

ADOPTED
BISHOPS LYDEARD & COTHELSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council: Mrs A Shepherd, Rose Cottage, Oldway Lane, Wrantage, Taunton, TA3 6DE.
Phone: 01823 412922 Email: clerk@bishopslydeard.org Website: <http://www.bishopslydeard.org.uk>

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 9th February 2022 at 7pm at Bishops Lydeard Village Hall.

Persons present: Cllrs Martin (Chair), Morency (Vice Chair), Allen, Armstrong, Pattermore, Hunt, Watson, Russell, and Lewin-Harris.

Persons absent: Cllrs Warmington and Rigby.

In attendance: Mrs Amy Shepherd (Clerk), PCSO Vicky Henderson, Sarah Berkeley and Paul Henderson (Airband), a representative of Connecting Devon and Somerset Broadband, Lisa Harvey (Headteacher, Bishops Lydeard Primary School), David Williams (Chair of Governors, Bishops Lydeard Primary School) and 5 members of the public.

223/21 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Warmington and Rigby.

224/21 Declarations of interest relating to matters on the agenda

Cllr Watson declared a prejudicial interest in respect of item 18 'Cleaning of public conveniences and library'.

Cllrs Lewin-Harris and Pattermore declared personal interests in respect of item 15 'To discuss MUGA repairs / replacement' as members of the MUGA Committee.

Cllr Morency declared a personal interest in respect of item 14 'Road and Traffic Issues update' as a resident of Quantock View.

225/21 Adoption of the minutes of the meeting held on 12th January 2022

The minutes from the Parish Council meeting on 12th January 2022 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

226/21 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

227/21 Clerk's Report

Clerk's report was read to the council (attachment 1).

Clerk to respond to food trader request suggesting that they operate on a Tuesday evening when the Chinese is closed.

Clerk to add an item in respect of Woodland Walk to the agenda for the next meeting

Clerk to obtain quotes for dropped kerbs at Darby Way to consider at the next meeting.

Clerk to request the Parish Lengthsman refurbish the Darby Way noticeboard

Clerk to liaise with SWT regarding the repair of the Darby Way bus shelter.

228/21 Chairman's Report

Chair reported that he had carried out the following activities since the last Parish Council meeting:

Held a site meeting with TPA to review the locations for projects in the village. A summary of the meeting has been circulated to Councillors.

Held meetings with the Clerk, Cllr Morency and Mr Durban about the Quantock View Parking Proposal. Attended on behalf of the Parish Council the service at the Church where Rev Mark Hurley was formally installed as Rector of Bishops Lydeard Parish on 3rd February 2022.

229/21 Comments from members of the public on matters not listed on the agenda

Members of the public present at the meeting had no comments to make.

230/21 Planning applications for comment

No planning applications were received to consider.

231/21 To receive an update from Bishops Lydeard Primary School

Lisa Harvey, Headteacher and David Williams, the Chair of Governors at Bishops Lydeard Primary School provided an update in relation to activities at the School.

Lisa Harvey has been in post for 2.5 years and her focus has been on taking steps to improve the OFSTED rating. An OFSTED inspection is imminent. There has been a reduction in pupil numbers at the school but that has been followed by a gradual increase in numbers this year and the school is now close to capacity on its current class structure. The Nursery is also open and supports 20 families.

Cllr Morency requested an update in relation to the trees that need reducing in height on the school premises. Lisa Harvey confirmed that a contractor had been to look at the trees, the overhanging branches will be taken care of but that there is a need to understand which trees are affecting properties in Quantock View to established which ones need to be reduced in height.

Cllr Morency expressed safety concerns about pupils walking up Quantock View from Mount Street to use the back entrance of the school; a measure that was in place during Covid. Cllr Morency asked if children can start using the front entrance again once covid restrictions are lifted? Lisa Harvey confirmed that the entrances used by pupils could be reviewed once restrictions are lifted.

Finally, Cllr Morency asked if the school had any plans to extend. Lisa Harvey confirmed that there were no plans to extend at present.

