MINUTES OF SPARKWELL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on 9th October 2018 at Sparkwell Parish Hall

**Present**: Cllrs Taylor, Small, Lee, Pearson-Bunt, Hughes, Milford,

Dawn Johnson (Clerk)

**In attendance**: Cllr John Hart (DCC), Cllr Keith Baldry (SHDC), Dave Black and Hannah Clark (DCC Highways Transport Planning)

**Apologies for Absence**: Cllrs May, Peacham and Ashley, Cllr Blackler (SHDC), PC Lynch, Elaine Budd (Wolf Minerals),

Cllr Taylor, who was Chairing the meeting in the absence of Cllr May, asked that the meeting be conducted in a different order to that stated in the Agenda to allow Cllrs Hart and Baldry and the representatives from Devon County Highways to leave the matter as soon as possible. All agreed.

**110/18 District Councillors Business**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Blackler but a report had been supplied which the Clerk read out:

1. A new People’s Bank is to be established “ South West Mutual” which is a customer owned bank. Among the advantages is that it will assist non-users of the internet and help cash only users. It will take about 2 years to set up.
2. The cost of maintaining all toilets in the South Hams is approx. £747,000.
3. S106 money over the last 5 years has amounted to £11,321,517 for Affordable Housing.
4. SHDC are permitted to borrow £60m for commercial investment to derive an income; only £30m up to April next year.
5. The budget gap for 19/20 is estimated to be £0.638m and increasing year on year.
6. The next District election is May next year and there are candidates for most seats

Cllr Baldry reported:

1. Regarding the £60m borrowing, it is agreed that it is as investments which will include investing in local business and some housing projects. The intention is that SHDC will make a better return than if money was sat in the bank. It is only being spent in the South Hams area, unlike other Councils who will be investing outside of their District.
2. The public toilet closures are in three parts; some will stay open, some will be pay on entry, and the third category, which he opposes, is that in smaller towns and villages, unless the town/parish councils take them over, they will be closed. Cllr Baldry believes that there are many reasons for keeping toilets open including health, tourists and for local people. He is opposing the closures.
3. A decision will be taken by SHDC as to whether to privatise the refuse collection service and there are two viable bidders being considered. Cllr Baldry is sceptical as to how a private concern can provide the service for less than the SHDC costs and also make a profit.

Cllr Pearson-Bunt asked why SHDC is not inviting an inhouse bid and Cllr Baldry explained that Contractors have said that they do not like bidding against inhouse bids as they believe the contracts are always awarded inhouse so little in point in them bidding.

Cllr Hughes asked about the proposed Place Lands development in Lee Mill. The application had come forward again with the addition of village hall. She said that it would appear that there had been discussions with planners and that Cllr Blacker was also present although there had been no report. Cllr Baldry confirmed the assurance that local and parish councillors would be included in all discussions. Cllr Hughes said that Place Lands are now stating that there will be no more meetings and they appeared to be trying to duck out of contributions to the Highways. If this is true then there is no reason to support the application at all. Cllr Baldry confirmed that £660,000 is what was agreed to and we will have to wait and see what happens; Cllr Baldry will continue to oppose it, the reasons why the Committee went for deferment have not been met and he would continue to argue that it should be refused.

Cllr Taylor said that two possible sites had been suggested for the community facilities but it would a very small village hall on a very small site and is not something that Lee Mill wants. Cllr Baldry said that it would take a lot more than a village hall to turn Lee Mill back into a proper village and the highway matters are appalling.

Cllr Baldry then left the meeting.

**112/18 Open Forum**

b. Hannah Clark and Dave Black (Devon County Council Highways) introduced themselves and delivered a presentation to the Councillors including:

They said they were aware of issues in Lee Mill and Ivybridge so have done a lot of data collection over last 18 months. They showed an old map which displayed current, paused and potential waste sites in the area. There was a series of sites which is why the transport study was done. He said that just because a site is paused it does not mean they won’t come back again.

There were concerns that the east bound slip road is not fit for purpose and not suitable for heavy vehicles.

DCC was in negotiation to secure land for a new slip road before discussions with Highways England could take place. If they were successful, it would mean putting the off slip closer to the on slip.

