

SAMPFORD COURTENAY PARISH COUNCIL

OPEN MEETING TUESDAY 27TH MARCH 2018

1. **Present – Cllrs Colin Coleman; David Botting-Page; Mathew McIlwraith; Michele Wilson; John Friend & John Palmer + 15 members of the public**
2. **Apologies were received from Cllrs Adrian Thorley & Jon Clatworthy Edwards + WDBC Cllrs Lois Samuel and Louise Watts.**
3. **Chairman Cllr Coleman welcomed everyone for attending.**
4. **Financial Summary** – Cllr Coleman explained the Power Points slides which showed how SCPC has managed to reduce the Precept over the past 4 years; and how they have managed to secure considerable external grants to fund various projects in the parish.
Earmarked Reserves – the Chairman also explained the considerable sum in the SCPC RESERVE account earmarked for specific designated expenditure in the future.
Precept – Finally Cllr Coleman demonstrated how the Precept Income just covers sums required for necessary annual expenditure and explained that SCPC always needs to source external funding for additional projects in the parish if they are to maintain or continue to reduce the precept at its current level.
5. **War Memorial** – Cllr Coleman explained that the new bronze plaque is now in the hands of the mason and it is hoped that the project will be completed by the end of June 2018. SCPC have received a quote of £3223.00 to complete the project and may have to seek additional funding to cover this cost. **If any parishioners know of possible funding please let the SCPC know.**

Dedication Service – It was suggested at the meeting that SCPC aim for a dedication service to coincide with VJ Day – (the official end of WW II) on Wednesday 15th August. Perhaps with a dedication service to include invited members of the Church and British Legion plus parishioners followed by a Reception in the Church rooms or Village Hall. **SCPC would appreciate your thoughts and comments on this.**
6. **Phone boxes** – Cllr Botting Page explained that since the last Open Meeting and in response to a letter from SCPC to the Chairman of BT – all three phone boxes in the parish have been visited by an engineer and all 3 are operational (card only) . In the engineers report they state that they intend to restore and refurbish the phone box in the village square to a good standard; remove the phone box at Belstone Corner because it is deemed dangerous and in a very poor state of repair, by both SCPC and BT; and they have also reported that the phone box at Sampford Chapple is situated on Private Land and as such will be removed. SCPC is still in communication with BT to see if this kiosk can be retained as a Landmark in the parish.
7. **St John's First Aid Course – Sat 7th April – 10am at the Village Hall** – there are 2 places left if anyone else wishes to attend.
8. **New Notice Board** – SCPC hope you have all noticed the new notice board that has been erected in the Village Square. This has been crafted and erected by a local tradesman and mainly funded by a successful TAP Grant. This has replaced the old Noticeboard which has been letting in water for several years.
9. **Footpaths** – Cllr Botting Page summarised the continued improvements that SCPC have been making on the numerous Footpaths throughout the parish. The Green Lanes marked on the OS maps are actually “Country

Roads or Historic Rights of Way". SCPC have been successful in obtaining significant funds from P3 (Parish Paths Partnership) mainly because they are held in high esteem by DCC for their work in this area.

SCPC has just received £10,000 grant for work on the lane from Shoalgate Cross to Furzedown Lane (in the Taw Green area of the Parish).

Networking with neighbouring parishes – David has also held a meeting with "Footpath" councillors from neighbouring parishes who are keen to work more closely together making a wider range of footpaths accessible to us all.

Village Stroll – Sat 21st April – 10.30 am from the Village Hall – an easy amble for all ages and abilities around the village with tea and biscuits back at the hall. [Please come along and join in.](#)

Walk on the Wild Side – Sat 12th May – a more strenuous 5 mile walk around the Taw Green area to have a chance to look at the Shoalgate – Furzedown Lane footpath as it is now before improvements take place.

[Keep an eye on SCPC notices for more details.](#)

10. Resilience Plan – Cllr Michele Wilson explained how she is still working on the Parish Plan as she outlined at the Open Meeting in October; part of which will include a Resilience Plan – how can Sampford Courtenay be **prepared** before an emergency/disaster occurs. **Snow Plan** – as part of this she has already up-dated the SCPC Snow Plan in the light of the recent snow falls in the area. The aim is to equip parishioners to "Help themselves" with the aid of key parishioners/wardens who live in various parts of the parish who can co-ordinate with SCPC to get necessary help where and when it is needed. [A copy of the updated Snow Plan can be found on the Parish Council pages of the website. We would appreciate your comments while your experiences in the recent snow are fresh in your mind.](#)

11. Sampford Courtenay Parish Plan - Cllr Wilson explained how the new Parish Plan would be based around the Sampford Courtenay Parish plan of 2004 and cover some of the same areas :- Employment & Education; Transport & Highways; Health & other services; Leisure, Sport & Recreation; Environment, Shopping and Housing & Planning.

- **Planning Policy** – As a start on this Cllr Wilson has produced a check list for councillors to use with all Planning Applications to ensure transparency and equity in all SCPC decisions.

At the meeting last night one parishioner questioned whether SCPC should insist on plans being drawn up by a "Qualified Architect". SCPC agreed to re-consider this.

[A copy of the Check list will be available on the website or from the Clerk – we would appreciate your comments before this is finalised.](#)

- **Parish Plan** – in order to identify the needs of the parish both now and for the future we want to conduct a survey of the parishioners and seek their opinion. This will probably be a joint online and letter drop survey. [SCPC would appreciate your comments on how you would be more willing to participate in this survey. For all the proposed plans above SCPC need to know the best way to COMMUNICATE with the parishioners.](#)

12. Annual Parish Spring Clean – Sat 26th May – starting 10 am at the Village Hall - if you take pride in your parish and the environment and would like to give up a couple of hours to litter pick; clean road signs and generally tidy please let the Parish Council know. As last year, The Cider VAT has kindly offered a Free Cider for all Volunteers and SCPC will provide a free pasty.

13. Future Projects – Cllr Coleman outlined some ideas that had been raised by parishioners for future projects to enhance the Parish.

- **Audio Visual Apparatus** – for the Village Hall to enable SCPC meetings to show documents on screen rather than wasteful printing. Plus opportunity for Film shows and similar events to be held and raise funds for Village Hall. The Chairman confirmed that this has been agreed and money allocated in the SCPC budget.

- **Modernisation/Refurbishment of Public Toilets** – although currently clean and sanitary, it is felt that the Public Toilets are in need of modernisation along the lines of North Tawton Public Toilets. SCPC were seeking parish opinion on whether to up-date toilets in present position or if alternative suggestions would be favourable eg – Combined with refurbishment of Village Hall Toilets.
- **Archive Store/History room** – SCPC and PCC have considerable documentation that is currently stored in private homes. A suggestion was made that independent storage facilities would be preferable. – It was discussed at this meeting that perhaps an Archive storage area could be included in Modernisation of Public Toilets project – I.e Reduce toilets to one Uni-sex/disabled access toilet + parish storage space.
- **Meeting Hub in the Church Rooms** – the Clerk had been approached by a parishioner who felt it was a shame the Church Rooms were not used as much as in the “old days” when it was regularly used for Brownies, Youth Club, and Club. **The Ark** at Lapford, is a good example of where a village building has been modernised to include disabled toilets, comfortable meeting rooms where parish volunteers or groups hold regular coffee morning/ afternoon teas as a social drop in space; + upstairs gallery space which can be hired for exhibitions or small events. The feeling at the meeting from members of the PCC was that they did not want to be committed to running things like this. Plus, would another letting venue in the parish detract from income for the Village Hall.
- **Play Equipment on Village Green** – this year the Swings have been replaced but the Climbing apparatus is in need of repair before the next inspection in October. Are parishioners happy for SCPC to spend money on refurbishment or look to replace and improve facilities?
- **All of the above projects would involve SCPC (and possible other parish organisations) obtaining outside funding. These are not projects that will be funded from the Precept. However, SCPC would like your opinion on which, if any, of the above suggestions you would like them to look into. Or have you got other projects in mind to enhance Sampford Courtenay.**

14. Parish Fete – Sat June 16th – in the beautiful grounds of Culverhayes – Fete Committee member Sarah Hanks thanked SCPC for agreeing to sponsor the Fete again this year and explained that there are lots of ways for Parishioners to get involved. Any help would be greatly appreciated:-

- **Make Cakes**
- **Lend gazebo/marquee**
- **Help on a stall**
- **Buy/sell raffle tickets**
- **Donations for Fete stalls eg Books, Fancy goods etc**

15. Any Other Business – Sarah Hanks asked if SCPC could find out who is responsible for cutting the hedge on Clifton Lane as it is becoming impassable.

16. The Chairman – thanked everyone again for attending and invited them to help themselves to more wine and cheese. The meeting closed at 9.30pm

If you have any comments or would like to get involved with any of the items listed above, please let us know via the usual channels - 01837 82285 or SCPCclerk@aol.com