

**Minutes of Shevington Parish Council Meeting  
Held Thursday 19 January 2017  
7:00 pm – Shevington Library**

**Present:** Councillor I Whiteley (*Chair*), Cllrs J Ball, C Miles, W McKnight, K Shaw, A Bland, J Fletcher and J Calderbank.  
Six members of the public.

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

**475 Apologies for Absence**

Cllr C Horridge.  
Dist Cllr M Crosby.

**476 Declaration of Interests**

Cllr W McKnight declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Item 487.

*Standing Orders were suspended.*

**477 Matters Introduced by Members of the Public**

**Road Behind the Parade of Shops in Gathurst Lane**

A resident reported that the road was now in such a state of disrepair that at the moment it resembled a river. The Clerk explained that Wigan & Leigh Homes, who own half of the road, had agreed in principle to fund some of the repairs, but had not yet confirmed how much that was likely to be. Once that was known the Council would approach the owners of the shops to ask them if they would be willing to fund the repair of their sections of the road.

*Cllr W McKnight withdrew from the meeting.  
Cllr K Shaw joined the meeting.*

A discussion followed. The Clerk was instructed to contact Wigan & Leigh Homes and the district councillors and invite them to a meeting with the Parish Council to discuss repairs to the road.

**Potholes at Entrances to Shevington Methodist Church & Youth Club Car Parks**

It was reported that the potholes at the Highfield Avenue entrances to the Shevington Methodist Church and Youth Club car parks were growing in depth and creating H&S issues. A discussion followed. The Clerk would be writing to both the Church and the Club to ask them to consider arranging repairs as soon as possible.

**Vicarage Lane Fields**

The Chair provided an update in reply to a question from a resident about progress with this project. The process in relation to the leases with the sports clubs was nearing completion.

### **Encroachment from the Rear of Properties in Parkway (Shevington Moor) Onto Privately Owned Land**

It was reported that the number of properties in Parkway where access had been introduced onto a privately owned field at their rear had grown. The Council took the view that only the owner could address this issue and asked the Clerk to write to him once she had obtained his contact details.

### **Overage Covenant Certificates**

In response to a query from a member of the public, the Clerk explained the nature of the certificates that were still outstanding in relation to the Vicarage Lane Fields leases.

### **478 District Councillors' Reports**

There was no report from the District Councillors.

*Standing Orders were re-instated.*

### **479 Minutes of the Last Ordinary Meeting of the Council (24 November 2016)**

**Resolved:** That the Minutes of the Last Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council, held on 24 November 2016, were approved as a true and correct record.

### **480 Chairman's Report**

The Chair reported that she had asked Lisa Nandy MP a few months ago about what could be done to help the asylum seekers staying at the Britannia Hotel. She had received a reply from the MP. The letter had contained very generalised comments about the process and agencies involved in managing refugees nationally and did not really respond directly to the Council's request. The impression given was that there was a preference for using contracted agencies rather than local councils and voluntary groups to aid asylum seekers.

Another member reported that he had heard that most of the asylum seekers being accommodated at the Britannia Hotel had been re-located over a week ago. Approximately 18/20 beds remained available for emergency use.

### **481 Reports from Councillors**

#### **New Bin for the Entrance to the Woods at the Junction of Longbrook with Parkbrook Lane.**

In reply to a question from a member the Clerk reported that she had not heard anything about the possibility of a new bin being installed at the entrance to the woods at the junction of Longbrook with Parkbrook Lane.

#### **Overflowing Bins**

Two members reported that some of the Parish Council bins (specifically the ones at Vicarage Lane and Houghton Lane) were so full that they were overflowing and, according to local residents, appeared either not to have been emptied for some time. Although, the one at Vicarage Lane had apparently been emptied earlier in the week. The Clerk reported that she had recently received a request from Greenspaces for an up to date map of the locations of the Parish Council's bins.

This suggested that there could have been issues in relation to the loss of a map. The Clerk would chase this up.