Cllr Lee asked whether they are confident that the land would give them enough land to do what they need to do. They confirmed that more would be needed but the first thing is to secure the land and once they have it they can go to scheme design and that will tell them how much extra land they need to acquire. There was discussion around which land would be needed and ownership, DCC does not own any of the land.

Cllr Taylor said that the Parish Council would be supportive of the proposal

Hannah Clark said that it was an ambitious scheme which could take a long time to deliver but if they can secure the land then that is the first step to progressing the scheme.

Dave Black said that the proposed developer may say there is no scheme so there is nothing to contribute to. Once the land is secured then they can publish their proposals, involve Highways England and get contributions towards it. The negotiations were at this stage still confidential and they would notify the Clerk as soon as there was news.

Cllr Taylor confirmed that while Lee Mill wants better access, it does not want another 110 houses as there were not enough amenities.

**111/18 County Councillors Business**

Cllr Hart reported:

1. Currently the budget is overheating on Childrens’ Services by some £8M. There were major issues coming particularly with so many children having to go into care. These circumstances are all unplanned. Other budget headlines other are in good shape and he wasn’t too worried at this stage as experience over the last few years showed that budgets that were well over at this stage in the budget year, managed to come back by February. Extra money has been put in from reserves. Money from business rates was not budgeted and some will be used to change the way they can operate with children to ensure they stay with families rather than being put into local care.
2. It looks like a reduction of £20M will be needed for next year’s budget. DCC have done a good job in making savings but it is getting more difficult particularly as some of the new government dictates’ mean that they need to employ more staff rather than reducing numbers. The reduction in staff is now showing.
3. The road repairs programme is going well and less people were complaining. They have invested a lot of money in drainage, patching and potholes. They have a new dragon machine for filling potholes which is great. There was a long time between placing the contract and getting the machine but they now have it and it is working well.
4. With regard to Wolf, he didn’t know any more than what has been heard today; they need new funding and if they don’t get it, then they have a problem. Shares have been suspended and everyone is holding their breath at the moment. There are lots of people employed and a lot of money has been put in. Other tungsten mines have closed but they are older ones and this one is supposed to be up to date.

Cllr Hughes said that she was at the DALC AGM and had heard the Chief Executive talk about priorities for local enterprise partnership. His view was that they couldn’t go for everything so thought that communications/broadband was a priority rather than road and rail. Cllr Hart said that the latest contractor admitted they had wasted 18 months in getting set up. They were now moving in the South Hams and had said they would need to isolate Wembury for 3 weeks with no traffic going in! The same company is using different contractors in East Devon where the small business federation had congratulated him on way the East Devon team is working. There was a mixed bag with contractors and sub-contractors. The company is running late and have been told they must get on as there is a deadline for spending the money.

Cllr Hart was asked about integrating health and social care. He confirmed that that the Western CCG is being integrated and they are also working with Cornwall. They are getting better with new works arrangement with Health; there has been an experiment in North Devon resulting in evacuating hospital beds a lot quicker. They are not going to save money but it will mean being able to treat more people.

Plymouth Hospital has some issues of its own so they have to be reminded that a good number of patients come from South Devon and South East Cornwall so they need to look wider than the City itself.

Cllr Hart confirmed that DCC is still solvent but a lot of money has to be saved in year to stay solvent for next year. The Minister for Brexit had visited yesterday to ask what would be wanted if there was a hard Brexit.

Cllr Small asked what was happening with the buses. Cllr Hart said that DCC had kept the subsidy on the buses and has picked up the bill for the over 65 bus passes which is £5M over what the Government gives them. They are spending money to keep the buses going.

There was discussion around the Challonsleigh waste transfer application which was withdrawn but then came back with a change. It was out for consultation at the moment. Highways had said that the traffic can’t go through Lee Mill; developers have now said they can go to Ivybridge but this issue needs to be looked at.

Cllr Hughes asked where the waste is coming from as Sherford should hold its own. Cllr Hart had asked but has not had an answer.

Cllr Hart, Dave Black and Hannah Clark then left the meeting.

