

MINUTES OF MEETING OF SPARKFORD PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 3 February 2025 AT 8.00PM

Present: Mr K Flood - Chair, Mr T Tuck, Mr D Hazell, Mr L Piper, Mr A Quick, Mr R Squires, Mr D Westwood

In attendance: Cllr Henry Hobhouse, Cllr Kevin Messenger, 7 members of public, Mrs A Tuck, Acting clerk.

Public session One member of the public had come to complain about the amount of dog waste on the pavements and verges - There are no dog bins in between the cricket pitch along Church Road to the Electric sub station. It was suggested one be put alongside the post box below Manor Close, Clerk to contact Mr & Mrs Reid to ask if they were happy to have it alongside their wall. If so the Council would look at buying another bin and paying to have it emptied weekly. The Cricket pitch is also covered in dog waste. Cllr Tuck agreed to look at the sign and get a quote for a newly worded large sign to encourage dog walkers using the cricket pitch to keep their dogs on a lead, pick up after them and use the bin outside the cricket pitch. It was agreed to ask the dog warden to visit Sparkford. LD

Another resident had video of a Green Close residents garden who had not put their rubbish out for the last three waste collections and who had rats running out of the garden, another waste collection is due this week. Clerk to contact Abri about this house at No 6, Green Close. The Chairman had also had a verbal complaint about a private house in Church Road with rubbish piled outside the house and rats in the garden. LD

The meeting followed at 8.15pm

2025

SPC13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mrs L Davis, clerk, unwell.

SPC14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

SPC15 APPROVAL OF LAST MONTH'S MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting on 6th January needed amendments, Cllr Flood agreed to take this up with Mrs Davis. Cllr Tuck had asked the clerk to amend the traffic monitoring in Sparkford High Street as it didn't include a request to contact Lisa Hopkins at National Highways and Somerset County, Ian McWilliams, Area South, about arranging a meeting to discuss the inspectors recommendations to mitigate the increased traffic in Sparkford High Street, due to the design of Hazelgrove junction. Cllr Hobhouse stated that at the time of the last meeting he had not spoken to Mr King-Brain as the minutes stated. They would be signed after alteration at the next meeting. KF/LD

SPC16 CRIME/NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

No crime report had been received.

SPC17 SOMERSET COUNCILLORS

Henry Hobhouse reported Somerset Council have Government permission to raise the Council Tax by 7.5% but they will still be £55 million short and may still end up bankrupt. A Traffic Regulation Order has been made so parishes can close their own roads in time of flooding. It will start in Podimore but next year parishes can be added to it, a folding sign will be put at both ends of where the flooding occurs, so they can be opened to close the road and they will need to phone the Council to say its been closed. The sign will warn motorists if they pass these signs their insurance will be invalid. Mr Hobhouse had met Mr King-Brain, who had refused to meet with Mr Doyle from the EA, there is a problem with the flow of the river on Mr King-Brain's side of the bank and the monitoring gauge cannot be installed on the motorway bridge until the

obstruction caused by Mr King-Brains hedges and trees are removed. Cllr Hobhouse asked the Council's permission to deal with it on their behalf with Dr Paul Eddison from Somerset Rivers Authority. The Council were all in favour of this. Cllr Flood raised the question about grants to bus routes, but these grants were only given to larger towns.

KF/LD

Section 19 flood report has been issued, Mr Hobhouse is not happy with it and is calling it to scrutiny, it doesn't explain the 5' wave that took place. Cllr Hobhouse would like a letter from the Parish Council to say the Section 19 report doesn't make sense. Cllrs Flood and Hazel took people around and showed them where it flooded but it's not been reported. 2 years ago Sparkford Parish Council asked if the river could be dredged to increase the flow. Cllr Hobhouse said its too late now for this year but to get three quotes ready for a digger to clear under the bridge and apply for an SRA grant for next year.

LD

Cllr Messenger had no further comments.

SPC18 HIGHWAYS

Cllr Tuck requested that the clerk contact National Highways/Galliford Try to move the second countdown sign back in line with the services sign as at present the services sign is obscured by it. Secondly due to the effect opening the dual carriageway has on the Shell Service Station and McDonalds, causing a serious lack of custom, could we also request a much larger services sign to be sited on the westbound carriageway, east of the A359 underbridge. There is no barrier so vehicles coming off the round-a-bout accessing the westbound slip road the headlights blind the cars travelling off the dual carriageway towards the Hazelgrove round-a-bout. A screen needs to be erected to shield the effects of the headlights. Following this Cllr Hobhouse raised concerns about connectivity with the bridleways and footpaths from Sparkford to Podimore and also the problems with bridleways and lack of safety barrier on the access to Hazelgrove School needs to be brought up with National Highways and Galliford Try. Cllr Hobhouse is due to meet Jonny Hill from National Highways re Podimore and he offered to put on a second meeting with Cllr Tuck to go along to discuss the other issues. Sid Reports on the High Street, in excess of 100 mph recorded exiting Sparkford and over 90 mph entering Sparkford this gives us good evidence to use for mitigation works with National Highways, TT will present the sid reports to National Highways at this meeting.

LD

HH/TT

Cllr Flood asked the meeting if we should book Cary Traders for grass cutting again, it was agreed to get them to cut the hedges after September and it may be necessary to cut the verges in June.

