

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Shevington Parish Council  
Held Wednesday 17 May 2023  
7:00pm – The Community Centre at Vicarage Lane Fields**

**Present:** Councillors William McKnight (Chairman), Chris Horridge, John Whiteley, Terry Bridge, Helen Thompson and Janet Brown  
5 members of the public

**Officer in Attendance:** Mrs Krystyna Pilkington (Clerk)

Members present made their Declarations of Acceptance of Office before the beginning of the meeting.

### **1 Election of Chairman**

The outgoing Chairman, Cllr Bill McKnight, opened the meeting by welcoming both old and new members. He invited nominations for the position of Chairman.

A nomination was received for Cllr Bill McKnight. The nomination was seconded.

**Resolved:** Cllr Bill McKnight was elected as Chairman of the Parish Council to serve until the Annual Meeting in 2024.

### **2 To Receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

The Chairman made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and the Clerk signed in witness.

### **3 To Elect the Vice Chairman**

A nomination was received for Cllr Jess Diggle. The nomination was seconded.

**Resolved:** Cllr Jess Diggle was elected as Vice Chairman of the Parish Council to serve until the Annual Meeting in 2024.

The Clerk informed the Council that Cllr Diggle had not yet made her Declaration of Acceptance of Office as a councillor and provided procedural advice relating to this.

**Resolved:** The Council agreed that Cllr Diggle would be allowed until the meeting of the Council in June to make her Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

### **4 Apologies for Absence**

Cllrs Mike Grimes and Mike Crosby

Both councillors had made their Declarations of Acceptance of Office before the Clerk prior to the meeting.

## **5 Register of Interests**

Most councillors had completed and submitted their registers of interests prior to the meeting. The deadline for submitting the completed form to the Clerk was 28 days after the date of the elections. Members who had not yet returned their forms were invited to do so as soon as possible.

## **6 Declaration of Interests**

Cllr Bill McKnight wrt Item No. 34 (*personal & prejudicial*)

## **7 Training for New Councillors**

Cllrs Terry Bridge and Helen Thompson expressed an interest in joining the online training session – ‘A Whistlestop Tour for New Councillors & Clerks’ – on 12 June 2023 at 7pm.

**Resolved:** The Council agreed to fund the fees for those attending the training.

Any other members wishing to join the session were asked to let the Clerk know as soon as possible.

## **8 New Code of Conduct for Members 2023**

The new Code of Conduct for Members was adopted by Wigan Council in March and had been shared with the Parish Council. It was based on the Local Government Association’s Model Code of Conduct and had been personalised for the Parish Council. It was recommended for adoption.

**Resolved:** The new Code of Conduct for Members 2023 was adopted.

## **9 Representatives to Outside Bodies**

### **Shevington & District Community Association**

**Resolved:** Cllrs John Whiteley and Terry Bridge were the appointed as the representatives to Shevington & District Community Association to serve until the Annual Meeting in May 2024.

### **Shevington Youth Club**

**Resolved:** Cllr John Whiteley was the appointed as the representative to Shevington Youth Club to serve until the Annual Meeting in May 2024.

### **Shevington Recreation Ground Trustees**

**Resolved:** Cllrs Jess Diggle and Mike Crosby were re-appointed as Shevington Recreation Recreation Ground Trustees and the Council confirmed the re-appointment of the Trustees from the community: Mr Jim Maloney, Mr Shane Currie and Ms Gilly Hodgkinson. All would serve until the Annual Meeting In May 2024.

## **Shevington Patient Participation Group**

**Resolved:** Cllr Mike Grimes was re-appointed as the Council's representative on Shevington PPG – to serve until the Annual Meeting in May 2024.

## **Audit, Governance & Standards Committee**

The Council were entitled to appoint an elected member to represent them on Wigan Council's Standards Committee. In 2021 the Council decided to no longer appoint a representative to this Committee. This was re-affirmed in 2022. As the option to appoint a representative remained open, this decision needed to be reviewed annually. This was discussed.

