

**Minutes of the Meeting of Shevington Parish Council
Held Wednesday 28 June 2023
7:00pm – The Community Centre at Vicarage Lane Fields**

Present: Councillors William McKnight (Chairman), Christopher Horridge, Helen Thompson and Michael Grimes

Cllr Andrew Keogh of Haigh Parish Council (*Observer*) was present for Items 36 to 40. Mr Peter Collins (Wigan Council's Project Manager for the re-development of the site of the former Shevington Community Primary School) was present for Items 36 to 39. Mr Chris Pennington (Street Lighting Engineer, Wigan Council) was present for Items 36 to 40.

11 members of the public

Officer in Attendance: Mrs Krystyna Pilkington (Clerk)

36 Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Mike Crosby, Jessica Diggle, Terry Bridge, John Whiteley and Janet Brown
Dist Cllr Vicky Galligan

37 Declarations of Acceptance of Office

It was reported that all outstanding Declarations of Acceptance of Office had been made before the Clerk and Cllr Jess Diggle was confirmed as the Vice Chairman.

38 Declaration of Interests

Cllr Chris Horridge w.r.t. Item No.53 (*personal*)
Cllr Bill McKnight w.r.t. Item No.39 (*personal*)

Standing Orders were suspended.

39 Miles Lane Extra-Care Facility - Update

The Chairman welcomed Mr Peter Collins, the Project Manager for the re-development of the site of the former Shevington Community Primary School, who provided an update on progress with the development of the Extra-Care facility.

Mr Collins reported that the demolition of the old school buildings had been completed and most of the rubble had been cleared. Work on the road linking Miles Lane with the entrances to the Extra-Care facility and the clinic / surgery car parks would begin in the next few weeks. Temporary traffic lights were now in place. He apologised for any disruption that they might cause, but this would only apply to the early weeks of the development. The project was due to be completed in August 2024, but the road should be completed in a month or so. The work on the building would then commence.

The scheme would be Council owned and Council managed. Mr Collins explained how residents should go about applying for a place. While applications could be made

at any time, the assessment process involved in selecting future residents would only start approximately three months before the scheme was due to open.

Mr Collins took questions, a number of which focused on work that could be provided by the contractor – M&Y – on a pro bono basis to local community groups. He provided examples of several projects to which M&Y were considering making a contribution – either a financial one or one in the form of voluntary work hours. Residents put forward further requests, which Mr Collins was willing to discuss with them on other occasions. To facilitate this, he suggested an exchange of email addresses via the Clerk.

Mr Collins was thanked for attending and left the meeting.

40 Christmas Lighting

The Chairman welcomed Mr Chris Pennington, a Street Lighting engineer from Wigan Council, who explained the options available for the way forward with regard to Christmas light motifs for the lamp standards in the centre of Shevington now that the two-year lease agreement for the motifs used in 2022 had ended. The options were discussed.

Standing Orders were re-instated.

Resolved: The Council agreed to extend the contract with Lite for the hire, refurbishment, installation and removal of the Christmas motifs used over the past five years at a cost of £3,000 for an additional year.

Standing Orders were suspended.

In reply to questions from residents of Shevington Vale / Appley Bridge, Mr Pennington explained the reasons why lighting motifs could not be used on the lamp standards in other areas of the Parish. He advised, however, that the introduction of a Christmas tree for Shevington Vale was a feasible option and was asked to look into the costs involved.

The issue of the lack of lighting along the path in Stockley Drive Park was raised. Mr Pennington suggested that the introduction of solar powered lighting, which was being trialled in Leigh, could be an option. He agreed to visit the park to assess it and look into how the issues could be resolved.

In reply to a question from the Chairman about how Christmas lighting in the borough was funded, Mr Pennington explained that Wigan Council spent £1,100 in each ward on Christmas lighting. In some wards additional funding provided through Brighter Borough grants and fundraising by voluntary groups enabled additional Christmas lighting to be provided.

Mr Pennington was thanked for attending and left the meeting.

41 Friends of Shevington Memorial Park

(a) Revised Agreement Between the FSMP and the Parish Council

Members of the FSMP had reviewed the agreement and the revised proposal had been circulated to members of the Council. However, elements of the agreement remained which, for legal reasons, needed to be amended or removed.