Cllr Hunt asked if the Parish Council could do anything to support the school. Lisa Harvey confirmed that the school will develop a school brochure and any support to promote the school to entice new pupils would be useful. Lisa Harvey also stated that the school is struggling to recruit teaching staff – any promotion of opportunities that the Council could provide would also therefore be useful.

Chair requested confirmation of the current class structure. Lisa Harvey confirmed that 5 classes in total exist; 2 classes in key stage 1 / reception, one for year 3 / 4, one for year 4 / 5 and one for Year 6.

The agenda was interrupted to take item 21 'Avon and Somerset Police Report'

232/21 Avon and Somerset Police Report

PCSO Vicky Henderson attended the meeting and summarised the January Police Report tabled at the meeting.

The last reported incident of nails in tyres occurred on Friday 14th January – investigations are continuing.

A 20mph speed check in the village has been carried out and the results were disappointing. Cllr Hunt suggested that pace car stickers and stickers for other locations like bins may also help, perhaps with the involvement of the school. The Community Speed watch scheme was summarised. Clerk to circulate and publicise the information to gather volunteers.

The agenda was resumed.

233/21 To consider and discuss the Parish Path Liaison Officer Annual Report

The Annual Report, circulated in advance of the meeting, was discussed and noted. The Parish Council recorded its thanks to the Parish Path Liaison Officer for developing the report. One amendment was identified.

Clerk outlined an email received from the SCC ROW Officer, requesting that the Parish Council pays half the training costs for a volunteer to use a brush cutter to keep the rights of way clear from overgrowth. It was agreed that the Parish Council would pay half of the training costs for the volunteer.

234/21 To discuss Airband works in the Parish

Representatives of Airband attended the meeting to answer questions about the works that have taken place or are scheduled to take place in the village. Maps of the proposed / required work in the village was tabled at the meeting.

Airband is an enterprise funded by the Connecting Devon and Somerset Programme to provide a service to properties that have lower than threshold broadband speed. Airband will also provide a service to other properties that would like higher speeds. Airband as an Internet Service Provider will run in addition to the existing providers. Fibre will be run directly to the properties meaning that speeds are 5 to 10 times faster.

The charge for Airband Broadband starts at around £30.00 and a standard installation fee of £99.00 is normally payable.

There is a need for two new poles at Hither Mead due to the underground infrastructure being insufficient for the service required. Notices were put up advising of the work as is statutorily required but the new poles have resulted in complaints being received from some members of the public.

It was expressed that although notices were displayed, the Parish Council did not receive any information from Airband or receive a presentation about the works proposed and letters were not put through the doors of those impacted by the new infrastructure or general publicity about Airband and the services it will provide to local residents and businesses. Representatives of Airband accepted that the publicity and public relations in Bishops Lydeard had not been good enough and committed to leafleting the village to improve communications and public relations. Airband to send a copy of the leaflet to the Parish Council.

Airband confirmed that the work in the area should be completed by the end of June.

235/21 To discuss the Remembrance Sunday Parade

Lt Col RM Retd Steve Richards attended the meeting and tabled a briefing paper putting forward representations that Mount Street in Bishops Lydeard should be formally closed for the Remembrance Sunday Parade 2022. The need to close the road is supported by the local Police Sargeant.

Following discussion about what was involved and the cost of making a formal application to close the road, the following actions were agreed:

- Steve Richards / John Collier to make contact with Church representatives about establishing a community group to oversee the Remembrance Sunday Parade 2022.
- Once established the Community Group to develop proposals for the parade and make a formal request to the Parish Council to pay for the cost of the formal road closure application.
- Clerk to contact the Somerset Armed Forces Covenant to seek advice, establish if other formal road closures are requested for other Remembrance Sunday services in Somerset and to see if a reduction in the cost of the application could be agreed.

236/21 Station View Open Space Update

The results of the consultation exercise carried out with residents in Station Green and Station View was tabled at the meeting and discussed. A total of 12 responses were received. All of the responses were in support of the proposal but comments made about finding an alternative location for a football goal and not including a toddler play park in the proposal were noted.