#### **Potholes in the Surgery Car Park**

A member reported on the poor condition of the surgery car park, which had a number of potholes. The representative to the PPG reported that the surgery had no funds, but agreed to raise this matter at their meeting the following week.

#### **Maintenance of Whiteacre Park and Some Grass Verges in Appley Bridge**

In reply to an enquiry from a member the Clerk replied that there was no update on the Parish Council's proposal to take over the maintenance of Whiteacre Park and some of the grass verges in Appley Bridge.

### **482 Reports from Representatives**

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

The meeting was the following week.

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

The recent meeting had been cancelled.

#### **Shevington Youth Club**

Shevington Youth Club met regularly on Monday evenings. Ten or eleven children of primary school age attended. The gym and six other regular hirers of the premises provided most of the income to fund the Youth Club activities. The Club was just about solvent. In 2017 the Club would be 50 years old – the foundation stone was laid in 1967. During the year there would be events to celebrate this anniversary. Suggestions were welcome.

*Cllr A Bland joined the meeting.*

#### **Shevington Recreation Ground Trustees**

The annual meeting of the Trustees had been scheduled for the following Tuesday.

#### **'In Bloom' Groups**

It was reported that Appley Bridge in Bloom had recently discovered that they had just been one point short of being classified as 'Outstanding' in last year's 'It's My Neighbourhood' competition.

#### **Standards Committee**

The meeting arranged for 24 January had been cancelled.

#### **Shevington Surgery Patient Participation Group**

The next meeting was due to take place the following week.

#### **Shevington Rugby & Football Clubs**

There was no report.

#### **Friends of Otters Croft & Crooke Woods**

There was no report.

#### **483 DRAFT Minutes of the Meetings of the Policy & General Purposes Committee (1 December 2016) and the Finance Committee (12 January 2017)**

The DRAFT Minutes of the meetings of the Policy & General Purposes Committee of 1 December 2016 and the Finance Committee of 12 January 2017 were received.

#### **484 Update on School Closure**

Members of the 'Save Our Shevington Federation Schools' group had attended Wigan Council's Scrutiny Committee recently. They observed the Committee in its work of scrutinising procedures followed by Education Department officers in relation to the proposed closure of Shevington Community Primary School. Two reports on the group's experiences of this meeting had been previously circulated and were discussed.

The Chair of the Parish Council was one of those who had attended. Cllr Whiteley observed that she had been impressed with the amount of care shown by the councillors towards the children and the school. In her view the approach taken by the councillors had been fair, but the outcome of the meeting had been a recommendation to the Cabinet that the school should be closed.

The children would receive funding for travelling to Shevington Vale Community Primary School for the first year. After that it would cease, as they would then have a choice as to which school they attended.

The Council recorded a vote of thanks to the 'Save Our Shevington Federation Schools' group for their work. The Parish Council would monitor the situation and support the transition. The view was taken that the community should be consulted over the use of the land.

The Chair was again commended for the work she had done in trying to prevent the closure of the school.

#### **485 Incredible Edible Appley Bridge**

Mrs E Longmore's report, in which she had described Appley Bridge in Bloom's proposals for their 'Incredible Edible' project, had been previously circulated and was received. Appley Bridge in Bloom had been successful in securing a grant of £3,192 to fund this project and were seeking a suitable site for it. The funding had to be used by December 2017 and the group were seeking permission to develop the stretch of open land at the entrance to the Forest Fold site.

The request was discussed at length. A member asked whether the grant would stretch to the periphery of the bowling green. This possibility of this was also discussed.

**Resolved:** The Council gave permission for Appley Bridge in Bloom to develop the unused stretch of land at the entrance to the Forest Fold site for their 'Incredible Edible' project.

## **486 Update from the Allotments Working Party**

The Chair presented a report updating the Council on progress made by the Allotments Working Party. *See Appendix A.*

She explained that Cllr C Horridge had been referred to for advice based on his past experience.

A member asked about the reasoning behind

- a) limiting couples to one allotment each and
- b) increasing the charge for raised bed allotments.

It was explained that a) was a recommendation of the Allotments Society.