The Clerk advised that one of these was the matter of insurance cover. At the moment the FSMP did not have sufficient funds to purchase their own insurance cover. The Parish Council's insurers would only cover them as volunteers if they were carrying out functions during an activity organised by the Parish Council and acting as Parish Council volunteers. They would not be covered if they were, for example, to book a stall at a fete as the FSMP. In the case of the latter they would need to provide proof of their own public liability.

There followed a brief discussion. The Council were of the view that, subject to the matter of the insurance being resolved, the remainder of the agreement was fine in principle. The Chair of the FSMP agreed to further review the document, make any necessary amendments and present it to the Council at its next meeting.

(b) Official Opening of the New Play Equipment in Memorial Park

It had been suggested by one or two parish councillors that it might be a nice idea to hold an official opening for the new play equipment. It had previously been agreed that two people would be invited to cut the ribbon, but to date only one had been approached. So far a date had not been agreed.

The FSMP had asked whether it might be possible to make a little event out of the opening to help raise further funds. The event could include activities such as face-painting, a bake sale, games for the children, etc. This was discussed.

Standing Orders were re-instated.

Resolved: The suggestion that the official opening should be extended to include a few activities to help raise further funds was approved in principle. Cllr Helen Thompson was delegated to liaise with the FSMP over the arrangements for the event and would prepare a press release.

Item 58 was taken at this point in the meeting.

Standing Orders were suspended.

42 Friends of Stockley Drive Park

Some residents of Shevington Vale and Appley Bridge had recently set up the 'Friends of Stockley Drive Park'. They had held meetings with Wigan Council representatives from 'The Deal', 'Green Spaces', 'Street Scene' and Dist Cllr Vicky Galligan and had consulted with Appley Bridge in Bloom.

The residents were present at the meeting and wished to introduce themselves to the Parish Council. They understood that the Parish Council were not responsible for the upkeep of the park, but they were hoping that the Parish Council would be able to help with some funding towards play equipment, flowers, seating, signage etc. In their view:

- the play equipment was outdated,
- there was a lack of lighting,
- the park did not have inclusive access,
- the signage was poor,
- planters were no longer provided,
- there were very few benches,
- there was no provision for the elderly and
- it was not inviting.

The group had recently met with the Treasurer of Shevington & District Community Association about the provision of a bench for the park and were looking forward to receiving an update from him on this.

The group were advised that Wigan Council would be happy to work with them as a formally constituted voluntary group and that the greater the number of members the group had, the greater the weight they would carry with regard to influencing the situation. The group would also receive the support of the district councillors, who could access Brighter Borough Funding. This led to a discussion about the quality of the general ground maintenance in the area.

The group were also of the view that the WWI memorial plaque on the green space next to Spar looked a little underwhelming and they thought it would be lovely if, considering its significance, it were made more visible. The possibilities were discussed.

The group were advised that they would be eligible to apply for grants from the Parish Council for specific projects once they had set up a two-signatory bank account.

43 Matters Introduced by Members of the Public

Taylor Wimpey Estates Issues

Mr Peter Schickhoff-Brown informed the Council that he had received an update from Wigan Council on progress with respect to matters relating to the dormant Woodlands at Shevington Management Company Limited and the management plan for the protected woodlands. The officer at Wigan Council had advised that the Council had been provided with an updated draft of the woodland management plan by Taylor Wimpey. As it was a draft copy, she was unable to share it, but she was able to confirm that it included a list of required remedial work.

Taylor Wimpey were awaiting confirmation from the management company that the works had been agreed. Once they had received this, the timescales for the commencement of any remedial works could be agreed. These were likely to take place over the summer months.

The Wigan Council officer would be requesting that the woodland management plan, once finalised, should be submitted to the LA so that a copy could be placed on the public file.

A discussion about potential future financial implications for the residents followed.

Appley Bridge Football Club

A resident reported that Appley Bridge Football Club, which had fourteen teams, had recently been told that they could no longer play on the pitches allocated to them in Appley Lane South. Consequently, they had been forced to book space on pitches at a range of locations. The resident wished to know whether there was any space available on the pitches at Vicarage Lane Fields and was provided with advice about whom to approach.

44 District Councillors' Reports

The Clerk read out Dist Cllr Vicky Galligan's report, which was received.
See Appendix A.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

45 Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council (17 May 2023)

The previously circulated Minutes were considered.

