

**Minutes of Shevington Parish Council
Policy & General Purposes Committee Meeting
Held Wednesday, 7 December 2022
7pm - The Community Centre at Vicarage Lane Fields**

Present: Councillor William McKnight (Chairman), Councillors John Whiteley, Christopher Horridge and Michael Grimes
Co-opted Committee Members: Mr Charlie Neve and Mrs Janet Brown
No members of the public were present.

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

1. Apologies

Cllrs Ira Whiteley, Mike Crosby and John Ball
Mrs Eileen Longmore and Mr Brian Longmore

2. Declaration of Interests

Cllr Chris Horridge w.r.t. Item No.5 (*personal & prejudicial*)

3. Village Issues

JP Oils

A member had concerns about the appearance of a parking facility at JP Oils and the number and variety of commercial vehicles that could be seen parked there. A year ago the new hard core parking facility had been a field. The Clerk advised that JP Oils was a company specialising in the distribution of high quality lubricants. It had been established quite a few years ago. They used their own vehicles, which came in various sizes, for distribution to some of their customers and also sold lubricants to companies like M&S that used their own branded vehicles for collection.

JP Oils had a website, which provided information about their activities. They had a licence to operate from the site in Shevington Lane. The business was similar to the one run by N Booth & Son at Appley Bridge. Another member observed that the business had clearly expanded.

Phantom Road Works

A Co-opted Committee member reported that sets of temporary traffic lights kept appearing at different locations, remaining there for a few days with no visible activity taking place and were then disappearing. This was a regular occurrence and the member had previously been advised by a Wigan Council officer that such occurrences needed to be reported, so that they could be investigated.

Wigan Council's Report It App

The previous report acted as an introduction to a discussion about the misleading responses received when using the Report It app to report issues to Wigan Council. Customer Services officers recorded matters as having been completed when they had simply passed a report on to the appropriate department. They then shared this

with the person reporting the issue. In the view of the Committee the 'completed' response should only be shared when the job actually had been completed.

4. Minutes of the Last Policy & General Purposes Committee Meeting (2 November 2022)

Resolved: The Minutes of the Policy & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 2 November 2022 were approved as a true and correct record.

5. Forest Fold Allotment Policy

Allotment Policy

The Forest Fold Allotment Policy that was adopted by the Parish Council on 29 June 2022 reviewed. Tenants would be expected to adhere to the Policy from 1 March 2023, which is when the new tenancy agreement for 2023 would come into effect. The existing tenancy agreement was also reviewed.

Resolved: The Committee agreed that no changes would be made to the Policy. Each tenant would be issued with a copy of the Allotment Policy when they were issued with their new tenancy agreement early in 2023. Tenants would be invited to sign a statement to the effect that they had *'read and understood the Policy and would comply with it'* when signing the tenancy agreement. The tenancy agreement would be amended to include such a statement.

Allotments with Issues

Earlier this year the condition of four allotments which were not being properly cultivated had been brought to the attention of the Council. The early stages of the enforcement procedure was initiated in all four cases, the tenants complied and the matter was resolved. The tenants were told by the Council that their status had reverted to normal.

With effect from 1 March 2023 this would not necessarily be the case. s27 of the Allotment Policy described the stages of the enforcement procedure. At the very end of this section it stated: *A warning letter will remain in force for a period of 5 years from the date of issue. If there is any subsequent breach within this time frame, the PC may decide to omit the First Warning or Second Warning stages.*

6. Allotment Ditch at Vicarage Lane Fields

Ditch One

Immediately behind the Community Building at VLF there was a ditch, which filled with water when it rained. The original drainage introduced to the site only covered the pitches. This consisted of a system based on attenuation (similar to the one proposed for Memorial Park) that had proved to be very effective.

It was reported that the sports clubs had recently introduced additional drainage around the boundaries of the pitches. This consisted of a series of soakaways along the boundary of the car park and also along the northern boundary of the allotments. They had included the ditch behind the Community Building in the system, so that, when it rained, the ditch, instead of filling up and flooding, now emptied into the

extended drainage system. The aim of extending the drainage system had in part been to reduce the flooding on the allotments site.

After the discussion during the Committee meeting on 5 October Cllr Vicky Galligan had raised the issue of drainage in relation to this ditch with Wigan Council officers. They had replied that, because the land in question was not owned by Wigan Council, they would not be able to carry out any work. They had advised that the Parish Council would need to communicate with Taylor-Wimpey over the matter. However, it appeared as though, because of the work carried out by the sports clubs, there was no longer any need to do this, as the matter of draining this ditch seemed to have been resolved. The situation would need to be monitored.

The Committee noted the above information.

Ditch Two

Some time ago a request had been 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. The Clerk had recently met on site with a contractor to discuss this. The meeting had taken place on a day when it was raining heavily and the flooding at the southern end of the allotments was very visible.

The contractor had pointed out that there were H&S associated with having an open ditch at that location, because the footpath from Vicarage Lane to Crooke Village would run parallel to its southern bank. These issues would also have to be addressed. The contractor had also asked about where the ditch itself would drain into. To this there was no immediate answer.

The issues raised were discussed. It was agreed that the Clerk should seek further advice.

7. Plaques for Platinum Jubilee Trees

Members considered designs for plaques to be installed at the recently planted Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Trees.

Resolved: Members agreed that they preferred the upright design to the one that lay flat on the ground.

The Clerk was asked to look into costings.

8. Treeworks in Memorial Park

The Council had applied for and been given permission by Wigan Council to carry out treeworks (which involved the felling of three dead or dying Sycamore trees and crown thinning and lifting of several other trees) along the northern boundary in Memorial Park. The Clerk was instructed to seek quotations for the work.

The three trees due to be felled would need to be replaced. Pictures of the replacement trees that had been recommended by the Trees & Woodlands Officer had been previously circulated. The timing of their planting and sources of replacement trees was discussed.

9. Grass Matting for Play Equipment

It was reported that Shevington & District Community Association had been successful in securing a Brighter Borough grant of £512.72 to pay for the fitting of grass matting in the vicinity of the two items of play equipment in Memorial Park that had been funded by them several years ago. This amount, which included the VAT, had now been paid into the CA's account. Once the work had been completed the Community Association would pay the supplier directly.

Resolved: The Committee approved the work and asked the Clerk to instruct Wigan Council's 'Playspaces' department to install the grass matting.

10. Wigan Local Plan Consultation

Wigan Council was preparing a new **Local Plan** to replace the existing Wigan Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) and saved policies in the Wigan Replacement Unitary Development Plan (2006). The Local Plan would be consistent with, and sit alongside, the emerging Places for Everyone Plan and the existing joint Greater Manchester Waste and Minerals Plans to form the development plan for Wigan Borough.

Consistent with the strategic policies in the emerging Places for Everyone Plan, it was proposed that the Local Plan would include planning policies for Homes, Jobs, Centres, Transport, Places, Environment and People. Wigan were consulting widely on a very initial basis with residents and other members of the public with a strong interest in the borough at present and, for information, details could be found at www.wigan.gov.uk/futurewigan2040.

It was envisaged that the Local Plan would allocate specific sites for development to facilitate sustainable development, deliver associated infrastructure and address development needs over the next 15 years. Wigan intended to focus particularly on ensuring that the Plan would support future bids for regeneration, transport and other funding opportunities.

To inform the preparation of the Local Plan, Wigan had invited the Council's comments on what the Plan should contain.

Following a brief discussion the Committee decided to note the information.

11. Planning Applications

There were no planning applications to consider.

12. Dates of Next Meetings

14 December (Council); 11 January (Finance Committees)

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 7:53 pm.

Chairman