

# SHIPLEY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at the Andrew Hall, Shipley on  
Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 7:00pm**

**Present** – Cllr Payne (Chairman) and Paul Richards (Clerk). 13 members of the public were also present.

- 1. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024.**  
The draft Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.
- 2. Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council.**  
The Chairman presented his report (attached at Appendix A). There were no questions, and the report was noted.
- 3. Greener Shipley Presentation.**  
Cllr Tuck presented an update on the achievements of Greener Shipley during 2024/25.
  - A resident referred to the recent public event where suggestions to enhance the Coolham Playing Field to be more nature friendly were presented. He objected to this suggestion and requested that the land remain as is for future generations. He also criticised the Greener Shipley team who, in his view, should have explained at the event of the existence of a covenant that required the playing field to remain for “recreational purposes”. He also questioned if all comments had been collated stating he would like the results of feedback verified by an independent examiner.

The Chairman responded by advising that the covenant issue had not been forgotten. No pre-determination by either Greener Shipley or Shipley Parish Council had been made and the event was held to ask for ideas from the community. No formal proposals would be made until all the comments had been collated and community views taken into consideration. This information will be shared with the community in the Summer of 2025. Cllr Tuck confirmed that Greener Shipley had simply presented some options for the community to consider. She also advised that Greener Shipley was not aware of the covenant details to which he referred at the time of the event. There was no sinister plan as this was an open and consultative process and was not a re-wilding exercise as the resident suggested. The resident reminded Cllr Tuck that Shipley Parish Council minutes referred to the proposals as “re-wilding”. The resident also asked who was compiling the consultation comments. Cllr Tuck confirmed that initial consultation event comments had been recorded together with feedback from local schools and the parish newsletter. Greener Shipley would also attend the Shipley fete in May to seek further comments.

A resident agreed that Cllr Tuck had undertaken a thorough consultation process that sought views from all.

- A resident noted that his children had grown up in the village and had been frequent users of the playing field in recent years. He asked the parish to see the benefit and value from this open space.
- A resident also reminded all present of the eco benefit from such an open space.

**4. Question and answer session from the Public.**

- A resident questioned why Shipley Parish Council had approved the development of a “industrial site” within 40 acres of the Knepp estate for a Battery Storage Energy System (BESS). He reported that the community had received no communication regarding this matter and he felt that it would be unlikely the operator would ever revert the land back to former use after the operating period had concluded.

The Chairman advised that Knepp had engaged in extensive public communication about the BESS with community exhibitions held in the Andrew Hall. This was publicised well in advance. The parish council had considered carefully the proposal and had made several observations on it (several of which had been addressed by the operator subsequently). The resident repeated his criticism of the parish council and Greener Shipley in not protecting the parish. HDC Cllr Jeffrey advised the resident that the site was not classified as “industrial”. In addition, he reported that two highly experienced HDC Councillors would be looking at the proposals and were due to report to HDC in June 2025. The issues raised by the resident would be addressed by this report.

- A resident asked if he and his friends could organise a stoolball tournament on Coolham Playing Fields. The Chairman advised that the parish council had tried, but failed, to organise such an event in 2024. He reported that the parish council would support these endeavours and asked that the resident email him the details.
- A resident raised concerns relating to the proposed development of 9 houses alongside the A272 at Coolham. The Chairman advised that the parish council had also objected to these proposals and that HDC had yet to determine the outcome of that application.

The meeting closed at 7:41pm.

Signed .....

Date .....

## **APPENDIX A – CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

The Council met ordinarily eleven times, from May 2024 until April 2025, being quorate on every occasion required, and refreshingly only twice for additional planning meetings required to discuss planning applications that fell in between ordinary meeting cycles. For half of the year, we maintained the usual consistency we have been used to with a full council of eleven councillors however, we saw departure of Councillor Roggendorff in the Autumn who decided to retire from Parish Council duties after many years of service, and likewise more recently our Vice Chairman, Councillor Woodage due to understandable time pressures. I would like to thank them both for their valuable contributions to the Council over the years they both served. Both vacancies are open for co-option in the May 2025 PC meeting.

As a matter of record, we started the year with £78,808 in the current account and reserves and concluded with £70,379, of which £38,145 is currently earmarked for capital projects.

