear	Planting - V. Hall and V. Green
301171	£430.00	Sheet Music	Caretaking/cleaning - V. Hall
301172	£95.49	HMRC	Tax, N.I. and Emp Cont - Clerk
301173	£733.05	J. Hollington	Clerk
Total	£2,870.54		

20/158 Roads and Traffic

- (a) School Lane/Farnham Road Junction – Cllr. Martin confirmed that Alex Hawkins, the Engineer overseeing the project, is now working on the tender package which will be distributed in January.

Road “space” has been booked for the Easter school holidays and Alex is optimistic that this is an achievable target.

- (b) Community Funded Initiative to narrow Village Street – The invoice for the admin fee for the CFI detailed plans to narrow the London Road end of Village Street has now been received. However, there has still been no up-date from Alistair MacAdam on the issue of cost of the plans for the Church end of the street and whether this is can be done under one admin fee (it is one scheme) – Cllr. Martin will chase this via Ian Janes.
- (c) Receding Riverbank– Cllr. Biddlecombe reported that it appears an area of grass is slipping into the River close to the telegraph pole – it was agreed that this should be reported to the Environment Agency if the situation gets any worse.
- (d) Mill Lane drainage issues – HCC have now established that there is a brick arch blocking the drain which will need to be replaced – HCC will address this asap.
- (e) Eroding Bank in Mill Lane – It was noted that a badger has taken up residence in the bank - concern was expressed that the badger may have protected status and may cause a delay to the plans to stabilise the bank.
- (f) London Road – SSE have not yet reinstated the Riverbank as promised – Cllr. Biddlecombe will chase them.

20/159 County Councillor’s Report – Cllr. Oppenheimer’s monthly report had been circulated prior to the meeting and the following items were highlighted:

- Extra funding from Government to support vulnerable families with meals – The funding package comprises 3 different schemes and full details can be found via the Hampshire County Council website.
- Training for Lengthsmen to work on the Highway – HCC is keen to extend the work the Lengthsmen can do on the highway and will be offering Traffic Management Training which will then allow them to erect basic traffic signage and work on the carriageway on low-speed roads. Sheet’s Lengthsman will be encouraged to take up this opportunity when it becomes available.
- HCC Tree Strategy – HCC has made a commitment to plant 1 million trees by 2050.
- Verge cutting in 2021 – The difference between the two types of cut (annual and biennial) is explained in Cllr. Oppenheimer’s report.
- Safer Care Home visits – Various care homes across Hampshire will be taking part in an innovative new scheme to support family visitors to visit loved ones more safely with regular Covid-19 tests.

Councillor Oppenheimer’s full report is appended to the Minutes and will be made available via the website.

20/160 District Councillor’s Report – Cllr. Drew reported that the EHDC environmental grant has now been spent, with over 1000 trees having been planted across the Ward.:

20/161 Sheet Assets

Millennium Field – Cllr. Biddlecombe will continue to chase the grant for wildflowers from SDNA.

Sheet Village Hall

- (a) Covid-19 - Hampshire has been placed in Tier 2 – High Alert – and this means that Government guidelines have changed yet again. The Management Committee continue to monitor hire requests alongside revised guidelines and permitted classes such as Dance Academy and Pilates have now been allowed to re-start.
- (b) Noticeboard – The new lock has been fitted and the notices updated – the Clerk confirmed she would get spare keys cut!

Recreation Ground – Cllrs. Wilton, Dark, Forrest and Glancy got together to repair the holes in the wet pour under the table tennis table with a repair kit ordered on-line. Elite Playground Inspections have since signed off the repair during their regular play inspection. If the repair holds, it will have saved the Parish Council a considerable amount of money and Councillors were thanked for their efforts.

Old Billiard Room – It was noted that the Lion & Unicorn Players have been unable to operate during lockdown and the National restrictions. L & U representatives have confirmed that they have visited and checked the building two or three times over the past few months and Cllr. Glancy also confirmed that he keeps an eye on the building. It was queried whether the water should be turned off if the weather turns very cold, and the Clerk was asked to check this with the Players.