**Resolved:** The Council agreed to maintain the status quo.

## **10 Committees**

The Constitutions, Terms of Reference and membership of the Parish Council's two standing committees - Policy & General Purposes and Finance – had been previously circulated and were reviewed.

**Resolved:** The Council agreed to maintain the status quo.

## **11 Appointment of Co-opted Committee Members**

**Resolved:** Mr Brian Lomas, Mrs Eileen Longmore, Mr David Crook and Mr Charlie Neve were appointed as Co-opted Committee members of the Policy & General Purposes Committee, to serve until the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2024.

The election of Mrs Janet Brown as a parish councillor had created a vacancy. The Council were advised that they had two options: to co-opt a new committee member to replace her or to reduce the number of co-opted committee members. The Equal Opportunities Policy and the Committee Member Co-option Procedure had been previously circulated to provide the Council with advice. The way forward was considered.

**Resolved:** The Council agreed to co-opt a new committee member to fill the vacancy created on the Policy & General Purposes Committee. The vacancy would be advertised via the website, the notice boards and the newsletter and residents would be invited to apply for the position. The appointment would follow the Council's Committee Member Co-option Procedure.

## **12 Bank Signatories**

Two former councillors, Mrs Ira Whiteley and Mr John Ball, were currently approved signatories to the Council's bank accounts. As they were no longer parish councillors, they were not permitted, by law, to continue in this role. The bank had recently informed the Clerk that Cllr Mike Grimes had now been registered as a signatory and would replace one of the two outgoing councillors, but another councillor had to be appointed as a signatory to replace the other outgoing councillor.

Cllr Helen Thompson agreed to be appointed as an approved signatory to the bank account.

**Resolved:** The addition of Cllr Helen Thompson as an authorised signatory for the Council's bank accounts was approved.

Two other authorised signatories were required by the bank to authorise the instruction to add a new signatory. Both they and Cllr Thompson would be asked to give their permission for their contact details to be shared with the bank.

**Resolved:**

- 'If the Council adds Cllr Helen Thompson as an Authorised Signatory in the "Add or remove individuals" section of the Natwest Bank's form, the Bank will update the Council's mandate accordingly for the accounts specified in the form's "About your business" section,
- the Bank is authorised to phone the individuals identified as "Call Back Contacts" to confirm or correct any instructions or information provided by the Council to the Bank
- and the current mandate will continue as amended.'

### **13 Councillors' Attendances at Meetings 2022-23**

The record of members' attendances at meetings during the 2022-23 municipal year was received. A members reported that information about members' attendances at meetings had been misused during elections and proposed that the document should not be published.

**Resolved:** The Council agreed that councillors' attendance statistics would not be published on the websites.

### **14 Deeds and Instruments**

The Council were informed that deeds and instruments held by the Council could be inspected by submitting a request in writing to the Clerk.

*Standing Orders were suspended.*

### **15 Matters Introduced by Members of the Public**

#### **Tree in Crooke Village Obstructing Telegraph Cables**

An issue being created by a tree was brought to the attention of the Council. There was a mature tree on the Council land adjacent, and to the west of, the tippler in Crooke Village. This tree was close to a telegraph pole feeding about 4 houses with telephone and internet cables. The cables ran through the canopy of the tree. One cable was taugt and could be in danger of breaking. The tree had not been maintained for many years and the resident who had reported it had said that the tree was also blocking their light and dropping debris on vehicles parked beneath it. There was limited parking at this location. The houses affected were at the top of Crooke Road and were across the road from the tree. After a brief discussion the Clerk was asked to write to the LA to ask them to prune the trees in this area.

#### **New Lamp Standard in Bankwood**

A resident of Bankwood, Shevington had approached the Chairman about a new lamp standard that had recently been installed in the street. The lamp was in the middle of trees and was being obscured by the canopy. The Chairman had reported this to the LA's Street Lighting team.

## **16 District Councillors' Reports**

There were no reports from District Councillors.

