

**DRAFT**

**STEEP PARISH COUNCIL**

**CHAIRMAN:** Jim MacDonald

**CLERK:** Jenny Hollington

**Minutes of an on-line Parish Council Teams Meeting held on Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021 at 7.30 p.m.**

**Present:** Cllrs. Jim MacDonald (in the Chair)  
Terry Cook Peter Cruttenden Jeff Graham  
Jenny Martin Jonathan Turk

**In Attendance:** Nick Drew, District Councillor  
Russell Oppenheimer, County Councillor  
Jenny Hollington, Clerk

There were 2 members of the public present at the meeting.

<b>Minute</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>
21/19	<u>APOLOGIES</u> – Apologies had been received from Cllrs. Ashfield and Hurst	
21/20	<u>MINUTES</u> – The Minutes of the on-line Teams Meeting held on Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> January 2021 were approved – the Minutes will be signed by the Chairman after the meeting.	
21/21	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> – The Chairman reminded Councillors of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary interest in any matter on the Agenda –none declared.	
21/22	<u>PUBLIC COMMENT</u> – <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A Church Road resident has raised a concern about the impact on traffic of any development in Church Road and asked if consideration could be given to creation of a cycle lane from Steep to Petersfield to encourage residents to cycle? It was noted that the footpath which runs from the Church to Tilmore across Bedales land is not suitable for cycling.</li><li>• A Steep Marsh resident highlighted the terrible condition of the lanes and verges in Steep Marsh. The ditches have not been maintained and this has caused erosion of the road surface as well as the regular flood at Elmwood. Steep P.C. were asked to review the situation and engage with Highways as a matter of urgency.</li></ul>	
	The Chairman confirmed that these are issues that are taken seriously by the Parish Council and will be followed up on.	
21/23	<u>RESIGNATION OF A PARISH COUNCILLOR</u> – Steep Parish Council was saddened to receive the resignation of Chris Laycock early in the New Year. Chris has worked hard for Steep Parish Council on various roads and traffic projects – especially the Phase 2 Traffic Management Scheme for the C18 – liaising with Hampshire Highways representatives, parish residents and the Lengthsman to resolve issues. <p>This means that there is a vacancy for a Parish Councillor – the Casual Vacancy notice is being advertised on Village noticeboards and must be advertised for 14-clear working days to give electors the right to request an election via EHDC. If you would be interested in the role, or would like to find out more, please get in touch with Jenny – <a href="mailto:jenny.hollington@steep-pc.gov.uk">jenny.hollington@steep-pc.gov.uk</a></p>	
21/24	<u>LAND AT CHURCH ROAD</u> – There are no specific up-dates on the sale of land to report.	

Momentum has slowed following the request for more information from the Charity Commission.

- 21/25 OPEN SPACE WORKING GROUP – Clare Moriarty, Chair, said the group had a useful meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> January and good progress has been made. For now, the group’s focus is on creating a vision from the strategic themes extracted from the consultation responses.

Terms of Reference for the group had been drafted and circulated prior to the meeting – it was suggested that the heading should reflect that the group is working under the auspices of Steep Parish Council and queried whether membership of the group would remain constant? It was confirmed that the group has capacity to invite more members and felt that the route should remain open. The Open Space Working Group Terms of Reference were approved with the minor amendment suggested in the title.

- 21/26 FINANCE -

- (a) Interim Internal Audit – The Internal Auditor’s interim report (April – December) had been circulated prior to the meeting. Whilst there were no formal recommendations, the Internal Auditor noted the following points:

- A list of payments over £500 should be uploaded to the Council website on a quarterly basis to ensure compliance with Transparency Code regulations (note – a full list of payments is recorded monthly within each set of Minutes)
- A “wet” signature should be obtained from the Chairman following each remote meeting. It was suggested that this could be achieved at the same time as cheques are signed each month
- Cyber insurance – The Internal Auditor recommended this be considered when reviewing the risk register

Clerk  
Chair/  
Clerk

- 21/27

- (b) Accounts Software – Currently the Council’s accounts are recorded via spreadsheets but there are several tailored software packages available which might make the process easier. Whilst this would incur a cost to the Council, it should also improve the resilience of basic operations. It was agreed to investigate further (with a view to 22-23 financial year start if appropriate).
- (c) Bank Reconciliation – The bank reconciliation for January had been circulated prior to the meeting and was approved.
- (d) Cheques – Cheques for February payment were approved as follows:

Chair/  
PC/  
Clerk

Chq No.		Payee	Service
100373	£37.80	Petersfield Town Council	Dog Bin - Oct-Dec 20
100374	£172.50	Lightatouch	Interim Internal Audit
100375	£1.67	HMRC	Tax and N.i. + Emp Contribution - Clerk
100376	£742.20	J. Hollington	Clerk + Expenses
100377	£75.00	T. Morgan	Website management (Nov-Jan)
	£1,029.17		

- 21/28 LUTCOMBE POND – Two members of Steep P.C., Cllr. Oppenheimer, and Pete Durnell from HCC Countryside Services, met with a representative of Five Rivers to discuss options for repairing the leak in the dam at Lutcombe Pond. Some interesting ideas emerged from the discussion including a potential fundraising route via heritage funding (e.g. the history of the old pumping station) - the History Group will be asked to research the history of the site.