There were 38 planning applications during the course of the year, which was ten more than 2024, and twelve more than 2023. Not only was this a 36% increase, but they also included 2 potentially controversial applications with local residents with the land north of Coolham Road near the Selsey Arms pub with an application for 9 units, and the land to the South of Centenary Road where Miller homes would like to build 83 properties. Both are a timely reminder for the Parish in terms of the threat from over development of our green spaces, and a bellwether for where the district finds itself in the current planning phase with the local Horsham District plan having been recommended for withdrawal by the planning inspector following the public examination in December. The findings by PINs were unprecedented and the implications for the Parish are wide ranging. Not only can we not begin to start looking at our local NHP which is now long out of date, it contains no housing allowance which as we saw from the decision on Woodfords by PINs means as Parish Council, we have no influence on any applications made within in our boundary that conflict with the plan, ergo that application was approved. Furthermore, with the current district plan now 10 years old and carrying very little weight and with no five year land bank, it leaves the whole area south of Horsham exposed to speculative and windfall developments and of course Buck Barn is now back on the agenda, having been cited eight times in a sympathetic context by PINs in their report on the rejected 2024 plan.

On Parish matters the continued focus this year has been on making some material progress regarding important matters such as traffic, littering and the climate agenda. That said, in May we launched our first Parish survey for some time with five key questions for parishioners on progress made since the last survey over 5 years ago, and what they would like to see going forward – the uptake was excellent with paper copies being provided as well as the usual online fayre, and responses are being collated as I report and will be published in the early summer.

On traffic matters, a culmination of over two years work concluded phase 1 in Coolham. Firstly, the 2 further SIDs purchased last year were successfully erected outside the former St Cuthmans after the wettest winter/spring on record, and to great effect, with speeds decreasing dramatically since their introduction. SID No 5 was also purchased ready to be

installed opposite Baileys to the north of the village, with the post already erected in preparation.

Secondly the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) application that was approved at the end of last year to reduce the speed limits in Coolham to a mixture of 20/30/40mph in the village was implemented by WSCC, with the limits and signage all changing. Our mostly law-abiding driving public have acknowledged the changes and speeds have come down in all directions in and out of the village in all directions, with the SIDS there as a reminder east and west. This has personal resonance for me, as it was one the main motivators for me to join the Council in 2021.

It was another busy year from Greener Shipley which saw the installation of numerous swift boxes, martin & swallow nest cups, and owl boxes at Parish and community buildings following their successful grant fundraising at the end of last year. Having grown their Facebook following further, many local events took places, encouraging and introducing people to look at green issues and initiatives culminating in some healthy debate in March in a consultation on how Coolham Village Playing fields and surrounding scrub could be put to better use for both the environment and local people, the feedback from which we will be published later in the year when all the events have taken place. Awareness of green issues in the Parish is certainly now more front and centre in peoples mind thanks to the efforts of the group, led by Cllrs Tuck & Emrich, a huge thanks to them.

In other matters, governance and compliance was as always high up the priority list as usual. This was our first year working under the Civility and Respect Pledge that we committed to right at the start of year. We have also taken steps to safeguard the Council's digital integrity and protect ourselves from cyber-attack as we have seen recently in the press, with our successful changeover to the gov.uk platform. We also changed our banking provider to an ethical banking platform, Unity bank, which not only supports our own ethical ambitions but has proved to be more accessible and better value for the Council. More recently we also overhauled our asset register to make sure it reflected current assets, and we were correctly insured where required.

I will close by thanking team Shipley PC, my fellow parish councillors, to those of you in particular who put in a superlative amount of effort over and above meeting attendance, it would be nice to extend that to all of our members, as we can see that we make such a huge amount of progress in the community when we do that.

Finally, to our Parish Clerk, Paul Richards. As the Proper Officer of the Council, he has once again been our much appreciated guide and counsel to keep the Council running efficiently and compliantly, On a personal level, in my second year as Chair, I have also enjoyed his continued mentorship of this not so rookie Chairman this year that has helped us tackle some of the less glamorous but no less important tasks in 2024-25 to make sure the Council is in good shape for future members to inherit as the guard slowly changes from year to year.

**Matthew Payne**  
**Chairman, Shipley Parish Council - 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025**