

23.03.21

Summonses to a virtual business meeting of Sampford Peverell Parish Council to be held using 'Zoom' on Tuesday 23 March 2021, starting at 7.00 pm, were distributed with the agenda to all Members by e-mail on 17 March 2021 by the Clerk.

Agenda

As distributed, but with grass cutting added to item 9.

2020/21/072

The Chairman of SPPC, Cllr David Cutts, declared the meeting open at 7.05 pm. He welcomed all present and thanked Cllr Culpin for setting up the meeting on 'Zoom'. Cllr Cutts welcomed Lewis Clarke, the reporter for Mid Devon (and other areas) for the North Devon Journal and Mid Devon Gazette. Mr Clarke explained that he is now able to attend more local council meetings than before thanks to the use of 'Zoom': in fact, he is attending, he explained, two other parish council meetings simultaneously, namely Halberton and South Molton.

Cllr Cutts reported the recent death of former Member, Charlie Port, who had served as Vice-Chairman for most of the six years of his membership. The Chairman announced that at 8.00 pm the meeting will briefly adjourn to allow Members to observe the planned national 'Day of Reflection' organised by the Marie Curie Charity.

2020/21/073

Parishioners' Open Forum: there were no parishioners present.

2020/21/074

Apologies: Cllr A Mackenzie (late apology).

Parish Councillors present: Cllr D Cutts (Chairman); Cllrs T Burt, H Culpin, B O'Connell, L Taylor, S Taylor, H Jackson and B Perks.

Cllr J Norton (MDDC) was also present.

Cllr R Radford (DCC) and Cllr C Collis (MDDC) were not present. The Clerk confirmed that they had been invited to attend.

2020/21/075

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Parish Council held on 26 January 2021 were accepted as a true record by the unanimous vote of Members, all having been present.

- a pdf version of these minutes will be sent to Cllr Culpin for posting on the website. The approved Minutes will be signed by Cllr Cutts at a later date.

- Matters arising: none.

- Declarations of Interests: none made.

2020/21/076

Planning matters: the Clerk had circulated a summary list of planning applications updated to 17 March 2021. Details noted.

- 21/00431/CAT: Members agreed unanimously that the Parish Council supports this application to fell an acacia tree at 30 Lower Town and instructed the Clerk to respond to MDDC accordingly.

- 20/00748/FULL: change of use of land from commercial to residential use, including demolition of a building and erection of a single storey dwelling: 22 Lower Town.

Cllr Norton has spoken to the Planning Officer to confirm that this application is to be called into Committee if the Planning Officer is minded to grant permission under delegated powers.

Cllr Norton advised that a likely date is 14 April which she may not be able to attend.

Cllr Burt expressed thanks on behalf of the Parish Council to Cllr Norton for her support of the objections to the proposed development.

continued.....

2020/21/076 continued.....

- Higher Town Appeal: the Public Inquiry is now closed: the Inspector's decision following an exchange of submissions regarding the NE access to the site from Higher Town is still awaited.

2020/21/077

Finance

a) Payments made since last business meeting (26.1.21):

1.2.21: MDDC: grass cutting 2020/21: £1,471.24. This payment replaced that issued at the 26.1.21 meeting (£1,872.20 cheque cancelled). (Reference my e-mail to Members on 31.1.21). Noted.

b) Statement of Accounts: as at 1 March 2021 balances were as follows...

Business Reserve account: £3,967.44 (sheet 122)

Current account: £15,532.64 (sheet 354): Members noted that this balance now includes £888.24 (unchanged) held in the name of the former Parish Plan Group and £227.00 held in the name of the Sampford Peverell Play Park Appeal.

Members voted unanimously to accept the statement given, copies of the relevant bank statements (nos.122 and 354) having been sent to the Chairman before the meeting in order to demonstrate reconciliation.

The Chairman asked that monies held on behalf of the Play Park Appeal be sent to the Village Hall Charity. The Clerk will raise the appropriate cheque for release of funds at the end of the financial year at the next meeting of SPPC.

c) Authority to pay accounts rendered:

i) M J Aspray: Clerk's salary 2 & 3/21: £642.00

ii) M J Aspray: Clerk's expenses to 31.3.21: £17.28

iii) Bernard O'Connell: toilets locking (61 days @ £2.00 per day): £122.00 **

iv) Bernard O'Connell: toilets cleaning (61 days @ £7.00 per day): £427.00 ** ##

v) Peter Bowers: refund re apple tree purchase: £17.00

vi) F Harding: refund of agreed 50% of tree works on southern boundary of the Sports Field: £400.00

** for the period 30.1.21 to 31.3.21 (61 days)

to be charged to MDDC

Six cheques to be issued with the unanimous approval of Members.

[Note: details/invoices sent to Members re items ii), iii), iv), v), and vi) on 17 March.]

d) other finance matters: expressions of thanks from Mid Devon Mobility and Citizen's Advice for recent donations noted.

2020/21/078

Public Convenience Development Group: the Clerk reported that the latest re-draft of the lease surrender deed is awaited from MDDC's legal department. Quotations for the phase one of the works to remodel the existing building are now needed (at least three). Members were in unanimous agreement for the purchase of six bottles of wine up to a maximum value of £40.00 as a gift in recognition for legal advice about the deed. Bernie O'Connell was asked to keep a record of purchases (with receipts) of materials purchased for upkeep of the toilet. It is expected that the Parish Council will assume liability for supply of these materials from 1 April 2021.

Bernard O'Connell continues to clean the disabled toilet on a daily basis (the gent's and ladies' sections remaining closed) combining this work with daily locking and unlocking. He has submitted further invoices for this and for the cleaning and light maintenance for the continued.....

2020/21/078 continued.....

61-day period of 30 January to 31 March 2021. These invoices have been submitted, and the payments involved authorised by this meeting.

2020/21/079

Climate Change issues: Cllr Burt tabled the response to the Devon Carbon Plan that he has submitted on behalf of the Parish Council. He continues to represent SPPC in the Culm Valley group.

Noting the contribution made by Cllr Elizabeth Wainwright (MDDC) towards MDDC's carbon reduction plan, concern was expressed that she had been sacked from the Cabinet, her role being taken over by the Member covering environment issues, Cllr Colin Slade.

Cllr Burt reported that the response to the fruit tree offer had been disappointing. The offer will be put on hold until the autumn and wider publicity employed. Cllr Burt will discuss with Peter Bowers other tree types that could be offered for the smaller gardens that many now have.

The meeting adjourned briefly at 8.00 pm.

2020/21/080

Reports from Working Group (WG) Chairmen and holders of individual portfolios:

a) Communications and Engagement WG: Cllrs Culpin and Jackson had nothing to report.

b) Roads, Pavements and Paths (Environmental) WG: Cllr Burt reported that he and Cllr S Taylor had recently walked around the village assessing the pot-hole situation. Some localised filling-in had been carried out in Boobery and Lower Town, but the general condition of village roads is poor. The Clerk to contact Cllr Radford.

c) Affordable Housing WG: Cllr Culpin had nothing to report from the Community Land Trust. All concerned are awaiting the outcome of the Higher Town Appeal.

d) Snow Warden: Cllr S Taylor is still seeking to reduce the level of stock of grit held.

e) Tidiness: Cllr Burt had nothing to report on the possibility of a village litter pick because MDDC cannot make the necessary equipment available due to the continuing Covid-19 crisis.

f) Defibrillator maintenance: Cllr S Taylor reported that all defibrillators in the village are OK. Noting the completed installation of the Higher Town unit, the Chairman thanked Steve for all his work in the sourcing and installation of it. The Clerk asked Cllr Taylor to send a photograph of the defibrillator to Ray Radford by way of thanks for the Locality Fund grant that enabled its purchase.

The Clerk confirmed that he had written to SOL Electrical Ltd to express thanks for the installation work that was provided FOC.

2020/21/081

Other highways and village matters:

a) grant from the Parish Magazine team: the creation of a Memorial Window for the Village Hall suggested at the previous meeting by Cllr O'Connell would cost around £400. It was proposed that Cllrs Jackson and O'Connell would work further on this. It may be necessary to instal a light behind the window.

It was noted that the benches in the recreation ground are well used: a further one was proposed (cost about £600). The Chairman to speak to Mark Baker about this (it being DCC land).

continued.....

2020/21/081 continued.....

This would leave about £400 for the purchase of trees.

Other suggestions for consideration:

- a village sign in the centre of the village
- planters near to car park entrance
- more litter bins (Cllr Perks suggested in the recreation ground, possibly a general purpose bin in place of the dog bin: Cllr Cutts to speak to Mark Baker about this suggestion.)

b) dog/litter bins: an application for an additional litter/dog bin on Station Road (as recommended by Cllr L Taylor) has been made to MDDC and is still pending a decision. One of the three damaged/defective dog bins reported by Cllr L Taylor is still difficult to use: the Clerk to report to MDDC staff.

c) grass cutting: MDDC's quotation for 2021/22, namely three cuts of DCC verges £1,212.03 (£404.01 per cut), with the verges in Station Road costing an additional £57.87 per cut. This was accepted unanimously by Members.

2020/21/082

Discussions with DCC and MDDC Members:

Cllr Radford (DCC) was not present but had written a report on County issues which had been circulated to Members by the Clerk on 19 March. It was largely concerned with budget issues.

Cllr Collis (MDDC) was not present.

Cllr Norton (MDDC) confirmed her involvement with the planning issue at 22 Lower Town. She also spoke of the disquiet of some Members of MDDC following the sacking of Cllr Wainwright from the Cabinet. They are calling for a 'State of the District' debate because of concerns over the way the Council conducts its business.

2020/21/083

Reports by Parish Council representatives:

a) VH & RG Charity Committee: Cllr Cutts reported that the Hall remains closed. The conifers on the southern boundary of the Whitnage Road Sports Field have been further reduced, following work by Hi-Line to protect overhead power lines, to permit the erection of ball-stop netting. That work has now been completed. It was agreed that a post and rail fence should be erected immediately to the south of the Devon bank.

b) Canal Advisory Committee: the monthly newsletters of the Friends of the Grand Western Canal for February and March 2021 have been circulated by the Clerk.

Cllr Cutts had attended the meeting of the GW Canal Joint Advisory Committee on 2 March. Cllr S Taylor reported the generally poor condition of bridge name plates in the parish.

c) Sampford Peverell Society: Cllr Culpin has circulated her report on Society activities. Noted.

d) SP & District Twinning Association: Cllr L Taylor had circulated information from the Association: it is felt unlikely that a twinning visit will be able to take place this year.

e) Tree Wardens: the Clerk read to the meeting the March 2021 report from Peter Bowers covering apple tree planting in the Community Orchard as well as limited work elsewhere in the village. The Wardens are waiting for the lifting of lockdown restrictions in order to complete the protection of the trees in the orchard.

continued.....

2020/21/083 e) continued.....

The Clerk reported a recent telephone conversation with Mrs Mavis Farley in which he was asked to pass on her thanks to all involved in the planting of daffodils around the village in the previous autumn. The Clerk was asked to pass on this message to Peter Bowers.

2020/21/084

Correspondence has been circulated by e-mail: noted.

2020/21/085

Other matters by leave of the Chairman: Cllr Culpin reported the approach by a student seeking to encourage children to read. The year-7 student from Uffculme School wishes to organise a children's section in the telephone box book swap. Cllr Culpin has agreed that this can be done, offering help to clear space if necessary.

Cllr Culpin has also been approached by Mr Peter Drew who has suggested putting up more shelving to reduce the chance of books falling onto the floor. He has suggested a scheme that avoids the necessity of drilling into the phone box itself. His estimated cost for materials is £20 to £30. It was unanimously agreed that this can go ahead.

It has been suggested to Cllr Culpin that the phone box is beginning to look rather shabby, being in need of re-painting. She has taken advice and obtained an estimate of the costs of materials involved, namely £100 to £150, assuming that the work is done by local volunteers. Again, Members were in unanimous agreement that this work should go ahead as soon as weather permits.

2020/21/086

It was noted and agreed that the next bimonthly business meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 4 May 2021. This will be the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, being the first meeting of the new municipal year. It will be preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting. Both meetings will be virtual using 'Zoom'.

There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 9.15 pm.