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, held on 17 May 2023, were approved as a true and correct record.

46 Chairman's Report

There was no report from the Chairman.

47 Reports from Councillors

There were no reports from councillors.

48 Reports from Representatives

'in Bloom' Groups

The representative reported that during the lengthy dry spell the 'in Bloom' groups had been spending a great deal of time watering plants.

Patient Participation Group

The representative reported that he had shared all updates with members that he had recently received from the PPG. The Surgery were mindful of the recent issues experienced by patients when the 999 service had gone down and had taken some calls, which they had re-directed as appropriate.

Vicarage Lane Fields Developments

A resident asked about the removal of the fly-tipping at Vicarage Lane Fields and whether the owners / tenants of neighbouring properties were to be contacted and warned about not fly-tipping in the future. The resident was informed that the fly-tipping was going to be removed pro bono by a civil engineering company as part of their social responsibility commitment at a time when they could release staff to do this. Once the fly-tipping had been removed, letters would be sent to all residents of neighbouring properties advising them that, if it appeared again behind their properties, they could be assumed to be responsible and would be asked to cover the costs of its removal.

Vicarage Lane Allotments

The representatives of the Tenants' Association reported that they wished to change two areas of the allotments into 'pay and raise' areas with a view to raising some revenue. There were four communal areas on the site that were not used very much and the Committee felt that two of them could be sacrificed for this purpose. They were thanked for sharing the information and encouraged to do whatever was appropriate.

Forest Fold Allotment Tenants Association

This year marked the 40th anniversary of the allotments and the FFTA Committee were looking into ways in which this could be commemorated. They were considering holding an Open Day – probably in September. This would provide an opportunity to

raise the profile of the allotments and possibly have a produce sale to raise additional funds.

Shevington Fete

It was reported that the Fete on 17 June was well attended. It had been a good day.

There were no reports from

Shevington & District Community Association

Crooke Village Residents' Association

Shevington Youth Club

Shevington Recreation Ground Trustees

Friends of Shevington Memorial Park

49 Draft Minutes of the Policy & General Purposes and Finance Committee (7 June 2023)

The draft minutes of the Policy & General Purposes and Finance Committee meetings were received.

50 Vicarage Lane Fields Allotments (Drainage)

Some time ago a request was made by Shevington H&A Society (the leaseholder for the allotments site at VLF) that a historical ditch running parallel to the allotments along their southern boundary should be re-opened. The aim was to reduce the impact of flooding on the allotments, which lay downhill from the sports pitches.

This matter had recently been raised again by the members of Vicarage Lane Allotments Society, because the allotments at the southern end of the site continued to be affected by the poor drainage.

The Allotments Society appreciated that there were H&S issues associated with re-introducing an open ditch at this location, because the footpath from Vicarage Lane to Crooke Village ran parallel to its southern bank. There was a hawthorn hedge separating them, but there were openings at regular intervals along the hedge through which children and others could easily pass.

The Society also appreciated the reasons why the ditch could not be allowed to drain into any existing watercourses, as they flowed towards Crooke Village and would increase the flood risk for low lying properties in the village. In view of this, they proposed to construct a soakaway using the re-opened ditch as a basis for this.

To reduce costs the Allotments Society were willing to provide volunteer labour. The proposal was discussed.

Resolved: Vicarage Lane Allotments Society were given permission to construct a soakaway using the ditch along the southern boundary of the allotments as a basis and were invited to prepare costings for the project.

The representatives of the Society asked if they could be put in touch with the Project Manager of the Extra-Care development at Miles Lane, as they wished to find out if any of the contractors on the site would be able to contribute anything to the project.

51 Annual Parish Walk

It was reported that Mr Alan Mohring was willing to lead the Annual Parish Walk once again on 28 August.

52 July Newsletter

The previously circulated text for inclusion in the newsletter was received and considered. The Clerk advised that it might be necessary to reduce the length of some articles or defer them to a future edition, if including them as they were meant that the font needed to be reduced in size.

Resolved: The text of the newsletter was approved for inclusion, subject to there being sufficient space available in the newsletter.

53 Forest Fold Allotments Site Security

The Chairman of Forest Fold Tenants Association had written to the Parish Council to bring to their attention the need for improvements to the security of the allotments site and the reasons behind this. He had also outlined how the FFTA were willing to improve security at no cost to the Council.