It is hoped the quote from Five Rivers will be received before the March meeting to enable a decision to be made as soon as possible, so that repairs can be carried out this year. The quote from Five Rivers will be the third quote received, as required by HCC financial regulations

21/29 LENGTHSMAN FUNDING – Hampshire County Council has confirmed the continuation of the Scheme for 21-22 – the Clerk will complete relevant paperwork within the cluster for the coming year. It was noted that Langrish Parish Council have funding they are unable to use in the current financial year and agreed that this should be reallocated across the parishes that have used their funding for the year and still have work outstanding for the Lengthsman to complete. Clerk

21/30 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT – Cllr. Oppenheimer’s written report had been circulated prior to the meeting. The following items were highlighted:

- Decarbonisation of Schools – The government has awarded £27m to HCC to carry out improvements to the energy efficiency of buildings. Cllr. Martin will ensure Steep School is aware of this opportunity. JM
- Local Transport Plan consultation – Cllr. Oppenheimer encouraged Steep P.C. to use this opportunity to provide feedback.
- Round the clock salting – It was noted that the salting crews had done a great job during the recent very cold spell.
- Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs) – BOATs are regularly being damaged by dirt bikes and 4 x 4s and Cllr. Oppenheimer has been campaigning for the last 3-years to get them reclassified as Restricted Byways. The issue is due to come before a full meeting of SDNPA and Cllr. Oppenheimer asked Steep Parish Council to consider writing to the Chairman of SDNPA explaining the negative impact the damage has on the community and urging them to use their powers under the National Park Authorities Traffic Regulation Orders to restrict vehicular access to BOATs. It was agreed that this item should be discussed further at the March P.C. meeting and, in the meantime, Cllr. Turk will obtain photographic evidence of some of the damage on parish BOATs. JT

Cllr. Oppenheimer’s full report is appended to the Minutes and will be made available via the Parish Council website.

21/31 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT – Cllr. Drew said he continues to represent Steep residents who have raised concerns about compliance and planning issues and where appropriate will respond to residents individually.

With respect to the Parish Council’s request for the Landscape Officer to attend a planning meeting to help them understand the landscape planning process, it now appears that EHDC will be offering a training session across several parish and town councils as opposed to a 1-1 session with Steep P.C. - the Chairman will follow this up with Planning Officers at EHDC. Chair

In response to a concern raised about the amount of litter in the parish, and in particular Stoner Hill, Cllr. Drew explained that litter enforcement officers have been re-allocated to work as Covid officers, so things are on a go slow for the time being. In discussion, it was felt that much more needs to be done to raise awareness, and a litter campaign is required. Cllr. Drew suggested that Steep P.C. lobby SDNPA (copying EHDC) on this issue.

Similarly, the lack of lane sweeping on the narrow parish lanes continues to cause concern - Cllr. Drew undertook to find out if Mill Lane has been swept.

21/32 STEEP COMMON

**Litter** – It was agreed to investigate the cost of providing a dual-use bin for the Common as the current dog bin is being used more and more for normal rubbish and is often overflowing – Cllr. Graham said he would investigate costs involved and report back at the March meeting. JG

**Bird Boxes** – 17 high-quality bird boxes have been built by a young Duke of Edinburgh volunteer

and will be installed around the Common – residents will be able to enjoy an increased diversity of wild birds this summer. Steep P.C. expressed their gratitude for the time and hard work that has gone into this project.

- 21/33 ROADS AND TRAFFIC – The Clerk was asked to write to the engineer responsible for Steep roads, requesting an urgent meeting to look at current issues in detail. Cllr. Cook said he would meet with the engineer to go through all of the Council’s concerns. Clerk  
TC
- 21/34 FOOTPATHS – Following the newsletter article, 6 volunteers have come forward to join the Recreation Group Working Party and walk and review the parish footpath network. The Group will report their findings at the April meeting. JM
- 21/35 COMMUNITY PROJECT – PLAY EQUIPMENT AT HAYES COTTAGES - Cllr Graham is waiting for feedback from EHDC on what their requirements are for permission to be given to install a swing on the grass area at Hayes Cottages. JG
- 21/36 FLOODING AT THE WAR MEMORIAL – The issue of how to resolve the flooding at the War Memorial will be followed up with Chris Budd. JM/JG
- 21/37 CORRESPONDENCE
- Parking on Church Road** – Following further correspondence with the Bursar who confirmed that the damage to the pavement occurred before work commenced on the Headmaster’s house, this matter has been closed.
- HCC Local Transport Plan Engagement** – It was agreed that Cllr. Turk would complete the survey on behalf of the Parish Council, focussing on the need for a safe cycling route to Petersfield. Individuals can also complete the survey so a poster will be created to advertise details and displayed at Alma’s mobile coffee shop. JT  
JM
- 21/38 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING – Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 9.35 p.m.

