

Shevington Parish Council
Clerk's Report to the Meeting of the Council – 30 March 2022

Christmas Decorations

The Heras fencing was removed about a month ago.

Issues in Connection with Drivers of the No.635 Bus

The Area Operations Manager at Diamond Bus has replied in relation to the issues experienced last year on two occasions by a resident with a zimmer when trying to travel on the No.635 bus. He began by apologising that it had taken so much time to get back to the Council. It seems the team in Bolton had been working on the 635s so he wanted to defer offering a response until he had more information.

The commercial team had noticed that there had been punctuality issues on this route, so changes have been made to the timings to improve punctuality.

“In regard to your concern of passengers not being collected and left by the road. I have personally investigated this and as to the reasoning of why some of our drivers were not observing the "hail and ride" sections of the route. It has been noted that all new employees are informed of these sections during training and do adhere to this. Our issue was that we had a small number of drivers on this route who were shown the route many years ago, at a time when the hail and ride was not in place. These drivers had never been informed of the new sections and therefore they have not observed the "hail and ride" sections.

All drivers are now aware of the hail and ride sections and I trust there will be no repeat issues concerning passengers being left.”

Please note that, while this may explain the incident where the bus failed to stop, it does not explain the second incident where the bus driver did stop, but then refused to lower the step to enable the resident to get on the bus.

There has since been further correspondence and an exchange of information between me and all the parties involved about the second incident. The resident could not remember the specific date and time that this had happened. This was needed for the incident to be investigated properly. However, the resident did say that the step being lowered is the exception to the rule and that it is rare for this to be done. The resident also made the point that at Wigan Bus Station the platform is rarely lowered and that older people do struggle to get on and off the bus.

I was asked by the member involved to suggest to the Operations Manager that ‘he should issue a reminder to all the drivers that lowering the platform should be mandatory unless it was obvious that someone didn’t need it lowering, e.g. young person. He should also advise them that failing to stop for passengers is totally unacceptable.’ The member was of the view that, if the Operations Manager did this and things improved as a result, then the resident would no doubt be satisfied.

I passed on the suggestions to the Operations Manager, who replied that all the issues I had raised were included as part of Diamond’s induction programme for new starters. The Operations Manager told me that he would send a message to their drivers from himself to highlight further the points we had raised.

Christmas Shop-Front Award Donations

We have received letters of thanks for our donations to Wigan & Leigh Hospice, Shevington Community Pantry and The Three Wishes Charity (Heart & Lung Fund) at WWL Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Status Upgrade of the Mill Lane Footpath

The Clerk to Wrightington Parish Council has asked that the Council’s thanks be extended to the Parish Council for considering their request in connection with the Mill Lane footpath.

Adoption of Planning for Health Supplementary Planning Document – Wigan Council

Wigan Council's Planning Department have notified the Parish Council that the Council adopted its Planning for Health Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Thursday 17 March.

The SPD can be viewed on the council's website via a link from www.wigan.gov.uk/spd. An Adoption Statement and Consultation Statement can also be viewed online, the latter setting out how consultation on the SPD was undertaken, the comments received, and how it informed the SPD.

The Planning for Health SPD will provide valuable guidance and supporting information to facilitate the delivery of healthier developments in the borough and to positively influence the impact that planning decisions have on health and wellbeing. To help achieve this, the SPD:

- Is based around ten key topic areas, which are integral to the application of a Health Impact Assessment, for schemes subject to Environmental Impact Assessment screening, and a Planning for Health Checklist for all other major developments.
- Sets out a consistent process for calculating developer contributions to address capacity issues in the health care system that result from new development proposals;
- Applies a framework for managing the provision of new hot food takeaways in the borough to help tackle obesity and other related health issues.

Donation to St Anne's PCC for the Churchyard and Grant to Shevington Fete

We have received letters of thanks from St Anne's PCC for our donation of £600 and from Shevington Fete for the grant of £750.

Issues with Raised Bed Allotment

The tenant of one of the raised beds at Forest Fold recently complained about root growth throughout the soil in his raised bed. The roots belong to a tree in a neighbouring garden. Following a site meeting with members of the FFTA, I consulted a tree surgeon, who suggested lining the base with a root barrier.

As a result I spoke to John Parker, who carries out minor maintenance work for the Parish Council from time to time. He suggested we use a lining of concrete and submitted a quote of £370 for digging out the soil, laying the concrete down and returning the soil to the raised bed. As the sides of the raised bed consist of fence panels, there is ample opportunity for water to seep out through the spaces between the panels and the fence posts, ensuring that the soil does not become water-logged.

Following consultation with the Chairman and another councillor, the John Parker has been instructed under delegated authority to undertake the work. He will be on site at the end of this coming week.

K.M.P. 26.03.22