The Council considered the offer.

Resolved:

- (a) Members of the FFTA Committee were permitted to install additional security measures, as detailed in the proposal sent by the Chairman of the FFTA, subject to their preparing a risk assessment for the activity and lodging it with the Clerk.
- (b) Members of the FFTA carrying out the work would be covered by the Parish Council's insurance policy as volunteers, subject to the above risk assessment being received.
- (c) In principle, additional signage indicating that the site was private could be introduced at the entrance, as requested by the FFTA Committee.

54 Arrangements for the Annual Inspection of Property

The Policy & General Purposes Committee's Annual Inspection of Parish Council Property was due to take place over three dates during the week beginning 7 August 2023. Some members had previously indicated their availability. The invitation to do so was extended to those who had not yet made a commitment.

Monday, 7 August: Memorial Park, Shevington Recreation Ground & Gathurst Lane car park and Vicarage Lane Fields – meet at Gathurst Lane car park at 6pm. Three members - Cllrs Helen Thompson, John Whiteley and Chris Horridge - would be available.

Wednesday, 9 August: Crooke Village and Otters Croft & Crooke woods – meet at Crooke Green at 2pm.

Cllrs Chris Horridge and Mike Grimes would be available to meet with the Chair of the CVRA, who had indicated that he too would be available.

Thursday, 10 August: Forest Fold site, Stockley Drive & Whiteacre parks – meet at Forest Fold at 6pm.

Cllrs Bill McKnight and Mike Grimes would be available.

55 Clerk's Report

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

56 Financial Aid Applications

None

57 Outstanding Elements from the Budget Monitoring Report to the Finance Committee Meeting (7 June 2023)

The Budget Monitoring Report originally circulated to the Finance Committee for its meeting on 7 June had been circulated. Three elements put forward for consideration by the Finance Committee had not been dealt with during the Committee meeting. These were highlighted and two of them were now considered by the Council.

Toilets at Forest Fold

As reported in recent Clerk's Reports, the plumbing system in the toilets needed to be upgraded in order to resolve the leakages. As this was a matter of urgency, the expenditure of £570 was approved under delegated authority. [*Financial Regulations 3.4 and 11.1(a)(iii) & (iv)*]

The initial estimate for the cost of the repair was £380. However, the initial repairs led to the discovery of more leaks. Repairing these cost a further £190, which was also approved under delegated authority. The amount was charged to the 'Upgrades at Bowling Green / Allotments' cost centre.

Resolved: The Council noted the expenditure of £570 on upgrades to the plumbing system in the toilets at Forest Fold and approved it retrospectively.

Allotments

In the previous financial year £265 from the General Reserve were used to supplement expenditure from the 'Allotments' cost centre because all of the 'Allotment Reserve' had been used up.

Resolved: The Council approved a virement of £265 from the 2023-24 allotment income to the General Reserve to return the funds borrowed from the General Reserve in 2022-23 to cover allotment expenditure.

The third outstanding item was not considered.

58 Community Ownership Fund

This item was taken after Item 41.

Cllr Mike Grimes and the Clerk were delegated to look into the Community Ownership Fund. In line with this they joined a webinar (hosted jointly by the SLCC and NALC) of

more than 300 parish councillors and clerks earlier in June to access more information and advice on the subject. The presenters included a representative of the Department of Communities and Local Government and Levelling Up.

Cllr Grimes outlined the funding options available to the Parish Council with respect to the drainage and explained the purpose of the Fund, which consisted of £150 million that had been set aside to support constituted community groups across the United Kingdom wishing to improve assets which were at risk of being lost to the community. Access to the Fund, which would be open for another two years, had recently been extended to parish councils.

The webinar had included a Q&A session. The advice received in answer to a question posed by Cllr Grimes was that an application with Memorial Park as the focus would be eligible for consideration for a grant. In the light of this, an expression of interest was being prepared and would be submitted at the earliest opportunity. Cllr Grimes advised that, because £150 million was not a very large sum of money, the chances of being successful were quite slim.

59 Discretions Policy

The Discretions Policy had been discussed by the Finance Committee on 7 June 2023 and had been recommended for adoption.

Resolved: The Council adopted the Discretions Policy.