- 20/162 Duke of Edinburgh Volunteer – A Sheet resident approached the Parish Council about her daughter carrying out voluntary litter picking on Sheet Common and the Millennium Field to count towards her Duke of Edinburgh Award – the activity would be supervised by the parent on each occasion. A risk assessment for the activity had been carried out by the Clerk and details circulated prior to the meeting. It was agreed that appropriate PPE kit should be purchased for the youngster to carry out the task, which will be signed off on production of suitable evidence, in due course.
- 20/163 River Rother - A copy of a report carried out by the Arun & Rother Rivers Trust on the health of an area of River through Hogmoor has been sent to the Parish Council for information - it is an interesting read.
- 20/164 Grant Application – The grant application towards funding for tools for the Hampshire Monday Group volunteers has been approved by HCC - the Clerk will liaise with HMG volunteers and Hampshire about purchasing the tools required.
- 20/165 Carols on the Village Green – The event is to go ahead on Friday, 18th December at 7.30 p.m. and will comply with current Government guidelines. The organiser has carried out an appropriate risk assessment and social distancing will be maintained.
- 20/166 Banners on Sheet Roundabout – Cllr. Biddlecombe has complained to EHDC about the number of banners being displayed at the roundabout – no response has been received yet. Cllr. Drew undertook to look into this.
- 20/167 Website – The proposal for a history page to be made available via the P.C. website will be followed up with the website manager and members of SVCT by Cllr. Biddlecombe.
- 20/168 Future Meeting Dates 2021 – A list of dates for next year’s Parish Council meetings had been circulated prior to the meeting and were approved. As per previous years, the meetings will be held on the second Tuesday of the month at the Village Hall (if Government guidelines allow).
- 20/169 Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday, 12th January 2021 – 7.30 p.m. – arrangements to be confirmed.

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT
TO
ALL PARISH COUNCILS
IN PETERSFIELD HANGERS
1 DECEMBER 2020**

1. Extra funding from Government to support vulnerable families with meals

I mentioned last month that Hampshire County Council had moved early to ensure that free school meals would be available to vulnerable families throughout the half term and holidays. On 9 November, the Government then announced a £170 million winter funding package. £2.89 million of this funding will come to Hampshire. The funding will provide further support to the most vulnerable children and families - including providing free meals to disadvantaged children during the Christmas holidays. The funding package comprises three schemes:

- The Covid Winter Grant Scheme funding will support children, families and the most vulnerable over the season.
- The Holiday Activities and Food programme will be extended to cover the Easter, summer and Christmas breaks in 2021.
- Healthy Start payments will increase from April 2021 to help expectant mothers and those with young children on low incomes and in receipt of benefits to buy fresh fruit and vegetables.

2. Training for Lengthsmen to work on the Highway

Both the County Council and Parish Councils greatly value the role of the Parish Lengthsmen. The scheme allows quick response to localised issues. HCC is keen to extend some of the work which Lengthsmen can do on the highway and are offering **Traffic Management Training** which will enable Lengthsmen to work under the appropriate safety requirements.

The training will allow the Lengthsman to erect basic traffic management signage and then work within the live carriageway on low speed roads. Currently the Lengthsman are not permitted to work within the live carriageway, only on footways and verges. The funding for all Lengthsmen for next year was confirmed on 19 November by Executive Member Cllr Rob Humby.

3. HCC Tree Strategy

Hampshire County Council has published a Tree Strategy. It is a very readable document and, for those interested in trees, I would say that it is worth a read. To accompany this new strategy, Hampshire County Council has made a commitment to plant 1 million trees by 2050. There is a commitment to working with partners and residents in the Strategy. Here is a link:

<https://documents.hants.gov.uk/environment/tree-strategy.pdf>

4. Verge cutting in 2021

I would like to clarify the HCC approach to verge-cutting. I have recently had a long conversation with the HCC Officer responsible for these matters.

There are two types of verge cut: the annual 1m cut and the biennial 3m deep cut (every other year).

Annual Cut

The Annual Cut is primarily aimed at maintaining pedestrian refuge points and visibility. Parish Councillors will recall that HCC undertook the annual verge cut early in 2020 as an experiment (around April). There was not universal approval for this, and I did pass on the feedback I received from Parishes. However the consensus seems to be that the early cut experiment was successful; Plantlife and County Botanist Nicky Court have been involved in the assessment process and they are apparently satisfied that the biodiversity of the verges did benefit from the early cut. A final decision on whether to undertake the cut early again next year will be taken in January but at this time it does seem that this is likely.

Biennial Deep Cut

The Deep Cut is aimed at preventing the formation of scrub which could negatively impact the Highway network, pedestrian safety and wildflower growth. The 3m Deep Cut used to take place every three years. In 2020 the frequency changed to every two years on the advice of Plantlife. The 3m Deep Cut will always take place at the end of the season, around October. **This means that every other year, all Parishes will get two cuts.**

I hope that is helpful clarification.

5. Hampshire chosen for innovative pilot offering regular testing to family members for safer care home visits

A number of care homes across the Hampshire County Council area will be taking part in an innovative new national scheme to support family visitors to have regular Covid-19 tests in order to visit loved ones more safely. Hampshire is one of only three areas in England chosen to take part in the pilot ahead of a wider roll-out nationally.

Regular testing will be offered to one family member or friend per resident, which – when combined with other infection-control measures such as PPE – will support more meaningful visits. The aim is to enable, where possible, indoor visits without a screen to take place while reducing the risk to care home residents, staff and visitors.

For more information visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pilot-for-family-members-to-get-regular-testing-for-safer-care-home-visits>

RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER
County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers