

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council, which took place on Monday 14 January at the Village Hall at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT Cllrs Rowswell (Chair), Bishop, Cripps, England, Fowler, Hallett, Lillywhite, Wakely, Messrs P Thompson & B Walker (District Councillors), P Maxwell (County Councillor) and 3 parishioners.

CASUAL VACANCY

Cllr Cripps proposed and Cllr England seconded the co-option of Chris Willoughby to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Toby Lewis and all were in favour.

COUNCILLOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The list of responsibilities was reviewed, adding Cllrs Bishop and Lillywhite to the Planning Sub-Committee and Cllrs Wakely and Willoughby as Recreation Committee representatives.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Bishop spoke about the possible erection of a dwelling on land adjacent to his farm and would have no objections to a single house.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The new Code of Conduct was adopted.

MINUTES The Minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed and signed.

MATTERS ARISING

Grit Bin Cllr Rowswell will obtain a shovel for use in the grit bin.

Footpath Map Cllr Lillywhite offered to enlarge the footpath map and copies will be displayed on the Cowleaze Noticeboard and at the Shop.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Bishop, as neighbour, declared an interest in the possible erection of a dwelling on land adjacent to Hillside Farm.

DC REPORT

Mr Thompson spoke of changes to the Council Tax system and said the Local Plan would be considered at the next meeting.

Mr Walker spoke of concerns that rural communities may have to bear the brunt of Government cuts as some services will be devolved to local Councils.

CC REPORT

Mr Maxwell advised that, from 1 April, the County Council became the responsible authority for flood prevention.

The County Council had signed a contract with British Telecom for Superfast Broadband, which should be in place by 2015.

Some bus services are under threat again and there is pressure on the education budget.

PLANNING

There were no objections to an application to erect a two storey rear extension to Valetta, North Street.

Permission has been granted for the erection of ground and first floor extension to Stanley House, Middle Street.

POSSIBLE ERECTION OF DWELLING ADJACENT TO HILLSIDE FARM

Cllr Bishop left the room while this item was discussed.

The applicant spoke of his plans and said he had met the Planning Officer and the outcome was positive. The proposal is a four bedroom family home built of hamstone with reclaimed roof tiles in character with the village. As a benefit to the community, drainage improvements are planned.

The Councillors gave their views, some preferring a single storey dwelling.

Cllr Rowswell added that, with the absence of a building line, planning applications are now to be considered on their own merits.

The Councillors were generally in favour, subject to approving the plans.

FLOODING

Cllr Rowswell had received letters and calls about flooding and silt deposits, especially in Love Lane, and she had spoken to the Highways Department and a silt drain is being considered for the top of Love Lane. A further meeting will be arranged with Mike Fear. The Clerk had obtained a copy of the Emergency Flood Plan compiled for Porlock and this will be circulated.

ACCOUNTS

The Clerk granted dispensation for the Councillors to discuss the Precept, in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, and the figure agreed for the coming year was £11,000.

Cheques were drawn for:

Shepton Beauchamp Village Hall – Grant	£500.00
Shepton Beauchamp PCC – Grant	1,000.00

SCHOOL

The Parish Council were delighted to hear of the recent very commendable OFSTED report on the School and the Headteacher and Chair of Governors will be congratulated.

PARISH PLAN

The Events Team will be giving a presentation on their achievements and their future plans during an event in the Village Hall on 19 January from 3 – 5 pm.

LENGTHSMAN

The Lengthsman has been clearing silt from the tops of the drains but it has been made difficult by landslips above some of the gratings.

HIGHWAYS

Cllr Fowler said that speeding through the village had become more of a problem recently and enquiries will be made about the possibility of a 20 mph speed limit near the School.

FOOTPATHS

Cllr Cripps advised that a bank had collapsed at Cowleaze so it had been necessary to block off the kissing gate and remove a section of the fence as a temporary measure. The Rights of Way Officer will be asked to resolve the situation.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.