

**Minutes of Shevington Parish Council Meeting
Held Thursday 31 March 2016
7pm – Shevington Library**

Present: Councillor I Whiteley (*Chair*), Cllrs W McKnight, C Horridge, J Ball, C Miles, J Fletcher, K Shaw and J Calderbank.
Dist Cllr P Collins and six members of the public.

Officer in Attendance: Mrs K Pilkington (Clerk)

243 Apologies for Absence

Dist Cllrs D Edwardson and M Crosby.

244 Declaration of Interests

Cllr I Whiteley w.r.t. Item 253 b) (*personal & prejudicial*).

Standing Orders were suspended.

245 Matters Introduced by Members of the Public

No matters were raised by members of the public.

Standing Orders were re-instated.

Item 246 was taken after Item 250.

Standing Orders were suspended.

246 District Councillors' Reports

Anti-Social Behaviour

Dist Cllr P Collins reported on progress with the Anti-Social Behaviour issues affecting the centre of Shevington. The Police had attended the Annual Parish Meeting to engage with local residents over the matter.

The District Councillors were continuing to urge people to report behaviour issues to GM Police on the '101' number. However, financial cuts had led to a reduction in resources and services for the Police, Council and other agencies involved. This meant that the resultant workforce needed to be provided with an evidence base which would point it towards the area of highest priority.

The District Councillors had issued all local businesses with a poster advertising the '101' number and had taken delivery of a large number of flyers for distribution to residents.

Direct Access to Wigan Council Officers for Parish Councillors

In response to an enquiry from a member about the possibility of Parish Councillors having direct telephone access to Wigan Council officers, Dist Cllr Collins replied that he accessed Wigan Council officers via the same telephone number that the general public are invited to use. The majority of enquiries were done online via the Wigan Council members' enquiry system. He agreed to find out whether Parish Councillors could have access to this. Dist Cllr Collins recommended the use of the 'Report It' app and told the Council that he would ask the relevant team at Wigan to provide the Clerk with a list of what was available.

Standing Orders were re-instated.

247 Minutes of the Last Ordinary Meeting of the Council (25 February 2016)

Amendment to Paragraph 3 in Item 225:

'.....grass verges in Miles Lane.....' to read '.....grass verges in Miles Lane and in the cul-de-sac at the top of Broadriding Road.....'

Resolved: That, subject to the above amendment, the Minutes of the last Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council, held on 25 February 2016, were approved as a true and correct record.

248 Addition to Standing Order 69

The following statement was proposed at the February Council meeting for inclusion after the first paragraph within Standing Order 69:

'The Proper Officer (Clerk/RFO) is already responsible for keeping records of decisions and ensuring public access to information, and will be responsible for administering the recording of meetings in line with the Council's Protocol Concerning the Recording of Public Meetings.'

Resolved: The above statement was approved for inclusion within Standing Order 69.

249 Chairperson's Report

Dedication of Bench

The Chair had attended the dedication of the bench to the Late Dorothy Nightingale. This had taken place on Easter Sunday and had been well-attended – there were approximately 40 people there - despite the rain.

Young Footballers from Angers

Also on Easter Sunday: the Chair had attended a 'Meet & Greet' event at Shevington Conservative Club, where she had welcomed the young footballers from Angers.

Cllr K Shaw joined the meeting.

Shevington Heritage Trail

John O'Neill's Heritage Trail booklets were now available on the website and could be downloaded.

250 Reports from Councillors

Litter Bins

In reply to a question about progress with the refurbishment and fitting of three worn litter bins that had been replaced in 2015 by new ones, the Clerk informed members that the volunteer who had offered to refurbish them had not yet started on the work. A short discussion about the merits of once again obtaining quotes for their refurbishment or buying new ones and scrapping them followed. The Clerk would look into the matter.

Potholes in Back Lane

A member reported that the potholes in Back Lane were becoming worse, probably due to the increase in traffic in the area, and was advised to report the issue to the District Councillors.

Direct Access to Wigan Council Officers for Parish Councillors

Members discussed the need for Parish Councillors to have direct telephone access to Wigan Council officers. The general feeling was one of regret that such access did not exist. The Clerk would raise an enquiry with the CEO and, if the answer was that Parish Councillors could not have such access, ask why that was the case.

Bench Missing from Memorial Park

In answer to a question from a member about progress with the bench, the Clerk replied that the insurers had said that it was not too late for the claim to be settled, although possibly not in full.

Dist Cllr P Collins joined the meeting.

Parking Outside Wigan & Leigh Hospice Shop

Issues were being created by residents, who were parking their cars on the double yellow lines outside Wigan Hospice Shop when delivering donations to the shop. Dist Cllr Collins advised that the incidents, together with relevant car registration numbers, should be reported to the Police via the '101' number. He offered to speak to the people involved with the Hospice about any possible solutions and raise an enquiry with Wigan Council.