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT  
TO  
ALL PARISH COUNCILS  
IN PETERSFIELD HANGERS  
1 FEBRUARY 2021**

1. HCC awarded £27m for decarbonisation of schools

I am delighted to report that the Government has awarded £27m to HCC to carry out improvements to the energy efficiency of buildings. The award comes from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund. This is a great vote of confidence in HCC. The funds will help us meet our carbon reduction targets whilst reducing energy bills. This will save taxpayers' money and give schools more cash to spend on classroom learning.

The funds will be spent as follows:

- A £6.7 million programme for the installation of solar panels (solar photo voltaics); and
- A £20.2 million window replacement programme to improve insulation levels by replacing inefficient single glazed windows with modern, double glazed units.

Across the two programmes, in total around 370 Hampshire schools and several County Council corporate buildings are expected to benefit. For Parish Councillors with links to local schools, I would encourage you to ensure that the school has responded to the energy survey sent out in January by the HCC Energy Team. This response is needed for the school to get in the line for these measures.

2. Local Transport Plan consultation

It is a statutory requirement for County Councils as Transport Authorities to produce a Local Transport Plan in line with the Transport Act (2000) and the Local Transport Act (2008). The existing Local Transport Plan for Hampshire was developed in 2011 and was the third such plan. HCC is now consulting on a replacement for that plan which we are abbreviating to “LTP4”.

LTP4 has a lot to consider. There are huge pressures on the highway network from new housing and population growth. Climate change means we must reduce emissions - we also want healthier places with more sustainable transport. Within both communities and businesses there are often different views on priorities, and that means we need as much feedback as possible.

We are keen to engage widely and would welcome your views. HCC has set up an LTP4 microsite with some really useful background information and an online survey. I would encourage you all to visit the micosite and have your say. Here is the link:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/localtransportplan>

Later this year a draft plan will be produced, and there will then be a further public consultation on that draft. I will let you know when that happens.

### 3. Round-the-clock salting during freezing weather

This winter Hampshire Highways teams have been out 24/7 doing all they can to keep Hampshire’s roads clear and safe. As well as the main roads, the teams are also treating roads leading to COVID vaccination and testing centres. We have additional gangs hand-salting the entrance and footway areas at these sites.

Each salt run takes approximately three to four hours. Once the first run is complete, teams return to their depots to re-load, ready for the next run.

We have good stocks of salt, with more deliveries scheduled.

Forecast road surface and air temperatures, wind speed and direction, rainfall, and ice formation are all important factors in putting the winter fleet to work. Roads are treated with salt before temperatures drop to freezing to try to stop frost and ice forming. Temperatures and conditions can vary significantly within Hampshire, so winter teams look at a number of distinct weather bands to help decide when and where to put the winter fleet to work.

Hampshire Highways' dedicated fleet of 43 winter vehicles are fitted with the latest technology to ensure salting is accurate and efficient, including full GPS guidance and automatic salt delivery. The vehicles also have Euro VI efficient engines and dedicated snow ploughs.

#### 4. Byways Open to All Traffic

As many of you know, the BOATs in East Hampshire are regularly damaged by dirt bikes and 4x4s. Our clay soil and chalk substrata can result in the damage being acute in winter. This issue of vehicles using the BOATs for sport therefore restricts access to the National Park, damages the natural environment and causes noise nuisance and air pollution for residents and visitors.

I and others have been campaigning for the last three years to get these BOATS reclassified as Restricted Byways. As a result of our initial efforts HCC and SDNPA undertook a pilot scheme on the Fiveways BOATS (in East Meon), focusing on signage and voluntary restraint. This pilot had only limited success and I now believe we need to look at more permanent measures.

I am hoping that this issue will come onto the Agenda for the SDNPA Full Authority Meeting on 25 March 2021. In advance of that meeting I would be very grateful if concerned Parish Councils could consider writing to the SDNPA Chairman and Chief Executive setting out the negative impact on communities and urging them to use their powers under the National Park Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure)(England) Regulations 2007 to bring Traffic Regulation Orders to restrict vehicular access to these BOATs. It would also be helpful if Parish Councils could take photographic evidence of damage and a record of incidents.

**RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER**  
**County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers**