

**Minutes of Shevington Parish Council
Policy & General Purposes Committee Meeting
Held Thursday 2 March 2017
7:00 pm Shevington Library**

Present: Councillor I Whiteley (Chair), Councillors W McKnight, J Ball, C Horridge, C Miles, J Calderbank, K Shaw and J Fletcher.

Co-opted Committee members: Mr B King, Mrs E Longmore and Mr B Lomas.

Mr I Clemow of NPS North West was present for Item Nos.1-3.

No members of the public attended.

Officer in Attendance: Mrs K Pilkington (Clerk)

1. Apologies

None.

2. Declaration of Interests

Cllr W McKnight w.r.t. Item No.3 (*DPI*)

Cllr W McKnight withdrew from the meeting.

It was agreed that Item No.3 would be discussed in Open Meeting.

3. Memorial Park Drainage

Mr Ian Clemow of NPS North West had been invited to attend the meeting to provide more information about the proposal submitted by NPS which had initially been discussed by the Council at its meeting on 19 January. A supporting paper had been circulated to members before the meeting.

Having been invited by the Chair to lead the discussion, Cllr J Ball welcomed Mr Clemow and began by asking him to explain how he would approach the challenge of identifying suitable external funding streams and submitting bids.

Mr Clemow began by describing his remit at NPS North West and his appreciation of the issues in Memorial Park – an opinion formed following a superficial assessment of the area. There were clearly problems with drainage in Memorial Park and he would be able to advise on how they could be remedied and on the investigations that might need to be carried out in order to develop a drainage scheme.

Mr Clemow was not aware of any grant funding streams that could be accessed purely for drainage, but, looking at the bigger picture, he advised that there were other things that needed to be done in the park, e.g. the footpaths needed re-bedding, and it might be worthwhile seeking funding for drainage as part of a larger project. Mr Clemow would be able to assess project costs which could be

included in applications for grant funding. Examples quoted of external funding sources included Landfill Tax Credits, the Coalfield Regeneration Fund (for which most of Shevington was not eligible), banks and supermarkets.

Cllr C Miles joined the meeting.

Mr Clemow informed the Committee that NPS were experienced in this type of work and had been responsible for major regenerations of parks elsewhere. He was willing to provide the Clerk with information about this. Funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund could also be accessed for the purpose of restoring parks.

Another member expressed an interest in exploring the matter of the investigation further. He would want to know what needed to be done, why it had to be done, whether the work should be done in phases, the order in which it should be done and how much it would cost. He also wished to know at what point the project would start costing the Council money.

Mr Clemow explained that he would work with the Council to build up a cost plan. Members should expect a 'shopping list' scenario consisting of visualisations, some specifications and outline costs. Any time that was NPS's time would be covered by Mr Clemow. However, there would be cost implications for the Council if specialist surveys had to be commissioned or a contractor had to be engaged to carry out an investigation.

If bids for grant funding failed there would be no cost implications for the Council in relation to work carried out by NPS. If the bids were successful, NPS would ask that they be allowed to bid for the work against competitors. If they were unsuccessful in winning the contract, all they would ask was that they be reimbursed for the costs incurred in the preparatory work they had carried out in relation to the bids. The reasons why the Council would have to go out to tender for consultancy work were explained.

Mr Clemow anticipated that the preparatory work would take up about a week (7 days) of his time. The cost of this (if any) would be agreed beforehand.

In reply to a question about historical plans, Mr Clemow advised that they would be useful. The scheme would be turned into a bid once the Council were satisfied that it was ready. NPS were happy to do this as part of their corporate responsibility.

The process would begin once Mr Clemow had received the information he needed, perhaps with photographs. He would then do some background work. The first priority was the drainage and the second the footpaths. The Council also needed a vision of the bigger picture. Landfill Tax Credits could be used to generate income for smaller projects. The process was very simple. If the drainage turned out to be a big issue, then it would need to form part of a bigger scheme in order to access funding.

The possibility of public consultation was discussed. Some members were of the view that there was no need to go out to public consultation at this time. The Clerk advised that a bigger scheme would involve consulting residents and providing evidence of community involvement in the project.

Mr Clemow observed that, in order to ascertain what was required, a drainage survey might need to be carried out. It might mean that installing a hydro-brake might be the

ideal solution. Alternatively, the introduction of a pond might be the best way forward. There were many ways of solving the drainage problems in the park.

If the Council agreed, Mr Clemow would return with a plan which could be used to secure grant funding.

Mr Clemow was thanked for his input and left the meeting.

Members observed that they were satisfied that Mr Clemow had answered their questions and had told them what they wished to hear.

Cllr W McKnight re-joined the meeting.

4. Minutes of the Last Policy & General Purposes Committee Meeting (2 February 2017)

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

5. Village Issues

Skate Boarding Ramp at Forest Fold

A little while ago Appley Bridge in Bloom had, with the permission of the Clerk, stored some coping stones in the Bowling Green car park. It had been discovered over the weekend that some young people had used some of them to build a ramp for skate boarding. It was a very clever construction, but had now been dismantled and the coping stones would be moved into the storage area at the side of the Green. It was suggested that the provision of a skate park somewhere in the area might be a good idea.

Damaged Fence Panels

It was reported that Storm Doris appeared to have damaged some of the palisade fencing at the boundary of the raised bed allotment area. On closer inspection it had been found that some of the wooden fencing was rotten. The Clerk would speak to the Caretaker about possible repairs.

Broken Glass Outside the Youth Club

A piece of broken glass had been left leaning against the wall of the Youth Club. It was thought to have been left behind by the tradesman who had carried out repair work on the Gymnasium windows.

Trees in Highfield Avenue

A quotation was being obtained for work to be carried out on the trees at the Highfield Avenue boundary of the Recreation Ground.

Parking Issues in Gathurst Lane

A member reported that vehicles parked outside the building site in Gathurst Lane were creating issues.

Litter Bin at the Entrance to Forest Fold

The practicalities surrounding the location of a litter bin by the notice board at the entrance to Forest Fold were discussed.

Play Area at Herons Wharf

One of the conditions attached to the Planning Consent for the extension of the Herons Wharf development was that Morris Homes would provide a new play area on the site. To date one had not been provided. The Clerk would write to Morris Homes to ask them when this condition would be met.

Obstruction of Entrance to the Flats in Gathurst Lane

A member reported that people were parking their cars along the stretch of tarmac leading from the entrance to the Parish Council and Methodist Church car parks in Gathurst Lane to the Recreation Ground and obstructing the entrance to the flats. She was advised that the land belonged to the Recreation Ground Trustees – they could put yellow stripes down to act as a deterrent.

Shevington FC Fundraiser

It was reported that Shevington FC were holding a fundraiser at the DW Stadium on 25 March to raise funds for the sports facilities at Vicarage Lane Fields.

Application for a Liquor Licence for Nos 5-7 Church Lane

The owner of Nos 5-7 Church Lane had applied for a Liquor Licence and residents of neighbouring properties were concerned about the impact it would have on them. The application had been advertised in the Wigan Observer that week. The issues were discussed. Mr B King advised that there were rules about how the Council could comment in the case of licence applications. He would look into the matter.

Issues in Shevington Moor

It was reported that the encroachments from the backs of properties in Parkway into the field behind them had resulted in drainage issues which were impacting on the public footpath and the farmer's field. A letter would be sent to the Right of Way Officer.

Mr B Lomas left the meeting.

6. Draft Green Infrastructure & Cycling Strategy Consultation

Mr B King's previously circulated paper relating to West Lancashire Borough Council's consultation on their Draft Green Infrastructure & Cycling Strategy was received and discussed. *See Appendix A.*

Resolved: It was agreed that the comments recommended in Mr King's paper would be submitted to West Lancashire Borough Council.

7. Vicarage Lane Fields Allotments

Shevington H&A Society had reported that they were close to the point where they would be able to sign their lease. However, they were concerned that they could lose the grant funding secured from Wigan Council via 'The Deal' initiative if they did not begin work on the site very soon. In the light of this they were seeking permission to do this. The request was discussed.

There was, in principle, no reason why the Society could not be given permission to begin work on the allotments prior to signing their lease, but, before any work began, the Council needed to know what they would be doing and had to be satisfied that

the Society had taken out appropriate insurance cover and that the insurers knew what was happening. The matter was deferred until the next Council meeting.

8. 'Northern' Update

On 1 March five local MP's and representatives of the Southport to Manchester campaign groups met at Westminster with the Rail Minister / Department for Transport. The meeting was also attended by representatives of Northern. Alan Phantom of OPSTA was one of those involved and had agreed to brief Mr B King on the meeting afterwards. As he had not been in touch, Mr King was unable to give a report on the negotiations to maintain a rail link between Southport and Manchester Piccadilly / Manchester Airport.

Meanwhile, Mr King had received an email from Northern advising him of strike action due to take place on Monday, 13 March and providing him with information about what Northern were doing to maintain services, if at all possible. The information would be circulated to members, put on the notice boards and on the website. A letter would also be sent to Northern to ask them to display this information at their stations.

9. Christmas Tree Lights

The quality and brightness of the lights on the Christmas trees was discussed. Some members were of the view that the lighting on three of the trees, and particularly on the one at the centre of Shevington, was not bright enough. The Clerk drew the Committee's attention to the fact that a quotation for additional lighting, similar to that already in place with respect to the tree in Appley Bridge, had been considered by the Council in October, when it had been decided not to go ahead with the order.

The Clerk was asked to bring the information about the additional lighting to a future meeting of the Committee, when the issue would be re-visited.

10. Report on Housing White Paper

The Government published its housing white paper, 'fixing our broken housing market' on 7 February 2017. It was consulting on the proposals in the white paper. Mr B King's report was received and discussed. *See Appendix B.*

Resolved: The responses recommended were approved and would be sent to the DCLG.

11. Plunkett Foundation

Information about the role played by the Plunkett Foundation in assisting parish councils and community groups to set up community run co-operatives was received and noted.

12. March Newsletter

The text for the March newsletter was considered.

Resolved: The text for the March newsletter was approved for publication.

13. Planning Applications

None.

14. Dates of Next Meetings

16 March (Annual Parish Meeting); 30 March (Council);
6 April (Policy & General Purposes Committee).

There being no further business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 9 pm.

Chairman