**112/18 Open Forum**

* 1. Wolf Update – The Clerk had received an email saying that the Elaine Budd was unable to attend and had sent apologies. If there are any queries then these could be emailed.
	2. Devon County Highways - already discussed above.
	3. Planning application Challonsleigh Farm, Smithaleigh update

 No more information other than the traffic issues.

**110/18 Police Business**

Apologies had been received from PC Lynch but a report had been supplied which the Clerk read out – see attached.

Cllr Pearson-Bunt expressed concern that although work had been done on side of the road which had improved the situation, Travellers keep coming back to the site so whatever is being done to prevent their return is not working. She would question whether there is a policy on this or are we deemed as not being effective in removing them?

There was discussion about the history of the site and the current position that Langage is still being developed. Cllr Taylor said he believed that DCC would never allow it to become an encampment next to the power station.

***Action*** *- Clerk to contact the Cllr Hart to ask what their policy is with regard to travellers on the site and ask for re-assurance.*

**113/18 Declarations of Interest**

None

**114/18 Approval of Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th September 2018 were approved by all present subject to an alteration by Cllr Pearson-Bunt on page 5, and signed by the Chairman.

**115/18 Matters Arising**

1. Recycling bags – The Clerk had emailed Localities at South Hams twice to request bags but had not received a response. Cllr Pearson-Bunt had obtained some bags from Ivybridge library.
2. Venton Noticeboard – the clerk reported that a petition had been received signed by all but one resident, the but one being on holiday, requesting that a board be retained in Venton.

After discussion it was agreed that the board be replaced.

***Action*** *– Clerk to contact resident to express concern about the location of the board and to ask whether there was a better location. Clerk to arrange removing and installation of new board.*

**116/18 GDPR Briefing update**

1. Update further to the Briefing in June 2018. Discussion about being more aware of Data Protection. Ensuring that we do not keep unnecessary data; most of the information kept by the PC was in fact public information. All were taking reasonable steps.

**117/18 Planning**

1. Lawful Development Application, Elfordleigh
Land being used for storage purposes. It would appear that it had planning permission since 1956 for storage and vehicles on the piece of land. Cllr Ashley has inspected and suggests the PC support the application as it was a lawful use of the land.
Agreed.
2. Revised plan for Place Land 110 houses plus Village Hall sites
Re-advertisement of this application. We know that traffic is a big problem and would not be fixed with the new proposed slip road (if that proceeds). People in Lee Mill do not want a further 110 houses. Cllr Hughes says it distorts the village and could not understand why a road safety audit was not being asked for. There couldn’t be a worse place for the traffic to come out. Both possible sites for a village hall were out of the village and accessed from New Park Road.

There was a discussion and as a result it was felt that a village hall did not swing anything and that the PC stuck to its opinion that the traffic is an issue and that it is contrary to work that SHDC did on joint local plan. There were better areas for a development that would be more suitable and logical.

Cllr Pearson-Bunt said that we should be asking for infrastructure as well so it becomes a village in its own right.
Decision – continue to object.

1. Land along Holland Road/Beechwood Way
Changes to landscaping drainage and fencing.
Supported.
2. Application for major conversions to Smithaleigh Hotel
Convert hotel rooms into residences.
There was a detailed plan in September 2017 to convert the farmhouse and part of the hotel which was turned down. It was Appealed and the decision upheld.
Cllr Hughes had inspected the site. The previous application had been rejected over amenity space outside and the quality of accommodation which had no windows. There was also an issue regarding highway safety, specifically a footpath to the garage and adequate provision for affordable housing and education facilities. The amenity issue had been resolved for most properties except for unit 9 which is on the end at the bus stop, the bedroom was at a lower level so could not open the window. They seem to have tried to meet all other requirements apart from appearing to trying to duck out of affordable housing and education viability assessment. It is essential that they meet the requirement; where are the children going to school as Ivybridge is already beyond capacity?
Decision, support subject to suitable planning conditions being imposed, taking into account recommendations from the Inspector.
3. Re-application of previous consent for second storey to existing bungalow in Hemerdon - time expired.
Decision - Supported
4. Radio Mast for Airband east of Mine consultation area. Previously turned down.
Decision – would like to retain the mine consultation area.

**118/18 Road & Snow Warden**

Apologies received, no report.

Cllr Pearson-Bunt said that while Hemerdon was well resourced, there didn’t seem to be people active and willing in Sparkwell, although one resident is normally wiling to go around and distribute salt. Could we have an arrangement with a local farmer who would be willing to assist if needed?

***Action*** *– Request Cllrs Peacham and May to come up with the plan.*

**119/18 Chairman’s Business**

Cllr Taylor discussed a Planning application to convert a derelict barn into a disabled building for the owners of the current house to move into. The barn is not visible to anyone and was supported by the Parish Council. The application was however refused by SHDC saying that it was not sustainable as there were no transport links - but there are buses and bridle paths and people walk. The owners have appealed and Gary Streeter MP has looked at situation and said he would write a letter of support and the owners have asked whether Parish Council would also provide a letter of support..

After discussion it was agreed that as the Parish Council had supported the original planning application that it would provide a letter of support

**120/18 Correspondence**

* 1. Cllr Baldry has confirmed that the wall referred to in Minute 105/ 18 (on the road from Smithaleigh to Yealmpton) has planning permission
	2. The Clerk had circulated an invitation to the opening of the showhouse at Fairways Gardens. Cllr Taylor confirmed he would be attending.

**121/18 Finance**

1. Bank reconciliation verification
The Clerk explained that the new Finance Regulations adopted in September stated that a member (not a signatory) was required to check the bank reconciliation every six months.

It was agreed that Cllr Hughes would undertake the role with the first review in January 2019.

1. The Clerk asked for approval to pay grants in November all of which were agreed in budget:

£150 to CAB
Agreed

***Action*** *– Clerk to contact CAB to enquire what funding is being used for, what sort of figure will be appropriate for next year and whether they supported people in Sparkwell Parish?*

 £400 to Parish Pump

 Agreed as it is felt the Pump is part of the community and picks up people not online.

***Action*** *– Clerk to the Parish Pump Editor to say that it was pleased to sponsor for the current year but that it would want to see accounts for April 2019.*

 £500 to Sparkwell Cemetery

 Agreed.

1. The Clerk asked for approval for the following Virements:

 £191 from Transparency fund into Equipment (for printer/scanner)

 £100 from Admin to Travel

 £100 from Admin to Subscriptions

 £5 from Admin to s137 Poppy

 £100 from Admin to Training (leaves £265 in Admin budget)

Agreed

1. Budget Analysis September 2018 (attached)
2. Bank Reconciliation September 2018 (attached)

**122/18 Payments and Receipts**

1. Receipt – SHDS Second Precept payment £5,115.00

The Clerk explained that the new Bank account with Lloyds Bank was open and that the four signatories had been set up for online banking and she was a delegate user able to set up payments. Money now needed to be put into the new account and the online banking system tested to see how it works. We would run the Lloyds Bank account alongside the existing Nat West account, looking to close down the latter at the end of the financial year.

1. Lloyds Bank £10,000 (transfer to new account) (cheque)
2. Lady Haig’s Poppy Factory - £34.00 (cheque)
3. Clerk Salary - £206.02 (online payment)
4. Clerk expenses - £265.00 (online payment)
5. Payroll4Business - £30.00 x3 months (online payment)

**123/18 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on the 13th November 2018 at Sparkwell Parish Hall commencing at 7pm.

Meeting closed at 9.17pm

This is a true and accurate record of the meeting

Signed ……………………………………………………………….

Name ……………………………………………………………….. Date ………………………………………………

**SPARKWELL, HEMERDON AND LANGAGE PARISH POLICE CRIME REPORT**

**September 2018**

**Crimes;** 2

* 07/09/2018 – Use threatening / abusive / insulting words / behaviour with intent to cause fear of / provoke unlawful violence. – Not supported
* 16/09/2018 - In charge of vehicle whilst unfit through drugs – Under investigation.

**Logs of Note;** 37

**Information;**

1. Langage – We are aware of the Travellers and a meeting is being conducted to discuss with all resources.
2. PC Dingley is currently on an attachment until Monday 10th December. I am PC 5890 Holly Lynch, who will be covering for the time being. I can be contacted via email, Holly.LYNCH@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

Please direct the requests for Police crime reports to me for the months of September, October & November.