



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SOPLEY PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 17th October 2022 at Sopley Parish Hall commencing at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr. D. Shutler (Chair) Cllr. K. Brake, Cllr.J. Ludford; Cllr,T. Langford and Cllr. G. Vines.

Mrs. K. Hughes (Clerk) and Mr. E. Macknamara (Locum Clerk)

Also Present: Cllr Thierry (Hampshire County Council} and 7 Members of the Public

The Locum Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate and that there were no declarations of interest in respect of Agenda items.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Cllr. J. Allen and Cllr. T. Ring (New Forest District Council)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

- **Notice Boards:** A resident pointed out that the Notice Board at Ripley was damaged and needed to be repaired. The Chair reported that all Notice Boards had been inspected and repairs would be carried out.
- **Defibrillator:** A resident referred to the request from the WI for an additional defibrillator for the Village and hoped the Parish Council would support the request.
- **Traffic Speed in Sopley:** A number of residents reported that the speed of traffic along the Village roads continued and compared the situation to a race track. A number of minor incidents had occurred, and they asked for the Parish Council's support in overcoming this problem. Councillor Vine explained that the highway authority had been made aware of this problem but that there were procedures that needed to be followed to gain support for action. He had also contacted the local police and he was setting up a local speed watch scheme which would need volunteers to help support the scheme and gather information to submit to the Highway Authority (Hampshire County Council) requesting local traffic measures. The use of a speed indicator advice (SID) was also being investigated following an initial use of a device borrowed from a neighbouring Parish Council.
Once the procedures had been completed a traffic speed plan could be prepared for the area.
- **Cats Eyes:** The issue of the noise from the cats eyes in the Village was raised. The Chair explained that he had watched the flow of traffic through the Village and had noticed that cars coming from Avon Causeway tended to drift onto the cats eyes causing the noise issue. Hampshire County Council had been contacted and had indicated that they would not agree to replace the cats eyes as they were functional. However the resident felt that these cats eyes should be replaced with the normal smaller size cats eyes which would reduce the noise significantly.
- **Rights of Way – Stiles:** The Council were informed of two damaged stiles located to the rear of Sopley Barns and adjacent to the Clockhouse. The Chair reported that replacement stiles were available and it was agreed that the Parish Council replace these damaged stiles.

ACTION: The Chair

- **Vandalism:** Vandalism in Sopley remained a problem. The Police were aware of this local issue.
- **Vatchers:** The obstruction to the watercourse along this right of way remained unresolved and the river bank was subsiding. The Locum Clerk reported that he had not heard from the Rights of Way Team regarding this issue and he would contact them again.

ACTION: THE CLERK

1. **CO-OPTION:** The Chair welcomed Dr. Jason Partridge to the meeting who had put himself forward for Cooption to fill the vacancy on the Parish Council. He had submitted his questionnaire which had been circulated. He was asked to give a brief presentation to the Council and he explained his experience and background and his interest as a local resident to support the work of the Parish Council. (Some Councillors reported that they had not received his completed questionnaire).

On being put to the vote it was unanimously RESOLVED: That Dr. Jason Partridge be co-opted to Sopley Parish Council and sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Dr. Partridge then joined the meeting.

2. **Minutes of the Meeting held on the 22nd August, 2022:** The minutes of meeting held on the 22nd August, 2022 having been circulated prior to the meeting were approved and signed by the Chair.

3. **Matters Arising:**

- i) **Trees along Salisbury Road:** The work to the trees along the West side of Salisbury Road had been completed and the Invoice received. Payment would be made once the work had been inspected and completed as specified in the quotation.

ACTION: THE CHAIR

- ii) **Avon Causeway – Trees overhanging the Highway:** It would be necessary due to the scale of the work to ask Hampshire County Council to undertake the work to the trees along the Avon Causeway. This work had not been carried out. However it was suggested that the land may be owned by Lord Manners.

ACTION: THE CLERK

- iii) **Allotment Site:** Two lockable barriers for the parking spaces (nearest to the site entrance) had now been purchased and would be installed.

ACTION: CLLR.
LANGFORD/CHAIR

- iv) **Red Telephone Box – Ringwood Road:** The question of ownership of the Telephone Box had now been investigated and with the information obtained from the Land Registry and a former Clerk it was confirmed that the Telephone Box was owned by the Parish Council and that a right of access to it had been given. The telephone box required refurbishment and would be a suitable site for an additional defibrillator requested by the WI. However, it was felt that further discussion should take place with the adjacent landowner so that he was aware of the Council's intentions. Further investigation would also be made into the costs of a Defibrillator and ongoing maintenance.

RESOLVED: That, subject to discussion with the adjacent landowner, a report be made to the next meeting of the costs of refurbishing the Telephone Box and providing a defibrillator for the Village.

ACTION: THE CLERK/CLLR. VINES

- v) Proposed Footpath – Derritt Lane: The Chair reported that he had discussed this proposal with the adjacent landowner who had now indicated that he would consider the issue and respond in due course. There may also be an opportunity to improve pedestrian safety along this road should CIL Monies become available from the development in Derritt Lane although this was intended for work to alleviate flooding problems along Derritt Lane. The meeting noted that existing Rights of Way existed which could be used rather than providing a new footpath.
- vi) Water Meter: Heatherstone Grange Allotments: There was no further information from the Water Authority and the meter had not yet been located. The Chair agreed to check for the location of the meter and Cllr. Langford also asked to be involved.

ACTION: THE CHAIR/CLLR. LANGFORD
- vii) HG ALLOTMENTS: The Clerk reported that the vacancy at the allotment site had been offered to the next residents of Sopley on the waiting list but had been declined. It was agreed that the availability of allotments to residents of Sopley be advertised to see whether a local resident came forward.

ACTION: THE CLERK
- viii) SHIRLEY ALLOTMENTS: The Invoice for the Shirley Allotments was now due and would be sent to the Avon Tyrell Estate for the ensuing year.

ACTION: THE LOCUM CLERK
- ix) REPLACEMENT BENCH – THE LATE QUEEN ELIZABETH 2: The Clerk confirmed that a replacement Bench had been ordered and would be installed by the maker at the agreed site at the Parish Hall.
- x) HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC: Cllr Vines reported that the cost of setting up a speed watch scheme would be in the region of £500 but this did not include the purchase of a Speed Indicator Device.

4. CURRENT ISSUES AND FORWARD PLANNING:

Staffing Committee: Cllr. Brake reported that she wished to remain on this committee but step down as vice chair.

RESOLVED: That Councillor G. Vines be appointed on the Staffing Committee as Vice chair.

5. PARISH CLERK'S REPORT:

The Locum Clerk reported the following matters for decision:

a. PAYMENTS FOR APPROVAL:

The following payments were presented for approval and payment:

PAYMENTS MADE SINCE AUGUST 2022 MEETING

PAYEE	DATE	DETAILS	AMOUNT £
Barriers Direct	2 nd September 2022	Parking Barriers HG Allotments	233.90
Outdoor Design (Maintenance Ltd)	4 th September 2022	Cemetery Maintenance - August	385.00

Quirky Wood	5 th September 2022	Replacement Jubilee Bench	400.00
Mr. E Macknamara	5 th September 2022	Locum Charges - August	546.00
Mrs. K Hughes	15 th September 2022	Clerk's Salary – September, 2022	243.69
Pennon Water Services	8 th September 2022	Monthly Cemetery Water Charges (DD)	3.60
		TOTAL	1812.19
PAYMENTS TO BE MADE:			£
UK Debt Management Office	1 st September 2022	PWLB Loan Repayment	1417.13
Outdoor Design (Maintenance Ltd	28 th September, 2022	Cemetery Maintenance - September	385.00
Tree Management Company	3 rd October 2022	Tree Work – Salisbury Road	2100.00
Mr. E Macknamara	5 th October 2022	Locum Clerk – September 2022	364.00
Mrs. K. Hughes	17 th October 2022	Clerk's Salary - October	243.69
Pennon Water Services	10 th October, 2022	Cemetery Water Charges (DD)	3.60
Mr. J. Eccles	17 th October 2022	Duplicate set of keys for Parish Notice Boards	36.00
Shaw and Sons Ltd	17 th October 2022	Burial Registers	631.20
		TOTAL	£5680.62

RESOLVED: i) That the Payments listed above be approved for payment.
ii) That the financial report including current Bank balances circulated at the meeting be received.

- a) Council Vacancies: One vacancy remained to be filled by cooption.
- b) Future Audit Arrangement: The Parish Council agreed to accept the appointment made by the SAA of an external Auditor following the 5 year Review.
- c) Conclusion of the Audit for the Financial Year ended 31st March, 2022: The Locum Clerk reported that the Audit of the Accounts for the year ended 31st March, 2022 had now been completed and the Notice of the Public Rights had been displayed on all Notice Boards and the Website.
- d) Appointment of Internal Auditor: RESOLVED i) That Do the Numbers be appointed as the Internal Auditor for the year ending 31st March, 2023.
ii) That the Finance Committee be asked to review the appointment of an Internal Auditor on a 3 yearly basis after the current financial year.
- e) Newsletter 2023: RESOLVED: That the Annual Newsletter be reinstated in 2023.
- f) Review of the position of Locum Clerk: The Locum Clerk asked the Council to review his position now that their Clerk was back in post. He suggested that the current arrangement be continued until the end of November, 2022 with the Clerk increasing her share of the weekly hours and a reduction for the Locum Clerk. This would enable work on the Budget for 2023/4 to be completed and presented

to the Finance Committee on the 10th November, 2022 following which the Locum Clerk would hand back all matters to the Clerk but be available on an as and when basis until the 30th November 2022.

RESOLVED: That the Locum Clerk's Contract be ended no later than the 30th November, 2022 on the basis set out above.

The Locum Clerk was thanked for his work in supporting the Council during the absence of the Clerk.

