

**Minutes of Shevington Parish Council
Policy & General Purposes Committee Meeting
Held Wednesday, 7 June 2023
7pm - The Community Centre at Vicarage Lane Fields**

Present: Councillor William McKnight (Chairman), Councillors Michael Grimes, Helen Thompson, Jessica Diggle and John Whiteley
Co-opted Committee Members: Mr David Crook
Two members of the public

In Attendance: Mrs Krystyna Pilkington (Clerk to the Council)

1. Apologies

Cllrs Mike Crosby, Janet Brown, Terry Bridge and Chris Horridge
Mrs Eileen Longmore, Mr Charlie Neve and Mr Brian Lomas
Mr Peter Collins (Project Manager for the re-development of the site of the former Shevington Community Primary School)

2. Declaration of Interests

None

3. Miles Lane Extra-Care Facility – Update

It was reported that Mr Peter Collins, the Project Manager for the re-development of the site of the former Shevington Community Primary School, had sent his apologies. He was unable to attend at the present time due to ill health, but had expressed a wish to join the meeting on a future date. The Clerk had provided him with the dates of future meetings.

Mr Collins had sent an update on the work currently being undertaken and had stated that, if any questions were raised, they could be forwarded to him and he would respond to them as soon as he was back at work. The Clerk read the report.

The update provided by Mr Collins covered the following:

- The demolition of the old school buildings was now complete and the construction of the new roadway and building could commence. Some of the bricks from the old building had been retained and would be used in the new scheme.
- Prior to the start of the demolition some items of historical interest had been found in the school – old pictures, a mosaic and some old equipment. These would be incorporated into the new scheme to create a link with the history of the site. Louise Wade, who had a lot of information about the history of the scheme, had met with Mr Collins and had started to share this material with him. They were going to look into the possibility of including some of this memorabilia about the old school within the new scheme. The inclusions might take the form of wall displays or public art or similar and they would be working on this as the project progressed. They were also looking in the Council archives which had a lot of information about the school.

- New service connections (e.g. for electricity and telecommunications) were being made for the development. Work on these would be underway in the next few months. This might mean there would be temporary traffic lights along Miles Lane for short periods.
- M&Y (the contractors currently on site) and Mr Collins had met with members of Shevington & District Community Association a few weeks ago and discussed what support they could use. The refurbishment of the kitchen at the Methodist Church had been discussed and M&Y were currently considering what contribution they could make towards this. Mr Collins was hoping they could attend Shevington Fete later in June and offer further support to the local community.

The project team had received lots of enquiries about the future residents of the scheme and Mr Collins was happy for his email address to be passed on to interested parties, so that he could inform them of the timescales and process. The scheme was still expected to be completed in the Summer of 2024 and would keep the Parish Council updated on any changes to this timeline.

The Committee discussed elements of the report. Some members present had driven past the site earlier in the evening and challenged the statement that demolition was complete. The Clerk was asked to pass this on.

A member of the public asked whether there had been any news about progress with the suggestion that the new approach road to the Extra-Care facility and the clinic / surgery. The Clerk advised that the request had been sent to Mr Collins and he had passed it on to the officer at Wigan Council who made these decisions. A discussion about Dr Surman's first name and how it could be established followed. The Clerk agreed to look into the matter.

Standing Orders were suspended.

4. Friends of Shevington Memorial Park

Earlier this year it was reported to the Parish Council that the Friends of Shevington Memorial Park had been disbanded. Since then another group of young mums had met and agreed that they would like to set the group up again. They had written to the Parish Council to introduce themselves and to express the hope that the Parish Council would continue to work with them under the terms of the previous 'Agreement' between the two entities. The letter from the FSMP and the 'Agreement' had been previously circulated to Committee members.

Cllr Bill McKnight welcomed Mrs Marie Birchall, the Chair of the FSMP, who had joined the meeting to discuss the way forward with the Committee. Mrs Birchall explained that the FSMP's interest lay in bringing the community together around the park by caring for its future, and they particularly wanted to contribute by raising funds towards the re-surfacing of the current playpark, as well as to continue to develop the area as a safe and vibrant outdoor space for wellbeing and exercise for residents of all ages. To this end, they were willing to play their part in fundraising for the park's future development, as well as taking an active role in maintaining the park as a tidy, litter-free space, working with other groups that helped to look after the park and encourage others to do the same.

The way forward was discussed. The Committee confirmed that the Council wished to continue working with the FSMP, as previously agreed. It was suggested that the

members of the FSMP might wish to review the 'Agreement' to see if any changes needed to be made. The Clerk advised that the current play park might benefit from the amalgamation and expansion of the three enclosures there at present, as two of them were too small for purpose.