Dog Fouling

A member raised concerns about the volume of dog fouling throughout the Parish. The Clerk had written to Wigan Council about this and had received a reply in which she had been asked to provide a list of the streets in Appley Bridge where the issues were apparent. In future issues would be reported to the District Councillors and to the Police via the '101' number.

Item 246 was taken at this point during the meeting.

251 Reports from Representatives

Shevington & District Community Association

No report.

Crooke Village Residents' Association

No report.

Shevington Youth Club

Everything was running well.

Shevington Recreation Ground Trustees

There had been no meeting recently.

'In Bloom' Groups

Progress with the bench for Woodnook Road was smooth, but slow. The group were receiving a lot of support from Nick Burdekin and were due to meet with him the following week.

Shevington Surgery Patient Participation Group

The farmer who owned Houghton Lane – and the access to the Shevington Surgery – had introduced double yellow lines all the way along the lane. It had been done to deter patients from parking their cars along the length of the road, but they were not legal and were unenforceable.

Cllr C Miles joined the meeting.

The Patient Participation Group were trying to put the case for the provision of more car parking at the Surgery as strongly as possible to the right people.

Shevington Rugby & Football Clubs

The representative reported that, sadly, one of the rugby players had been badly injured a week or so ago and was due to undergo surgery in the near future.

Three rugby players had been selected to play for England – one would be representing his country in Serbia and the other two would be going to Canada.

Shevington ARLFC had recently secured £10,000 in grant funding which would enable them to go into local schools over the coming year with a view to promoting the sport. They were proposing to run Summer school and other activities.

Friends of Otters Croft & Crooke Woods

The representative reported that there had been problems with motorbike riders using the woodland and was advised to ask people to report any issues of this nature or other forms of abuse to the Police via 101. There had also been reports of individuals using firearms for hunting in the woodland. The Firearms Act had made the use of a firearm on private land without appropriate permission an offence, but the Police had to be able to prove the offence in order to bring about a successful prosecution. A letter would be sent to the Police to ask them how these problems could be resolved.

Everyone involved wished to encourage residents to enjoy the woodland, but wished to discourage its abuse. The possibility of introducing signage was raised: this would be discussed further at the Policy Committee meeting the following week.

Part of woodland management involved carrying out surveys of flora and fauna. Many of those who had volunteered in 2015 to help were now finding it difficult to find the time to continue. They had been under the impression that they had only been asked to help with a one-off litter pick, not with other projects. Appeals for volunteers would be made via the newsletter, the notice boards and the website.

252 DRAFT Minutes of the General Purposes & Finance Committee Meetings (3 March 2016)

The DRAFT Minutes of the General Purposes & Finance Committee meetings held on 3 March were received.

253 LCTP Training Courses

- a) Information about a training course entitled 'Effective Meetings' was received. No members expressed an interest in attending.
- b) After being notified of a last minute cancellation, Cllr I Whiteley had attended a training course in 'Chairmanship' delivered by the LCTP. She had paid the course fee herself and had applied for reimbursement.

Cllr I Whiteley withdrew from the meeting.

Resolved: The Council approved the reimbursement of the £25 fee paid by Cllr I Whiteley for the Chairmanship course.

Cllr I Whiteley rejoined the meeting.

254 LALC Spring Conference 2016

Information about the LALC Spring Conference 2016 was received. There were no members interested in attending.

255 NALC/LALC

Cllr J Fletcher wished to share her recent experiences of NALC and LALC with the rest of the Parish Council. Bearing in mind the size of the membership subscriptions paid to both organisations, there seemed to be a lack of information being provided by both of them: members needed to know what services they provided.

The websites of both organisations had a "members' login" section. Cllr Fletcher had contacted LALC to ask for the password to theirs, but had not succeeded in obtaining one. She had instead been sent a list of training courses. NALC had told her that the password to their login could only be obtained through LALC.

Subsequent research had established that other county associations provided their members with statements of standards of service and passwords for the member logins on both the CALC and NALC websites to the clerks and chairs of all their member councils.

The issues were discussed briefly.

Resolved: The Clerk would write to LALC to request the following:

- a) A Standards of Service Statement detailing exactly the services for which the Council were paying and
- b) The provision of passwords for both LALC and NALC login pages.

256 ASB Leaflets

The Council had been provided with a number of copies of a poster asking residents to report anti-social behaviour to the police via the '101' telephone number – they were for display on the Council's notice boards. It had been suggested that the Council might wish to consider printing A5 versions of the leaflet for distribution, but Dist Cllr D Edwardson had informed the Council that there was no need for further printing, as he was in possession of several thousand A5 size leaflets and would be grateful for help with their distribution parish-wide.

257 Shevington Fete Stall

Shevington & District Fete was due to take place on Saturday, 6 August.

Resolved: The Parish Council would hire a stall at the fete at a cost of £15 for the purpose of community engagement.

