

DRAFT

STEEP PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN: Jim MacDonald

CLERK: Jenny Hollington

**Minutes of the Steep Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 13th December 2021
at Steep Village Hall**

Present: Cllrs. Jim MacDonald (in the Chair) Terry Cook Charlotte Duthie
Jeff Graham Freddie Holmes Nick Hurst
Andrew Martin Jenny Martin Jonathan Turk

In Attendance: Nick Drew, District Councillor
Jenny Hollington, Clerk

There were 3 members of the public present at the meeting.

Minute	Item	Action
21/198	<u>APOLOGIES</u> – Apologies had been received from County Councillor, Russell Oppenheimer.	
21/199	<u>MINUTES</u> – The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 1 st November 2021 were approved and signed.	
21/200	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> – The Chairman reminded Councillors of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary interest in any matter on the agenda. He also reminded Councillors that the Parish Council is Sole Managing Trustee of the Village Hall and of the possible conflict of loyalties between the two roles.	
21/201	<u>DELEGATED POWERS</u> – Standing Orders were suspended to allow an emergency item to be introduced to the agenda in recognition of the serious situation that the latest variant, Omicron, poses to everyone’s health. The next meeting of Steep Parish Council is due to be held on 10 th January 2022 and the Chairman explained that to ensure that Councillors, Clerk, and residents are not put at risk through public meetings in an enclosed space if the risks are deemed too great, the following tasks should be delegated to the Clerk to take on behalf of the Council in consultation with Councillors if necessary: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Placing orders for any items required in relation to on-going projects.• Responding to planning applications having first consulted with Councillors who could make recommendations.• Making payments, including salary payments, for anything already agreed by the Council and in line with limits set by financial regulations.• Arranging for the emergency repair of any Council owned asset in consultation with Councillors.	
	The proposal was unanimously approved.	
21/202	<u>PUBLIC COMMENT</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to the Alms Houses – In response to a question about improving sight lines at the Alms Houses, it was confirmed that although this had been investigated by a member of the Parish Council, it was not be within the Parish Council remit to request the type of alteration that would be necessary to correct the matter.	

- Consultation – A resident queried when the results of the Village Hall Consultation would be made available to residents? The Chairman said that he had hoped to share the results at the community meeting due to be held at the Village Hall on 11th December which unfortunately had had to be cancelled due to concerns around Omicron. The results will be made available via the Village Hall website as soon as they have been reviewed and discussed by Trustees. Chair
- Coffee Cart – Residents said that they were very pleased to see a new Coffee Cart in the Village Hall car park.
- Minutes – It was pointed out that at the last meeting, Cllr. Duthie had wanted to raise an issue about the land on Church Road and queried whether this should have been Minuted? The Clerk explained that she had not included the comments because the item hadn't been on the agenda – however, the item is on the agenda for discussion this month.

21/203 LAND AT CHURCH ROAD

- (a) Agenda item – Cllr. Duthie said that she felt that the Parish Council should be pressing the developer for community engagement as had been promised and suggested that a SIN representative is invited to a future meeting to ensure there is a community led approach to the project. She also stressed the importance of the subject of land at Church Road being kept on the agenda each month. Following discussion it was agreed that the item should be included as a monthly up-date. Clerk
- (b) Newsletter up-date and indicative timeline – The Chairman said that he has written to Stuart Wilson explaining that whilst the Parish Council welcomes his engagement with the village via the newsletter, they are disappointed with the current lack of community engagement and asked him to re-visit his timeline to make more effort to communicate with residents. He will let Councillors know when a response is received. Chair
- (c) Church Road correspondence – The Clerk said that she had received several e-mail communications in response to Cllr. Duthie's letter, which was sent privately to residents, about the land. She was asked to circulate these to all Councillors. Clerk

21/204 PLANNING COMMITTEE – Cllr. Holmes was invited to fill the remaining place on the Planning Committee – she agreed – and this was unanimously approved.

21/205 ADHURST ST. MARY – Correspondence about the very poor condition of East Court at Adhurst St. Mary which continues to decay despite previous intervention by SDNPA, was discussed. It was agreed that the Parish Council should write to Tim Slaney, Director of Planning at SDNPA, and the Listed Building Officer at EHDC, to request further remedial work is carried out as a matter of urgency. Other options include an approach to Historic England and/or the Enforcement Officer at EHDC - these options will be followed up if necessary. Clerk