The reasoning behind b) was discussed. The Chair agreed to take the outcome of the discussion back to the Working Party.

## **487 Memorial Park Drainage**

*Cllr W McKnight withdrew from the meeting.*

A brief outline proposal for consultancy services to be provided by NPS Northwest was discussed at length. Members had concerns about several issues relating to the proposal. Some were of the view that, as the services offered consisted of more than free informal advice and there were unknown costs involved, the consultancy services should go out to tender.

*Standing Orders were suspended.*

A resident explained his understanding of the proposal put forward based on his experience in applying for grants.

*Standing Orders were reinstated.*

A motion to accept the information provided by NPS North West fell.

A councillor requested a recorded vote.

FOR: Cllrs Whiteley, Miles and Ball

AGAINST: Cllrs Shaw, Bland, Calderbank and Fletcher

A member put forward the suggestion that more information was required on which to base a decision and that, once that information was available, the Parish Council should go out to tender for consultancy services. The proposal that a representative of NPS North West be invited to a future meeting to provide a fuller explanation was discussed at length. The Council's position, concerns and reasons for tendering for consultancy services could then be explained to NPS. It was agreed that a representative of NPS North West would be invited to a future Policy & General Purposes Committee meeting.

## **488 Poppy Cushions**

Cllr C Miles had spoken to members of the Knitter 'n' Natter group about a proposal to make cushions with knitted covers for the benches in the Memorial Garden. The group had declared that they were interested. Cllr Miles outlined the project, which was discussed. The cushions would be used once a year on Remembrance Sunday and could be stored at Shevington Methodist Church.

**Resolved:** The project commissioning the Knitter 'n' Natter group to make poppy cushions at a total cost of £120 to cover four benches was approved.

#### **489 January Newsletter**

The Chair explained that the newsletter was still a work in progress and the text would be circulated to members for comment prior to sending the proof to the printers.

#### **490 Buckingham Palace Garden Party**

**Resolved:** Cllr W McKnight was nominated for selection to attend the Buckingham Palace Garden Party in May.

#### **491 LCTP Finance Workshop**

No members were interested in attending the LCTP Finance Workshop.

#### **492 Audit Arrangements**

The Council noted the information about future audit arrangements. There would be no changes to the Council's existing audit arrangements for the financial year 2016/17. The existing external auditors, BDO, would continue in their work of carrying out a limited assurance review on the current year's accounts. For the financial year beginning on 1 April 2017 a new appointment would become effective. The appointment would run for a five year period. The Parish Council's external auditors for the period 2017–2022 would be PFK Little John LLP.

#### **493 Budget & Precept 2017/18**

The budget and precept for 2017/18, as recommended by the Finance Committee, and the latter's impact on residents were briefly discussed.

**Resolved:** The Council approved a budgeted expenditure for 2017/18 of £77,601 (including an expenditure contingency of £5,000) and a precept of £69,000.

A councillor requested a recorded vote.

FOR: Cllrs Whiteley, Ball, Calderbank and Miles

AGAINST: Cllr Fletcher

#### **494 Asset Register 2016/17**

The Clerk explained that the Asset Register had been updated. An amendment to the location of the regalia was requested.

**Resolved:** Subject to the above amendment, the Asset Register for 2016/17 was approved.

#### **495 Financial Risk Assessment 2016/17**

The financial controls were reviewed. No amendments were made.

**Resolved:** The Council approved the financial risk assessment for 2016/17.

#### **496 Clerk's Report**

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

#### **497 Financial Aid Applications**

None.

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

*Cllr A Bland left the meeting.*

The Income / Expenditure Schedules for November – January were received.  
*See Appendix C.*

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

**Resolved:** A virement of £888 from the 'Contingency' cost centre to the 'Planning, Legal, etc Fees' cost centre was approved.

#### **499 Planning Applications**

None.

#### **500 Next Meetings**

2 February (Policy & General Purposes Committee); 23 February (Council).

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the Meeting at 8:45 pm.

**Chairman**