

**Minutes of Shevington Parish Council
Policy & General Purposes Committee Meeting
Held Wednesday, 6 March 2024
7:03pm - The Community Centre at Vicarage Lane Fields**

Present: Councillor William McKnight (Chairman), Councillors John Whiteley, Christopher Horridge and Helen Thompson;
Co-opted Committee Members: Mr David Crook, Mr Charlie Neve and Mr Brian Lomas (via MS Teams)
One member of the public

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

1. Apologies

Cllrs Mike Crosby, Mike Grimes, Jess Diggle and Janet Brown
Mrs Ira Whiteley and Mrs Eileen Longmore

2. Declaration of Interests

None

3. Village Issues

Damaged Grass Verges in Miles Lane

A member reported that the grass verges in front of some properties in Miles Lane (near Forest Fold) were still being damaged by local residents, despite measures having been taken by Wigan Council to prevent this.

News from the CVRA

The CVRA representative reported that:

- despite sending several reminders to the Project Manager for the Extra Care development and also to M&Y a site meeting to discuss the projects proposed for Crooke Village by the CVRA had still not been arranged.
- the bench removed from Crooke Park by Wigan Council for repair had still not been returned.
- the next meeting of the CVRA was due to take place on Tuesday, 12 March.

After a short discussion the Clerk was asked to write about the lack of progress with regard to the proposed Crooke Village projects to the Director of Housing Services.

**4. Minutes of the Last Policy & General Purposes Committee Meeting
(7 February 2024)**

Resolved: The Minutes of the Policy & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 7 February 2024 were approved as a true and correct record.

5. April Newsletter

The newsletter was due to be published on 24 April 2024. The Committee discussed suggestions for topics to be included.

Mr Brian Lomas joined the meeting.

Resolved: The following topics were approved for inclusion:

- Community Awards
- What Does the Parish Council Do For You?
- Annual Spring Show
- Shevington Fete
- Upgrades at Forest Fold Bowling Green
- 80th Anniversary of D-Day
- Youth Club advertisement

6. A Memorial for Dr John Stuart Surman

A suggestion had recently been put forward by a resident that there should be a memorial to Dr John Stuart Surman – the GP who founded Shevington Surgery on its original site and was involved in the founding and development of Wigan & Leigh Hospice – in Shevington Village.

Several possibilities had been suggested:

- (a) The tree outside The Dispensary (the site of Shevington Surgery before it moved to its current site) was damaged by vandals in 2023 and was due to be felled, as it was thought unlikely to survive in its current condition. The suggestion put forward by the resident was that a tree should be planted in memory of Dr Surman to replace the damaged tree.
- (b) An information board outlining Dr Surman's work could be installed on the grassed area outside The Dispensary.
- (c) A few years ago the then Parish Council – in response to a request from other residents – had consulted nearest neighbours of the grassed area over their views about the introduction of a bench on which elderly residents carrying heavy shopping home to the Council estate or Gathurst could rest. At the time most residents did not object to this and the Parish Council had agreed in principle to the idea.
- (d) A memorial plaque could be fitted either to the side wall of The Dispensary or to a purpose-built structure on the grassed area next to it.
- (e) A combination of some or all of the above.

The possibilities were discussed. Members looked favourably on the suggestion of a memorial tree being planted, but some members had reservations about the introduction of a bench in view of the vandalism that it might attract. As future residents and visitors to the area would need to know a tree had been planted, the installation of a memorial plaque and / or an information sign might be helpful. The resident offered to research blue plaques.

7. Shevington Parish Council Email Address

At the end of the 2023-24 audit the external auditor drew the Parish Council's attention to a change within the Practitioners' Guide 2023 which was mandatory for the 2023/24

period. Paragraph 1.26 related to the requirements in relation to Assertion 3 of the Annual Governance Statement and stated:

'Email management - every authority should have an email account that belongs to the council and to which the council has access – this ideally would be a .gov.uk or .org.uk address or could be an address linked to the council's website.'

The external auditor had advised that, in order to answer 'yes' to Assertion 3 in the 2023/24 Annual Governance Statement, the local authority should ensure that it has an email address that complies with this requirement and, if it does not already, it should do so urgently.

It was reported that the website manager had spent a significant amount of time trying to set up a .gov.uk email address, but had only met with limited success. The way forward was discussed. It was agreed that the Clerk would discuss this with the domain hosting provider for the Council's .gov.uk website.

8. Shevington Garden Club 40th Anniversary

Shevington Garden Club were celebrating their fortieth anniversary this year and had asked for permission to plant a tree in Memorial Park to commemorate this. The tree would replace one of those recently removed because of damage caused by Storm Pia.

Resolved: The Committee granted Shevington Garden Club permission to plant a tree in Memorial Park to commemorate their fortieth anniversary.

9. Vision Zero Strategy

Almost 10,000 people had been killed or suffered life-changing injuries on Greater Manchester's roads in the previous 10 years. Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) had now endorsed a draft Vision Zero Strategy for the city-region. Information about Greater Manchester's Vision Zero strategy and the Safe System approach was received and noted.

10. Planning Applications

None.

11. Dates of Next Meetings

20 March (Annual Parish Meeting); 10 April (P&GP Committee)

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 7:25 pm.

Chairman