5. CORRESPONDENCE:

- Stepping Stones of Sopley: An application for a Grant had been received from Stepping Stones of Sopley requesting £500 to support their work and improve their play facilities including the outdoor sandpit. The application had been submitted on the Application Form with the supporting information attached. The Applicant was present at the meeting to answer any questions and also outlined the purpose of this application.

RESOLVED: That a Grant of £500 be made to Stepping Stones of Sopley to support their work and to enable improvements to be made to their play facilities.

ACTION: THE CLERK

- The Queen's Green Canopy: RESOLVED: That the Parish Council replace the Oak Tree at Shirley Common to mark the Late Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.
- Defibrillator: This request from the WI had been considered earlier in the meeting.

6. PLANNING: i) 22/11137 Removl of Condition 3 of planning permission
21/10362commence without an archeological watching brief, 9 Marryat Way, Sopley
NO OBJECTION

7. **Heatherstone Grange Allotments:** Cllr. Langford presented a report of the local resident's involvement in tree planting and the proposal to now add a further 19 trees which would be provided by the Tree Council. The residents had also supported the provision of a Children's Swing and seats with financial support from Sopley Parish Council and the installation by New Forest District Council. Some 2000 Daffodil bulbs would be planted in honour of Her Majesty the Late Queen Elizabeth 2. The report was noted.
Cllr. Langford reiterated the need to inspect the allotments to ensure they were maintained in accordance with the allotment agreement and in particular during periods when allotments remained vacant.

8. **SHIRLEY ALLOTMENTS:** An invoice would now be raised and sent to the Avon Tyrell Estate.

ACTION: THE CLERK

9. BURIAL BOARD:

Cllr. Brake presented the Burial Board Report:

The interment of ashes of the Late Ivy Harwood to be interred into the grave of the Late Peter Barrow. Grave ref: Section 3 F1.

RESOLVED: The 2004 cost of grave purchase being £60 and the interment cost at 2022 at £66 would be the fees payable by the purchaser.

- Cemetery Wall Repair: The Back Wall Repair was now proceeding at a cost of £7000 as agreed by the Parish Council.
- Benches: It was agreed that a Register of Family ownership of Memorial Benches be kept and inspected annually to ensure that ongoing maintenance was undertaken by the family. The Clerk suggested that these Memorial Benches could be kept on a Register annexed to the Council's Asset Register. Family contact details to be set up in the register so we will know who to contact to arrange bench maintenance etc this was agreed.
- Potholes: The potholes at the entrance to the Burial Ground would need to be repaired and it was agreed that the Finance Committee include a Budget sum for this work to be carried out during the financial year 2023/4.
- Waste Disposal: The Grounds Maintenance contractor had noticed a large build-up of waste sacks at the front of the cemetery. It was proposed that we contact our regular unofficial volunteers and create a community rota to take out waste for collection monthly. It was suggested that a Community Rota be organised to ensure all waste from the Burial Ground was collected weekly. The waste disposal service offered by New Forest District Council would also be investigated.
- Overgrown Bush at Entrance: The bush at the entrance to the site needed to be removed to improve visibility for vehicles leaving the site. It was agreed that this work be arranged.
- Review of Procedures and Regulations: A review was being undertaken and would be reported to a future meeting for consideration.
- Burial Ground Administration: It was suggested that the person who takes over the administration of the Burial Ground should undertake appropriate training. An audit of Burials and Cremated remains was being undertaken.
- Storage of Records: The Clerk has facilities to store the burial records in a fire proof filing cabinet owned by the Council which she kept at her home as her place of work. Insurance Cover had also been arranged. The cost of purchasing fire proof storage would depend on the size needed.
- Burial Ground Extension: A review of the current plots was being undertaken to ensure that availability was maximised for the future. It was recommended that the Regulations be amended so that only double dug plots were allowed. This would extend the period of time before the Burial Ground Extension became full. It was agreed that the Regulations should be amended so that only double dug plots were available in future.

ACTION: CLLR BRAKE

10. PARISH HALL COMMITTEE REPORT: The meeting noted the future bookings for the Hall which included a cheese and wine event on Friday, 21st October, Bingo and a Skittles Evening. Details of these events and Christmas Events were advertised on the Notice Boards.

11. PARISH FOOTPATHS AND RIGHT OF WAY

The Chair advised that the clearance of the area behind Vatchers was in hand. A member suggested that the Bransgore Road sign in Derritt Lane should be moved to the Parish Boundary near West Road.

12. HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ISSUES: No further matters were raised.

13. COMMUNICATIONS AND GRANT MAKING POLICIES:

Cllr. Allen had requested that the Council consider adopting policies relating to Communications and the making of Grants by the Parish Council. Draft Policies had been circulated and subject to some minor editing it was:

RESOLVED: That these Policies be adopted.

ACTION: THE CLERK

14. COUNTY/DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS: The Chair invited the County Councillor to report any current issues. Cllr. Thierry congratulated the Parish Council on the way they conducted their meetings and in particular the involvement of Parishioners. He had no other matters to raise

The meeting concluded at 21.30pm

NEXT FULL COUNCIL MEETING: Thursday, 17th November 2022 – Sopley Parish Hall commencing at 7.30pm

Chair.....