*Standing Orders were re-instated.*

## **17 Minutes of the Last Ordinary Meeting of the Council (26 April 2023)**

The previously circulated Minutes were considered.

**Resolved:** That the Minutes of the Last Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council, held on 26 April 2023, were approved as a true and correct record.

## **18 Chairman's Report**

There was no report from the Chairman.

## **19 Reports from Councillors**

### **Finch Mill Avenue Fence Issue**

A member reported that he had received a phone call from a resident of Finch Mill Avenue, Appley Bridge raising concerns about an issue with a fence along a path leading away from Finch Mill Avenue. The member had agreed to look into the matter.

### **Bollard Issues**

It was observed that a damaged bollard in the centre of Shevington that had recently been replaced had been damaged. This led to a discussion about damage to bollards in other locations.

## **20 Reports from Representatives**

### **Shevington & District Community Association**

The representative reported that there had been a change in personnel at the top of the group. At the AGM in February Mrs Vicky Galligan had stepped down as Vice Chair and Mrs Marlaine Whittham had been elected in her place. Mrs Elaine Ellams, Mr Jim Maloney and Mrs Sheila Milnes would be continuing as Chair, Treasurer and Secretary respectively.

### **Crooke Village Residents' Association**

The CVRA representative:

- a. Thanked Cllr John Whiteley for supporting Crooke Village during his time as a parish councillor for South ward.
- b. CVRA meetings were held at the Crooke Hall Inn on the second Tuesday of each month and started at 7pm and there was an open invitation to all South ward councillors to join the meetings.
- c. There was currently an on-going discussion about the possibility of reducing the number of meetings held by the CVRA throughout the year and perhaps holding more social events. No decision had been taken as yet.
- d. In May the Crooke Gardening Club had resumed its activities, which would be taking place on Tuesdays.

- e. The outline planning application for development submitted by the owner of the Owd Barn site had received consent. The Planning Officer had agreed that the exit from the development could remain at the same location as the present exit from the garage site.
- f. The issue of the bench belonging to Crooke Park that had been removed for repair had still not been resolved. The Clerk reported that she had not yet received a reply to her enquiry and was asked to write again.

### **Shevington Youth Club**

The representative reported that 19 children had attended the Youth Club the previous evening.

### **'in Bloom' Groups**

Appley Bridge in Bloom would be holding its annual fundraising event at Booth's on Saturday, 20 May at 1:30pm. They were hoping to raise funds for a new bridge to replace the one at Randall's Corner that had been damaged.

### **Vicarage Lane Fields Developments**

The Clerk reported that the employer (a civil engineering company) of a member of Shevington FC had agreed to remove the fly tipping on the perimeter of the fields. This would form part of their social responsibility commitment to the locality and there would be no charge to the Council.

### **Vicarage Lane Allotments**

The new Chair and Vice Chair of the Tenants' Association were present and the Chair reported on some recent developments. The Association were currently reviewing the Tenancy agreement and the Disciplinary procedure adopted under the tenure of the previous Chair. Elements of both documents had caused issues and needed to be changed. The Chair took the opportunity to report that the allotments were still having difficulties with flooding along the southern boundary. This was discussed briefly. The way forward would be considered under an agenda item at the Council meeting in June.

### **Forest Fold Allotment Tenants Association**

The green container had been moved from its previous position to a position in the car park, but the correct vehicle was needed to remove it completely and to take it to Crooke Village.

There were no reports from

**Shevington Recreation Ground Trustees**

**Patient Participation Group**

**Shevington Fete**

**Friends of Shevington Memorial Park**

## **21 Parish Council Websites**

It was reported that the Parish Council websites working group met several weeks ago to discuss progress and the way forward with the two websites. Both Cllr John Whiteley and the Clerk had been added to the list of personnel who had access to the new site and had been provided with a training video by manager of the new site.