It was agreed that:

- The Clerk would request a site meeting with representatives of SWT at the Railway Playpark about the siting of goal posts.
- The proposal for the POS would proceed without the toddler playpark provision.
- Clerk to invite contractors to quote / bid to deliver the proposal.

237/21 Road and Traffic Issues

Chair provided an update on the two main pieces of work relating to road and traffic issues:

Quantock View Parking Proposal

Work is underway to obtain a topographical survey for Quantock View which will enable detailed drawings / plans to be developed.

Jim Bletcher has confirmed his willingness to act as the Project Manager for the works and would charge an hourly rate for the work undertaken.

Chair confirmed that a virtual meeting is scheduled to take place later this week with Mr Durban and the Headteacher to consider a number of requests put forward by Mr Durban on behalf of the South Side Residents Group including lines at the back of the school, double yellow lines at locations in Quantock View and restrictions on the use of the new parking bays.

Cothelstone Road Raised Crossing and Gateway Feature:

Meeting to be arranged with Highways to take proposals forward. Proposals include a raised crossing at the football ground and a gateway feature at Pound Lane.

Concern was expressed by Councillors about vehicles reducing their speeds from 60 to 20mph at the football ground location. Chair to explore this further with TPA and / or SCC Highways including a section of 30mph speed limit between the existing 60 and 20mph speed limits.

Cllr Lewin-Harris suggested the addition of a Speed Indicator Device at the location. Clerk to gather quotes for consideration at the next meeting.

Cllr Armstrong requested an update in relation to the 20mph speed limit on the Railway Station side of A358. Chair confirmed that Cllr Rigby is liaising with Highways regarding the extension of 20mph speed limit. It is likely that physical work to the roadway will be required to slow vehicle speeds.

Councillors confirmed that they were content with the updates provided in respect of the two main pieces of work and were supportive of the direction of travel.

Councillors to look through the possible gateway options provided by TPA and send their suggestions, thoughts and preferences.

238/21 To discuss MUGA repairs / replacement

Chair confirmed that following approval at the last meeting, Jim Bletcher has sent the specifications to contractors inviting them to tender for both options (repair and replacement). The deadline for the submission of tenders is the end of February.

239/21 To discuss hanging baskets for 2022 and consider quotes

Clerk outlined the quotes received for hanging baskets in the village for 2022.

It was agreed to order up to 57 plastic baskets, requiring watering twice a week and the replacement of 10 existing brackets in the village. A request for the basket planting to be red, white and blue for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee also to be made.

Letters to be sent to local businesses and David Wilson Homes requesting sponsorship and an article to be added to Fiveways requesting donations towards the cost of delivering the baskets.

240/21 To discuss the update of the Welcome Pack

Cllr Pattemore suggested that consideration of updating the Welcome Pack be delayed for six months. It was agreed that the Clerk add an item to an agenda for a future meeting.

Cllr Watson left the meeting at 9.05pm

241/21 Cleaning of public conveniences and library

Clerk outlined the current cleaning contract monthly cost and the cost of three alternative cleaning contractors. It was proposed, seconded and agreed with all in favour that the quote provided for cleaning of the public conveniences and library provided by AIS Cleaning Contractors was accepted.

Cllr Watson rejoined the meeting at 9.07pm

242/21 Update regarding Climate Change

It was agreed to defer full consideration of this item until the next meeting. A proposed survey was tabled at the meeting by Cllr Russell, Councillors to send any thoughts or comments on the survey to Cllr Russell. Cllr Russell also confirmed that he was in the process of developing an Emergency Planning Document for the Parish Council using the document in place at Bicknoller Parish Council.

243/21 To receive an update on the Platinum Jubilee Picnic Lunch

Cllr Hunt outlined proposals to hold a simple picnic lunch on the village green for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The yarnbombers have also confirmed that they are happy to create decorations for the village for the Platinum Jubilee. Cllr Hunt confirmed that she was happy to organise a small event like this but that there appeared to be appetite from people to expand the event and put on more activities. Cllr Hunt confirmed that she did not have the capacity to organise a large event.

Cllr Allen agreed to take the picnic lunch proposal back to the Village Hall Management Committee to see if the Village Hall would like to organise a series of events over the Platinum Jubilee weekend. Clerk to add an item to the agenda for the next meeting to agree next steps.

244/21 Parish Lengthsman Report

The Parish Lengthsman Report for January was tabled at the meeting and its contents noted.

Cllr Allen requested if litter from litter picks could be left between the gateway to the MUGA and the goal mouth for collection by SWT in the future.

Cllr Allen requested that installation of the new litter bin to replace the one next to the MUGA is chased. Clerk to chase.

245/21 Somerset County Council and Somerset West and Taunton Council matters

In Cllr Rigby's absence the Chair summarised a report received in advance of the meeting which reported on the following:

Sandhill Park Emergency Works Package - information has been submitted, additional detail required. Due by 24th February 2022. If acceptable, the plans will be approved and the work undertaken by the owners shortly afterwards. If not, SWAT can do the work ourselves, using the £800,000 lodged by the owners in an Escrow account.

Speed limits - I am very pleased that the 20mph limit is now in place across much of Bishops Lydeard. While I would have preferred that this had been implemented more quickly, and used the county council

rather than the parish council's funds, the long gestation period has at least enabled the limit to be applied to a much wider basis than was originally thought possible; Taunton Road, Hither Mead, all of West Street, and more of High Street/Cothelstone Road have been included than initially suggested. Anecdotally, people tell me that they feel that average speeds have reduced and I see a lot of local cars sticking rigidly to the limit, which similarly restricts the speed of vehicles in the 'platoon' behind them. We still get the odd inconsiderate driver travelling at significantly more than the speed limit but I hope that the physical measures planned by the parish council will help to address that. After a bedding-in period, I will organise some speed recording so that we can compare with pre-existing speeds. Having completed this project, I have turned my attention to the part of the village to the west of the A358, which due to higher existing speeds, was not able to be treated in the same way as the eastern part of the village has been. This week I met a highway engineer on site to examine what could be done. As usual, the county council has no money, so any physical measures would need to be funded by the parish council. We are approaching the issue in two phases. Firstly, residents will have seen some fairly extensive patching work undertaken on Greenway Road in the last few weeks. This is precursory to the road being surface dressed this summer. At that point, all the lining will obviously need to be replaced and there is therefore an opportunity to change the lining scheme to promote lower speeds. For example, edge lining 50cm in from the carriageway edge is known to give the impression of restricted width, which can slow cars. Our engineer is considering how this might work and will produce a scheme for implementation post-dressing. Secondly, the high recorded speeds on Greenway Road are a function of the long straight road. Ultimately, speeds will only be brought under control through the use of physical measures, for example chicanes or priority build-outs. She will produce some suggestions for us, including, for example, moving the existing 30mph limit further west, beyond the bend adjacent to Greenway Farm, which would then encompass the point at which the public footpath from Ash Priors meets Greenway Road on the outside of the bend. We, as a parish council can then decide what we might like to do, given that we will need to pay for it. There is currently no announced continuation of the SCC Small Improvement Scheme through which these sorts of schemes can be promoted. If a new application window does open, and it will do if we win control of SCC in May, then I will commit to holding open one of the two bids available to me, for Bishops Lydeard, given that the last two were located in Norton Fitzwarren and Combe Florey respectively.

Wall opposite Delta Rise - SWT is shortly going out to tender for the work required on the wall. The wall will be cleared of vegetation between 21-25th February in order to make it visible to bidding contractors. It is estimated that the contract will be delivered in June (this year).

Hedge on Greenway Road - The plants are in the nursery and will be planted by the end of next week. They will be surrounded by palings or wooden poles to indicate that it is deliberate planting to any over-zealous strimmer operators.

Local Government Review (LGR) continues with new structures put in place to manage the process, including the Somerset Local Government Reorganisation Joint Committee and the LGR Joint Scrutiny Committee. Some of these are interim structures that will fall once the composition of the SCC (and later, unitary) administration is known in May. The new Somerset Council will come into being on 1/4/23, when the district and county councils will cease to exist. The head of the LGR programme is departing and is being replaced by SCC's Head of Highways.

Covid - Infection rates locally remain high though there has been a small fall in the last week. The official advice is to remain cautious and I direct people to the county and district councils' websites for more information. At SWAT we have, in recent weeks, paid out £875k to 270 businesses who qualify for the mandatory Omicron Hospitality & Leisure Grant Scheme and £635k to 221 businesses qualifying for the Local Hospitality Support Grant.

Broadband - The vast majority of premises that did not benefit from Phase 1 of the Connecting Devon & Somerset programme, will now benefit from the much-delayed Phase 2, providing Fibre to the Premises

(FTTP) which supports speeds of almost 1,000mbps. As well as those areas being funded by Somerset County Council the contractor, Airband, will also be undertaking some commercial roll-out in neighbouring areas and this is happening, for example, in Hithermead, Bishops Lydeard. The downside is that in order to deliver the FTTP, the cable is to be strung on poles rather than buried in ducts. I have been contacted by residents concerned about new poles and explained to them the basis on which they might object. Essentially Government planning rules hand the power to erect new poles to contractors without the need for planning permission so the grounds for objection are limited. Properties on the periphery of the village will benefit from the work which is due to be completed by the end of the year.

I have asked Highways to insist that David Wilson Homes sweeps Taunton Road on a more regular basis following complaints about the state of the road.

246/21 Update regarding Sandhill Park Mansion

Update provided in Cllr Rigby's reported in the previous item.

247/21 Finance

To appoint 2022 Internal Auditor

It was agreed to appoint Tammy Weeks from Hillside Business as the Internal Auditor for 2022.

To note income received

Interest	£0.19
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To approve payments

Payments to be made by Direct Debit:

BT (Telephone and broadband)	£75.36
Somerset Web Services (Email account)	£5.52
British Gas (Public conveniences Electric)	£70.01
EDF Energy (Library Electric)	£87.34

Payments to be made by BACS:

Jack Council (Parish Lengthsman Work – January)	£919.25
Clerk's expenses (Travel, office 365)	£179.69
Intelligent Workplace Solutions (Cleaning Toilets and Library)	£445.66
Viking Direct (Stationery)	£218.28

Donations:

Mind in Somerset	£212.50
Taunton CAB	£212.50
Taunton Foodbank	£212.50
Love Musgrove	£212.50

It was proposed, seconded, and voted unanimously that these payments be approved.

248/21 To note planning permissions granted

06/21/0041 Variation of Condition No. 02 (approved plans) of application 06/21/0027 to reduce the size of the extension to the stables at Luxborough Farm, Frenchies Lane, Aisholt - Decision of Conditional Approval was made on 25/01/2022.

249/21 To note planning applications refused/withdrawn

No planning applications were refused / withdrawn

250/21 Any Other Business - for report only

Cllr Hunt asked if there were any plans to place a footbridge over the stream at the Spinneyfield end of the footpath. Chair confirmed that Cllr Davenport had made enquiries about this previously and would ascertain the outcome of those enquiries.

Cllr Hunt reported the caravan that is persistently parked on Taunton Road and asked if parking a caravan on a public highway was legal. Cllr Morency confirmed that he had made enquiries and that it was legal and therefore no action could be taken.

Cllr Armstrong asked if there are plans to add lighting to the extended village hall car park. Cllr Allen confirmed that there are not currently plans to add lighting but that the idea may be given further consideration and would be informed by the feelings of local residents.

Cllr Armstrong asked if there was any news regarding the post office. Chair confirmed that he had not received any further update from Landmark Estates.

Cllr Pattemore asked that the Clerk make a further request for a visit from the parking enforcement officer.

Cllr Morency requested an update on the Taunton Road Development Public Open Space. Chair confirmed that an update will be provided at the next meeting. Work is taking place to establish how much it would cost the Parish Council to maintain the POS, how much extra precept the Parish Council will receive as a result of the new development and if the Management Company could be set up with influence from the Parish Council.

251/21 Date of next meeting:

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 9th March 2022, 7pm at Bishops Lydeard Village Hall

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.40pm.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Hunt', written over a faint rectangular stamp.

Date: 9th March 2022