258 Flooding in Church Lane & Memorial Park Drainage

Issues relating to the flooding in Church Lane on Boxing Day 2015 and the drainage of Memorial Park were discussed. Suggestions in a report provided by the owner of some of the properties affected by the flooding had been considered during a meeting earlier in the year and were briefly discussed again. Some members were of the view that his suggestions would need to be assessed for compliance by the LA's Conservation Officer.

The drainage requirements for the park would need to be properly assessed. Grant funding would be required to cover the costs of the work.

Resolved: The Clerk would seek to obtain proposals from three different companies.

Mr B Lomas offered to help with applications for HLF and Eurofunding and agreed to prepare a report for a future meeting.

259 Cleaning of Notice Boards

The Parish Council's six enclosed notice boards were all in need of a clean, especially internally, where quite a lot of grime had collected. The options were discussed.

Resolved: The Council agreed that the cleaning of the notice boards could wait until a Caretaker had been appointed.

260 Audit Information

The Accounts and Audit Regulations came into force on 1 April 2015 and applied to the annual review for the year ending 31 March 2016 onwards. Information provided by the External Auditor (BDO LLP) about the impact of the changes on the annual review, the audit time-table for the review and common findings across the sector during the previous year's review were received.

261 Unity Trust Bank Savings Account

The Clerk had investigated savings accounts at the Unity Trust Bank, which catered for parish councils, with a view to the Council's transferring some of its funds into one of the bank's accounts in order to ensure security for Parish funds under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. Until recently the bank's accounts for parish councils had been relatively charge free, but in the last couple of days client councils had received notices from the bank advising that in future they would be charged a monthly flat rate for the services the bank provided.

Resolved: The matter was deferred to a future meeting, subject to further research.

262 Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report was received. *See Appendix A.*

263 Financial Aid Applications

None.

264 Payments, Income & Bank Balances

The Income / Expenditure Schedules for February and March 2016 were received.
See Appendix B.

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

265 Virements

Resolved: The following virements were approved:

- a) £491 from the 'Contingency' cost centre to the 'Planning, Legal, etc Fees' cost centre to cover additional costs of legal work on the Vicarage Lane Fields Leases.
- b) £190 from the 'Contingency' cost centre to the 'Clerk Superannuation' cost centre to cover the cost of a small increase in the percentage of the employer's liability w.r.t. employee pensions.

266 Planning Applications

- **LCC 08/13/0140: The installation and operation of a 5MW bio-liquid to power generation facility. Railway Pad, Appley Lane North, Appley Bridge.**

Mr B King's report on the position in relation to this planning consent was received and his recommendations were discussed. ABCAGE were in the process of trying to arrange a meeting with planning officers at LCC to discuss a number of points in relation to the consent.

Resolved: Mr King's recommendation that the following questions should be put to LCC was approved:

- Had LCC have been given notice of the intention to commence the development? (Condition 2)
- Had LCC received and approved details of the materials and colours of the electricity generator housing? (Condition 7)
- Will meeting the requirements of condition 9 by 17 April effectively mean that a start will have been made on site and the planning consent cannot expire?

It was agreed that the questions would be sent to ABCAGE, so that their representatives could put them to LCC.

267 Next Meetings: 7 April (Policy Committee); 28 April (Council)

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Resolved: That, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

Dist Cllr P Collins and the members of the public left the meeting.

268 Vicarage Lane Fields Lease – Shevington ARLFC and Shevington FC

Several issues in relation to the leases were discussed.

Resolved:

- a) The Deed of Covenant was approved.
- b) The documents associated with the leases would be signed by Clrs I Whiteley and J Ball, with the Clerk acting as witness.
- c) The plans for the pitches and associated drainage submitted by TGMS were approved.
- d) It was agreed that an application to discharge Condition 5 would be submitted to the Planning Department at the appropriate time.

269 Laptop, Storage Facility & Software

Resolved: The purchase of a laptop, extended hard drive and relevant software was approved.

270 Audio Recording Equipment

Resolved: The purchase of suitable audio recording equipment was approved.

271 Scanner / Printer

Resolved: The purchase of a scanner / printer was approved.

As the purchases agreed in Items 269, 270 and 271 would be made from recognised 'High Street' vendors, the Clerk was permitted to use her discretion in relation to their cost, as long it was reasonable.

272 Honours Board Update

Resolved: The quote of £65 from AMK Signs was approved.

273 Plants & Planters Contract

The award of the Plants & Planters contract was discussed.

Resolved: The Plants & Planters contract was awarded to Moss Bank Nurseries at the agreed price of £4,700. Extra visits for dry weather watering in the Summer would be at additional cost on a per visit basis.

274 Daily Opening Up & Closing Up of the Bowling Green Gate & Toilets

Arrangements for the opening up and closing up of the bowling green gate and toilets at Forest Fold were considered.

Resolved: The Council agreed to employ a suitable individual to carry out the above tasks during the bowling season, until such time as a caretaker had been appointed, and would pay the individual at the same rate as the living wage.

There being no further business, the Chairperson closed the Meeting at 9:41 pm.

Chairman