KF

SPC19 PLANNING DECISIONS

a) 24/02862/COU Change of use of stables to B8 storage use. Mill Farm, Weston Bampfylde Road, Weston Bampfylde Application permitted with conditions

b) 24/02823/TPO Application to carry out Tree Surgery works to no. 1 tree as shown within the Yeovil District Council (SPAR 1) 1981 Tree Preservation Order. Beeches, Church Road, Sparkford. **Approved**

c) 24/02736/TPO Application to fell no. 1 tree as shown within the SSDC (SPAR 1) 2003 Tree Preservation Order. Land at Ainstey Drive, Sparkford. **Approved**

SPC20 Planning Applications. An invitation to speak, for up to 3 minutes, on individual applications will be offered **None**

SPC21 MATTERS ARISING NOT INCLUDED IN OTHER SECTIONS

- a) **To discuss request for speed limit reduction outside Haynes Motor Museum.** 3 members from Haynes came along to report on two nasty accidents that have occurred outside the motor museum and ask for the Councils support with planning for additional traffic restrictions outside of their entrance, one ended up upside down on their land the other upside down on the farmers field opposite, both accidents happened at night. The national speed limit currently applies (60mph) outside Hayes Motor Museum but even that is too high. Haynes would like the speed limit outside their Museum to be restricted to 40mph and are happy to pay for it but would like the Councils support. Cllr Hobhouse stated he would get Gary Warn down to look at it, Ollie from Haynes to send HH an email – suggest lowered speed limit starts at Woodside Farm.

- b) **McDonalds and Hazelgrove Services – outstanding issues update-** Cllr Flood asked Cllr Tuck if he would pop in and speak to the Manager at McDonalds and the Spar about the installation of electrics for the defib.
- c) **Transfer of Land for Village Hall** Lovells have got rid of all their top management, as yet we haven't had the £10,000 or conditions relating to the plot sorted. Cllr Flood liaised with Battens and they can help to take this forward before the site is signed off. The road has not been sold to LVA for access, Wessex Water have stated problems with the sewers are in Orchard Close, they did a drain survey but part didn't show up. Highways have kerbs and drain covers to be put right. Need to contact the planning officer to ensure the estate is not adopted until the land transfer for the new village hall is complete. Lovells expect the work to be signed off in the next three months. TT
LD
- d) **Local Community Networks (LCN)** Cllr Squires attended the meeting on 18th January it is his opinion that there is too much emphasis on Health and Wellbeing and it is a waste of time. A lot of the Parishes didn't receive the LCN Survey, the LCN needs to get involved in the local plan- workshops are planned and we need to attend. The Highways meeting every 6 weeks or so is good.
- e) **New Development Sites** – Mrs Nixon has copied the clerk in on an email to the planning officer. LD/KF
No further action.

SPC22 Financial Matters

- a) Payment to Mrs L Davis (Parish Clerk salary)
 - b) Payment of £2,760.00 to B & G Down Tree Care (works to trees at Daisy Wood)
- Both the above payments were approved, Cllr Quick is being chased for the payment for the new web site which was approved at a previous meeting but still has not been received.

SPC23 CORRESPONDENCE An email has been received regarding dog mess – see notes at the beginning of the meeting.

Mr Walton had sent an email to the clerk about Great Western Railways wanting a passing loop between Castle Cary and Yeovil, Mr Walton was wondering about the possibility of doing it in Sparkford and having a railway station as well., he is hoping for the Parish Council's support Mr Chris Haynes is also keen for this to happen and felt that they may be able to find the land for this to take place above the race track behind Woodside Court.

Cllr Squires stated that the land behind the playing field is the last green space in the village and he would like to see it registered as a community space to prevent building on it in the future.
Discussion for next meeting. LD

Cllr Tuck said we had a request to buy poppies for Remembrance to put on the lamp posts please put on agenda for next meeting. LD

The Copse Trust. Cllr Flood stated that Mr Crawford has had some tree work done, but it was felt the copse is dangerous. Does Mr Crawford want to continue or to put the land into the Woodland Trust and put into the care of the Parish Council and Queen Camel Parish Council in the case of Ridge Copse. Clerk to communicate with Cherry Toop clerk of Queen Camel and to write to Mr Crawford LD

Cllr Piper is concerned the section 106 went in October – the Playing Field Committee have heard nothing, the invoice for the equipment is paid but nothing heard about the field maintenance money, this should have been triggered and the money drawn down, there's a 10 year plan for maintenance and they want the equipment for use in March and April. Clerk to contact the officer concerned. LD

SPC24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING Monday 3 MARCH 2025 at 8pm

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.34pm

PUBLIC NOTICES

Neighbourhood Watch – we are looking to re-instate the Neighbourhood Watch scheme. If you would like to get involved then please contact the Parish Clerk.

Speedwatch – we are looking for volunteers to get involved with Speedwatch in the Parish. If you are interested then please contact the Parish Clerk.

Warm Hubs – Do you have a few hours to spare each week or month? Would you like to help people who may be struggling with the cost of living crisis? Do you like to meet new people? If you answer yes to all these questions then please contact the Parish Clerk to learn more about how you could help with a Village Café/Warm Hub?

Community events – are you holding an event in Sparkford? Please send the details to the Parish Clerk so that it can be promoted on the parish website and Community Facebook page.

Daisy Woods – please note that in the interests of safety and to protect the habitat Daisy Woods has been closed temporarily to allow the area to recover following recent bad weather.

Emergency Plan – would you like to get involved in producing an emergency plan for Sparkford? Please get in touch with the Parish Clerk to find out how you can help!