21/206 FINANCE

- (a) CIL Funding – A total of £1301.94 CIL funding has been received from SDNPA. It was agreed that this should be used towards the cost of the new speed indicator device. Clerk
- (b) Grant application – A request from the Steep Marsh Residents Association for a grant towards the cost of a traffic survey carried out in Rockpitts Lane, Steep Marsh was considered. Following discussion it was agreed to contribute £250 towards the cost. Clerk
- (c) Bank Reconciliation – The bank reconciliation for November, circulated prior to the meeting, was approved
- (d) Cheque payments – The following cheques were approved for December payment:

Chq No.		Payee	Service
100420	£54.60	Petersfield Town Council	Dog Bin - Steep Common
100421	£1,162.50	Ginkgo Landscaping	Lengthsman - November

Steep Parish Council Meeting – 13.12.21

100422	£75.00	T. Morgan	Website management
100423	£14.00	Sheet P.C.	Room hire - data protection training
100424	£756.20	Jenny Hollington	Clerk + Remembrance day expenses
100425	£1.60	HMRC	Tax (Clerk)
	£2,063.90		

21/207 BUDGET 22-23 – Cllrs. MacDonald, Turk, and Andrew Martin had met with the Clerk to discuss and prepare the budget proposal for 22-23 which had been circulated to all Councillors. It was noted that the budget does not currently include an amount for a potential community project (e.g. swings at Hayes Cottages) and, if this (or a similar project) is to go ahead, external grant funding would need to be sought. Even without this, if the precept is kept at £19,000 for the year, the Parish Council is looking at a £6,000 deficit which would need to be met from reserves if the precept is not increased. Cllr. Turk said he had researched other local precepts and currently the Steep precept is much lower than neighbouring parishes, as well as the national average. It will be necessary for the precept to be increased to £25,000 (an increase of 31.5%) to cover the predicted deficit and, subject to this being agreed, the budget proposal 22-23 was approved.

21/208 PRECEPT REQUEST 22-23 – As discussed above, it was agreed that the precept should be increased to £25,000 for 22-23. An article will be written for the February newsletter explaining clearly why the increase is needed and how the money will be used. Chair/
Clerk

21/209 REGENERATION FUNDING – Cllr. Holmes explained that the preferred contractor for the refurbishment of the B.T. Phone Box has pulled out due to a concern that if the weather is bad in the New Year, he may be unable to complete the project by the end of March as required by the regeneration grant funding. The project will be put on the back burner for now and reconsidered in due course as part of an overall plan to improve the outside area of the Village Hall.

21/210 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT – Russell Oppenheimer’s report had been circulated prior to the meeting and focusses on helping residents stay warm and healthy over the winter period, and the planned enhancement of Butser Hill. A review of HCC policy on implementing 20 mph speed limits has also been announced for 2022. So far there has been no feedback on regeneration of the Ashford Hangers or repairs to Lutcombe Pond. These local issues will be chased in the New Year.

Cllr. Oppenheimer’s full report is appended to these Minutes and can be seen on the Parish Council website –

21/211 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT – Cllr. Drew reported on the following items:

- Remembrance Day – Cllr. Drew said he had been honoured to lay the wreath on behalf of EHDC at the Remembrance Day service at the Steep War Memorial and to join residents for coffee afterwards – he thanked the Vicar, the Clerk for organising and volunteers for helping at the event.
- Land at Church Road – Cllr. Drew pointed out that as a member of the EHDC Planning Committee, he is unable to comment on this matter. However, he applauded the PC decision to keep the item on the agenda and encouraged the Parish Council to continue to share information.
- Environmental Grants – Cllr. Drew confirmed that he would be happy to consider a grant towards a tree re-planting scheme on Steep Common. The Clerk was asked to follow this up.
- Finance – Many Parish Councils are facing increasing financial pressures – Cllr. Drew said he would be happy to engage with EHDC community officers to see if there are grants available which could help keep the hall afloat through its current difficult financial period.

Clerk

- In response to concerns raised about the level of enforcement at the Brickyards, Cllr. Drew confirmed that resources would be made available at EHDC for this to be thoroughly investigated. He suggested that pressure could be put on EHDC Enforcement Officers via monthly meetings and requested that Steep P.C. e-mail him with their concerns. NH/
Clerk

21/212 FOOTPATHS –

- Hedges on Stoner Hill - There has still been no feedback from Radian about the overgrown hedges blocking the footpath from Stoner Hill to Hayes Cottages, despite being chased via HCC who have instigated a legal process. The pavement and footpath are now badly overgrown, and access is very difficult. Cllr. Drew offered to help chase this issue via EHDC officers who work closely with Radian. JG
- Hangers Way Maintenance - An e-mail will be sent to Elliott Rowe at Countryside Services requesting HCC assistance to repair the very muddy part of the Hangers Way on the approach to the Water House. Clerk