A member reported that the work on the paving in the Memorial Garden had been completed and observed that the quality of the workmanship was excellent.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Birchall for coming and asked the FSMP to liaise with the Clerk.

Standing Orders were re-instated.

5. Village Issues

Festive Garlands on Lamp Posts

A member reported that the festive garlands adorning the lamp posts in Shevington Moor had still not been removed. The Clerk agreed to look into this.

Cllr Jessica Diggle joined the meeting.

Potholes at Shevington Recreation Ground

A member raised concerns about the condition of the tarmac along the joint entrance route from Gathurst Lane to Shevington Recreation Ground and Netherwood Court. The Clerk advised that this was the responsibility of Shevington Recreation Ground Trustees, who were working towards addressing the issues. One of those issues was that of funding. The complexities of the matter were discussed.

Carriageway at J27 Roundabout

It was reported that the recent repairs to the carriageway on the roundabout at J27 had failed already. The current condition of the carriageway was discussed. The Clerk would write to both the Highways Department at LCC and the County Councillor for the area.

Security at Forest Fold Allotments

The Chairman of the FFTA had reported that tenants had recently experienced a spate of thefts of crops from their allotments. He had observed that the site was not as secure as it could be and had asked if the security could be improved. The Clerk was asked to look into the matter.

6. Minutes of the Last Policy & General Purposes Committee Meeting (1 March 2023)

Resolved: The Minutes of the Policy & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 1 March 2023 were approved as a true and correct record.

In reply to a question from a member about progress with outstanding matters in connection with the Memorial Park drainage, the Clerk advised that these would be followed up the following week.

7. Trophy for Shevington Annual Show

The Chairman was delegated by the Parish Council at its meeting in April to select a suitable trophy for presentation at the Annual Show. Cllr Bill McKnight circulated details of his recommendation, which was considered.

Resolved: The Committee agreed that the Sienna electro-plated silver rose bowl from the Trendsetting Awards & Trophies catalogue should be ordered and recommended to the Finance Committee that the expenditure of £190 should be approved.

The Clerk was asked to contact Shevington Garden Club to establish the wording for the inscription.

8. Fete Stall Rota

The Committee noted that the Parish Council's information stall at Shevington Community Fete on Saturday, 17 June would be in the Youth Club. The opening hours of the Fete were 11am to 4pm. Cllrs Bill McKnight, Terry Bridge and Chris Horridge and Mr David Crook had previously agreed to cover the stall on a rota basis. Cllr Mike Grimes confirmed that he would be available to join the rota. The Clerk reported that Mrs Eileen Longmore would also join the rota.

The Clerk would set up the stall and liaise with the members over the rota.

9. July Newsletter

Proposals for articles for inclusion in the July edition of the newsletter were considered.

Resolved: The following were approved for inclusion in the newsletter:

1. Shevington Fete
2. Shevington Annual Show
3. Forest Fold Bowling Green
4. SJR Artwork Unveiled at Gathurst
5. Fundraising for Appley Bridge
6. Shevington In Bloom – volunteers desperately needed
7. Progress with the Miles Lane Extra Care Development
8. Vacancy for a Co-opted Member of the Policy & General Purposes Committee
9. Annual Parish Walk

Cllr Jess Diggle agreed to identify someone who would prepare an article about the Fete. Mr Andy Moakes would be approached and invited to advertise the Annual Show and prepare an article about the work of the bowling teams in providing short courses in crown green bowling to local schools. Articles for Nos.4, 5 and 6 had already been received and the adverts for No.8 and 9 would be prepared. Mr Peter Collins would be asked to provide a short update on progress for No.7.

10. Annual Parish Walk

The Annual Parish Walk was scheduled to take place on August Bank Holiday - Monday, 28 August 2023. Members discussed the arrangements for the Walk.

Resolved:

- a. Cllr John Whiteley would contact Mr Alan Mohring, who had planned the route in recent years, and establish whether he was willing to do again. Cllr Whiteley would act as the steward.
- b. The Walk would start from Shevington Methodist Church at 10am and end there in the afternoon.
- c. Cllr Whiteley would approach members of Shevington Methodist Church and ask them whether they would be willing to serve refreshments at the end of the Walk.
- d. A collection for Derian House would be taken up at the end of the Walk.

The generic risk assessment originally prepared in 2020 was due to be reviewed by the Finance Committee at its meeting, which was due to take place at the rising of this one.

11. Removal of Bins from Canal Towpath

Cllr Mike Grimes had recently received a letter from the Canal & River Trust and had passed it on to the Clerk. The letter stated that, in these times of financial constraint, the Trust had made the difficult decision to stop servicing their bins and remove them from canal towpaths, unless they had been adopted by a local group. In the letter they asked if the Parish Council would be willing to adopt the bin on the towpath at Bridge 43 in Appley Bridge.