Cllr Whiteley, who managed the old website, had agreed to learn how to work the new site and to gradually transfer information from the old site to the new one. He had been working hard to do this and was of the view that he was now conversant with

both sites. He considered that it might take approximately a year to get to a stage where one of the websites could be switched off at no loss to the Parish Council.

The above information was noted and the way forward with the transfer of information was discussed. Cllr Helen Thompson agreed to help Cllr Whiteley with this task.

## **22 Fete Stall Rota**

The Parish Council had arranged to have an information stall at Shevington Community Fete on Saturday, 17 June. The opening hours of the Fete were 11am to 4pm. Cllrs Bill McKnight, Terry Bridge and Chris Horridge and Mr David Crook agreed to cover the stall on a rota basis.

## **23 Trophy for Shevington Annual Show**

This item was deferred to the Committee meetings in early June.

## **24 Blinds for VLF Community Centre Meeting Room**

Now that evenings were lighter it would become difficult on sunny afternoons and evenings for anything on the large screen to be seen by those in the meeting room who were watching it. To enable a good experience for anyone using this facility blackout blinds were needed on three of the windows. A quotation for such blinds had been obtained from a local supplier.

After the discussion that followed, this item was deferred to a meeting in late August / early September, so that the need for blinds could be ascertained.

## **25 Review of Standing Orders**

The Standing Orders were reviewed. No changes were necessary.

**Resolved:** The Standing Orders were approved.

## **26 Clerk's Report**

The Clerk's report was received. *See Appendix A*

In reply to a question about the Christmas motifs for the lamp standards in Shevington, the Clerk advised that, as the rental agreement for the existing motifs had come to an end, the way forward would need to be discussed and agreed.

## **27 Financial Aid Applications**

None

## **28 Internal Audit Report 2022-23**

The 2022-23 accounts and supporting documentation had been reviewed by the internal auditor and the auditor's reports had been circulated. There was one recommendation in the Auditor's Report: to identify earmarked reserves in the year end accounts. This was already done for the external audit, but would also be done for the 2023-24 Internal Audit.

**Resolved:** The Internal Audit Report 2022-23 and the AIAR were accepted and approved.

## **29 Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit 2022-23**

The Internal Audit process for 2022-23 was reviewed.

**Resolved:** The outcome of the review of the Internal Audit 2022-23 was approved.

The Chairman observed that the Council were happy with the outcome of the Internal Audit and thanked the Clerk for all of her work in this.

## **30 Appointment of Internal Auditor 2023-24**

**Resolved:** The Council approved the appointment of Heelis & Lodge as its internal auditor for 2023-24.

## **31 Period for the Exercise of Public Rights 2022-23**

**Resolved:** The Council agreed that the period for the Exercise of Public Rights in relation to the financial year 2022-23 would run from Monday, 5 June 2023 to Friday, 14 July.

## **32 Review of Financial Regulations**

The Financial Regulations were reviewed. No changes were made.

**Resolved:** The Financial Regulations were approved.

## **33 Payments, Income & Bank Balances**

The Income / Expenditure schedule for May was received. *See Appendix B*

**Resolved:** That the accounts be approved, the cheques signed and internet transfers be made in payment, due notice being given to the bank statements exhibited.

## **34 Planning Applications**

**A/23/95111/LA: Shevington High School, Shevington Lane, Shevington** – Single storey extension to existing dining hall, layout new macadam playground and erection of 2.4m high fencing and gates.



The Clerk reported that, as requested by the Parish Council, she had both written to the Planning Department about this application and registered a representation online. A member who was a Governor at Shevington High School reported that she had raised several issues that had been brought to her attention during the April Council meeting with the Governing Board.

### **35 Next Meetings**

7 June (Policy & General Purposes and Finance Committees)  
28 June (Council)

A Co-opted Committee member asked whether a decision had been made about whether the PA system and an operator would be hired for Remembrance Sunday or whether a new one would be purchased. He was advised that at this point no decision had been made.

A short discussion about matters concerning the Baby Elephant site followed.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:25 pm.

**Chairman**