21/213 ASHFORD HANGERS – There has been no feedback from the Hampshire Rangers/HCC on re-planting projects for the Ashford Hangers nor about the repairs to Lutcombe Pond. There will be renewed efforts to chase these items in the New Year Chair/
Clerk

21/214 ROADS AND TRAFFIC –

- Speed Indicator Device – A meeting has been organised with Ian Janes for 7th January to confirm positioning of the posts for the new SID. Clerk/
JT
- Eroding Bank at Steep Hollow – Residents have been made aware that although drains have been cleared either side of Steep Hollow, drains adjacent to their property have been specifically excluded from the work – the Clerk was asked to follow this up via the County Councillor. In addition, the Clerk was asked to write to the Parish Council’s SDNPA representative to find out what the P.C. can do to ensure protection of the verges of our sunken lanes. Clerk
- Flooding on Ashford Lane – Cllr. Cook said that he had helped to clear leaves from the corner of Island Farm Lane to the area of the flood to help keep the lane clear for traffic in the busy run up to Christmas. He now knows where the grill is but the actual pipe under the road remains blocked and this will continue to be chased via Highways. Cllr. Cook and volunteers were thanked for their community effort.
- Signage Working Party – The review of parish signage is on-going, and a full report will be made available in the New Year. FH

21/215 COMMUNITY PROJECT – PLAY EQUIPMENT AT HAYES COTTAGES – The consultation responses have now been collated and reviewed – over 50% of residents of Hayes Cottages had responded to the consultation, with the majority in favour of swings and a picnic table. Cllr. Graham will now engage with EHDC to discuss in more detail. The results of the consultation will be shared via the February newsletter JG/
FH

21/216 STEEP COMMON

- Phase 2 Tree Work – Due to contractor health and labour issues, the work to fell the remaining Ash trees has been delayed until early January. It was confirmed that this will not impact S.106 funding. An estimate for planting new, native, trees will be sought by Cllr. Holmes. FH
- Play Equipment – A quote from a local contractor has been received for the work required to repair the play equipment and the quote to replace the rotting wood at a cost of £325 + VAT was approved. However, it was decided not to go ahead with the cleaning of the equipment at a cost of £750. Cllr. Andrew Martin said that he would try to arrange for the

- play equipment to be cleaned by Bedales' students as part of their Badley community day and this could be tied in with tree planting as well. JG/
AM
- (c) Bonfire and Firework Event 2021 – This year's event had been very successful with large sums of money being raised for charity – the Parish Council is very grateful to everyone involved for helping to create such a spectacular community event. It was agreed to invite the Chairman of the Bonfire Committee to the next Parish Council meeting for more detailed feedback. Clerk
- 21/217 STEEP WAR MEMORIAL – The Remembrance Day Service at the War Memorial had been well attended and everything had gone to plan - the Bedales' student, who has sounded the last post for the past few years, had been excellent and it was lovely to see children from Steep School helping with the scattering of the rose petals. It had also been particularly good to be able to offer refreshments at the Village Hall this year. Thank you to all involved!
- 21/218 NEWSLETTER REPORTING – It was agreed that future Newsletter Reports should be circulated to Councillors allowing 48 hours for input, prior to being sent to the Newsletter Editor. A caveat should also be included to refer residents to the minutes of the meeting in case of any misunderstanding. FH
- 21/219 NEW COUNCILLOR TRAINING – Cllr. Holmes confirmed she would like to participate in an on-line training session organised by HALC during February – Cllrs. Turk, Martin and Duthie will check diaries and confirm. FH/JT/
CD/AM
- 21/220 FEEDBACK FROM MEETINGS ATTENDED
- HALC AGM – Cllr. MacDonald attended in his role as Chair of EHAP&TC. He noted that the proposal put forward by Dummer Parish Council for a 20-mph default speed limit had been amended on the day as it had not been thought practical or possible to enforce. Cllr. Humby from HCC has already committed to a review of the implementation of 20 mph speed limits (see the County Councillor's report) and EHAP&TC will take the proposal forward with local councils to gauge support.
 - Data Protection Training – 8 out of 9 Councillors had attended the training session which had been very useful. Cllr. Holmes confirmed that she will read the literature provided and has already participated in data protection training in another role. Clerk
- 21/221 FUTURE MEETING DATES – To be circulated
- 21/222 CORRESPONDENCE
- 1st tier legal cases lodged with the Charity Commission – The Chairman confirmed that both cases have now been decided and struck out.
- 21/223 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING – The next meeting of Steep Parish Council will be Monday, 10th January 2022 (Government regulations permitting) at 7.30 p.m. at Steep Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.45 p.m.