60 Payments, Income & Bank Balances

The Income / Expenditure schedule for June was received. *See Appendix C*

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.

61 Travel Plan Supplementary Planning Document – Pre-Draft External Engagement

Wigan Council was intending to prepare an updated supplementary planning document (SPD) on Travel Plans to reflect significant advances in best practice nationally. This would replace the existing SPD produced in 2007. Prior to its preparation, the Council wished to hear residents' thoughts on their proposed scope for the SPD. This targeted consultation would provide developers, transport consultants and other key stakeholders with the opportunity to influence and shape the document, which would, hopefully, result in a more effective SPD. Consultation on the scope of the SPD was now open. The Parish Council and all residents were invited to submit any comments to planningpolicy@wigan.gov.uk by Wednesday, 5 July 2023.

After a brief discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council would not send a corporate reply, but would note the above information. However, individual councillors and residents were encouraged to submit their own replies.

62 Planning Applications

A/23/95694/CON - Shevington Community Primary School Miles Lane Shevington Wigan WN6 8EW - Condition Discharge application to discharge condition no.7 (Landscaping Scheme), condition no.14 (Biodiversity Strategy) and condition no.17 (CT&EMP) in respect of application A/22/94090/MAJLA

The Council noted the application.

63 Next Meetings

30 August (Council); 6 September (P&GP and Finance Committees)

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Resolved: That, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

The members of the public withdrew from the meeting.

64 Insurance Matters

(a) Insurance 2023-24

The Parish Council were in the second year of a five year long-term agreement with Zurich Municipal. To ensure continuity of cover, the premium for 2023-24, which was due on 1 June 2023, was paid at the end of May.

Resolved: The insurance premium of £1,559.88 for the second year of a policy with Zurich Municipal was approved retrospectively.

(b) Metal Storage Container at Forest Fold

It was reported that the metal storage container (green cabin) at Forest Fold allotments had now been removed from the car park and had been re-located at Crooke Village.

Resolved: The metal storage container was written off.

(c) Shevington in Bloom Metal Storage Container

Several years ago Shevington in Bloom were given permission to install a metal shed in the storage area at the FF Bowling Green site. They currently paid for the insurance cover for the shed, but, as they had to fundraise to secure the necessary funding, had asked whether the Parish Council would be willing to include the shed within its policy with Zurich Municipal. The latter had been asked to provide the net cost implications of removing the green cabin from the schedule and replacing it with the metal storage shed and had replied that there were no cost implications for the Council, i.e. there would be no change in premium.

Resolved: The Council agreed to include the metal shed used by Shevington in Bloom within its insurance policy.

(d) Insurance Cover for the New Play Equipment

The Clerk reported that she had asked Wicksteed's for information about the current replacement cost of the play equipment they were not replacing in order to establish whether the insurance cover provided would be sufficient. As the information was still awaited, this item was deferred.

65 Litter Bin in Longbrook

The Council discussed a complaint from a resident about a litter bin fitted outside their property in Longbrook.

Resolved: Arrangements would be made to move the bin to another location nearby.

66 Overspill Parking for Crooke Beer Festival

Each year the Crooke Hall Inn organised a Beer Festival over a period of three days in early September. The event was very popular and brought a large number of visitors to the village. As the increase in the volume in cars being parked in the area usually had a negative impact on the ability of residents to move in and out of the village, some were looking into the possibility of overspill parking being provided for visitors.

A resident had asked the Council if they would be willing to give the Clerk permission to write to Wigan Council to ask them if they would be prepared to allow parts of Crooke Park to be used as an overspill car park. The Council considered the request.

Resolved: The Clerk was given permission to approach Wigan Council with the above request, subject to the CVRA being willing to act as stewards.

67 Post-Installation Inspection

Under the terms of the Parish Council's SLA with Wigan Council for the maintenance of the play area there was a requirement for a post-installation inspection of any newly installed play equipment to be carried out by a competent and suitably qualified person / organisation, e.g. ROSPA, if the owner of the equipment wished the LA to maintain it.

Quotations for such an inspection had been sourced and were considered.

Resolved: The Council awarded the contract to The Play Inspection Company, who would charge £350. To cover the cost, the Council approved a virement of £350 from the Memorial Park Development Reserve to the active cost centre of the same name.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9:35 pm.

Chairman