The Clerk had investigated and had established that this bin already belonged to and was serviced by the Parish Council and the old one at this location had recently been replaced by the Council with a new one. The Clerk had written to the Trust to inform them of this. She reported that the Trust's representative in the area had replied to her email and apologised for any confusion. They had asked Head Office for clarification regarding the bin in question and would update the Council accordingly in due course.

The Council owned and serviced a similar bin located near Bridge 46 at Gathurst. The Clerk had also informed the Canal & River Trust about this in her email.

The Committee noted the above information.

12. Wigan Local Plan Review

It was reported that Wigan Council had embarked on preparing a new Local Plan for Wigan. The Local Plan would sit under the 'Places for Everyone' Plan for Greater Manchester that was currently undergoing public examination. It would replace the remaining policies in the LA's Unitary Development Plan (2006) and in their Core Strategy (2013).

Wigan Council held an extensive public-focused consultation on Issues and Opportunities in October to December last year, and would be consulting on Options and Preferences in October to December this year, with consultation on an Initial Draft Local Plan following in the summer of 2024.

In the interests of successful local planning the LA had invited the Parish Council to raise any issues with them that members thought Wigan Council needed to know in preparing the Local Plan. Irrespective of whether any issues were raised, the Planning

and Transport Policy Team would be in touch in October with details on the Options and Preferences for the Plan.

This was considered briefly. The Committee agreed that there were no general planning issues in relation to the preparation of the Local Plan that needed to be raised at this time and noted the information.

13. Planning Applications

None

14. Coffee Stand in Gathurst Lane Car Park

The Committee considered an application from the owner of a coffee cart who wished to sell coffee to passers-by and wished to locate the cart in the centre of Shevington. The applicant had submitted the business case for the application to gain approval to trade on the Parish Council's car park in Gathurst Lane. The application was discussed. The Council had received two objections to the application.

On looking at the photos of the location the applicant had selected, it was clear that they had opted for a part of the car park that was the responsibility of Shevington Recreation Ground Trustees, not that of the Parish Council.

Resolved: Subject to the applicant's agreement, the application would be forwarded to Shevington Recreation Ground Trustees and the Clerk was asked to write to the Trustees to express the Council's reservations about the proposal.

15. Arrangements for 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:

- Monday, 7 August: Memorial Park, Shevington Recreation Ground & Gathurst Lane car park and Vicarage Lane Fields – meeting at Gathurst Lane car park at 6pm.
- Wednesday, 9 August: Crooke Village and Otters Croft & Crooke woods – meeting at Crooke Green at 2pm.
- Thursday, 10 August: Forest Fold site, Stockley & Whiteacre parks – meeting at Forest Fold at 6pm.

A minimum of three Committee members were needed to take part in each inspection.

Three members indicated their availability. The Clerk observed that the inspection on 9 August was dependant on the availability of members of the CVRA. The arrangements would be re-visited at the Council meeting at the end of the month.

16. Forest Fold Allotment Policy

During the annual review of allotment rents it was agreed to increase the base rate charged from £25 to £27.50.

The second paragraph under 3. Rent on P.3 of the Policy adopted in 2022 stated: *'Allotment Rents will be calculated on the size of the allotment gardens, the first 100 square metres attracting a base rate of £25 and then an additional sum for each square metre above this. Allotment Rents will be reviewed each year and may be adjusted immediately without prior notice.'*

Resolved: In the paragraph referenced above the '£25' was amended to '£27.50.'

POTENTIAL 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.

Members of the public left the meeting.

17. Forest Fold Plot Issues

(a) Plots at Stage One of the Enforcement Procedure

Three allotment plots were currently at Stage One of the Enforcement Procedure, as detailed in the Allotment Policy. The tenants had had been given a deadline by which their plots had to be compliant. Two were already compliant, but one had not brought their allotment to an acceptable level of cultivation.

Resolved: The Enforcement Procedure for the two tenants who had complied would be terminated. The tenant of the third plot would be moved to Stage Two, if their plot were still not compliant by the deadline.

(b) New Bay in the Forest Fold Allotment Car Park

It was reported that the green cabin had been removed from the lower allotment car park the previous week. This had created space in which a new supply bay could be constructed.

Resolved: The FFTA Committee were given permission to approach a contractor working on a major project in the locality about the possibility of the contractor constructing a new supply bay as part of their social commitment to the community.

The meeting was re-opened.

18. Date of Next Meeting

28 June (Council)

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 8:15 pm.

Chairman