

Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council
7.30pm Monday 24th August 2020
at
Shustoke Village Hall

Draft Minutes
Ver 260820

PRESENT:- Councillor B Chandler (Chair), Councillor R Pugh (Vice-Chair)
Councillors N Cole, R Gough.
Clerk – D Jeans
Five members of the public attended.

1. Apologies and Approval of Absences

1.1 Councillors approved the absence of Councillors G Noble and L Pugh.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 It was agreed this would be agenda-specific.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting (13th July 2020)

3.1 The minutes of the last meeting had been circulated. Councillor Chandler proposed that the minutes be adopted, seconded by Councillor Cole and agreed by Councillors present.

4. Matters arising

4.1 BUZZ Service (17.2)

4.1.1 The Clerk had passed the views of Councillors to Councillor Riley. The BUZZ service had recently been resumed with the bus now stopping at ALDI, Station Road. The Friday service extended to ASDA at Minworth.

4.1.2 Councillor Cole asked what data was collected in respect of take-up. The Clerk undertook to enquire with Councillor D Reilly.

5. Contributions from the Public (Maximum 30 minutes)

5.1 The Chair reminded members of the public that Councillors would be discussing security of the recreation ground and the allotments during the next agenda item, and contributions on that or any other matter were very welcome.

5.2 Members of the public variously made the following points:-

- a) Access was required for parents to park within the recreation ground during term time to prevent obstruction and inconvenience to local residents.
- b) The current opening hours of 6am to 6pm, Monday to Friday were working well.
- c) Staggered start times for pupils being introduced as part of coronavirus-related measures might reduce congestion.
- d) Staggered start times might mean that parents with siblings stayed longer in the car park.
- e) The School should take responsibility for opening and closing the gate as access was primarily of benefit to parents delivering and collecting children.
- f) Several vehicles arrived in the evening but left when presented with a locked gate.
- g) The current arrangement had reduced problems in the area.
- h) Significant problems were anticipated if the gates were locked during the school day.

6. Village Crime and Disorder Issues

- 6.1 The Chair introduced the problems being experienced at the Recreation Ground and asked Councillors to take full regard of the comments made by members of the public.
- 6.2 The Chair of the Allotments (having given his apologies for absence) had written to the Clerk to advise that his members felt that to have the gates locked at all times would compromise the ability of the emergency services to attend the Allotment site in an emergency. They had also commented that to open and lock the gate as they arrive and on their exit of the car park, would present an unnecessary inconvenience and additional responsibility. Allotment members, however, were not averse to having the gates locked from 6pm to 6am.
- 6.3 The Clerk reported that a further allotment holder had provided a written submission expressing her personal concern that a locked gate would prevent or delay access by emergency services, should there be an incident on the allotments, leaving the Council, in her view, legally liable. She had suggested the gate was opened by the first plot holder arriving and left open until 6pm in the summer, or dusk in the winter.
- 6.4 The Clerk advised that the pedestrian gate remained unlocked at all times, and that the Council was unlikely to be under any legal liability to provide unrestricted access for emergency services' vehicles to Council-owned land. Councillor Gough added that the emergency services were aware of the locked gate and had been given the lock code.
- 6.5 Councillor Cole felt that the current arrangements had worked well and should be continued.
- 6.6 Councillors discussed the benefit of parking restrictions in Wilkinson Way but agreed that the Council would need to canvass the views of residents prior to decision being made. However, the Clerk was asked to ascertain what process was required to have such restrictions installed.
- 6.7 Following further discussion, Councillor Gough proposed that the recreation ground gates should remain open from 6am to 6pm, Monday to Friday during term time only, and that the impact would be monitored and the decision reviewed at the next two Council meetings. This was seconded by Councillor Cole and agreed by Councillors present.
- 6.8 The Clerk was asked to write to the School to request the caretaker close and lock the gates each weekday evening.

6.9 Councillors reported that previous problems and issues in respect of the Reservoir had now abated.

7. Coronavirus Crisis Update

7.1 The Clerk advised that he understood local authority responses had been scaled down, but the published telephone help line remained in use. The Council had received a ‘Thank You’ card from the County’s Lord Lieutenant for the work of the Council during the coronavirus pandemic.

7.2 Councillors reported no further issues.

8. Financial Report

8.1 The appointed external auditor had confirmed receipt of the Council’s 2019-20 accounts and had advised no further action was required by the auditor unless a member of the public raised a query. The scheduled period for public enquiries had now expired.

8.2 The Clerk had circulated the Council’s accounts to 4th August 2020. The Clerk had also circulated an update of the 2020/21 budget position. There were minor variances on two spending headings, but no significant variations, to date. Councillor Cole proposed acceptance of the accounts, seconded by Councillor Chandler and this was agreed by Councillors present.

8.3 The Chair and Councillor R Pugh examined recent invoices and the payment schedule for the period to 14th July to 23rd August 2020 which were signed.

8.4 The Clerk reported that the appointment of an odd-job person had been previously discussed but no decision had been made. There was no specific budget for such work, but the Clerk advised that Councillors could resolve to absorb such spending within the Grounds Maintenance budget code, during 2020/21. Councillors were supportive of the idea and it was agreed that applications would be sought within the next Connecting Four magazine.

8.5 The Clerk reported that new Local Government pay scales had been published with effect from 1st April 2020, along with an increase in annual leave. The published figures of scales for 2019/20 differed from those currently in use and the Clerk needed to clarify the situation.

9. Planning Matters

9.1 There had been no recent Shustoke planning applications.

9.2 The Clerk provided an update on two separate local concerns which had been raised with the Parish Council – installation of a portacabin and the construction of a border wall along the residential property adjacent to the Church. The Clerk had visited the portacabin householder who had subsequently moved the structure behind the building line. Both had been subject to site visits and enquiries by a NWBC Enforcement Officer who had confirmed there were no breaches of planning regulations.

10. Horticultural Services

10.1 The Village Hall Committee had requested that the contractor brought forward the Hall hedge-cutting, scheduled for September, and this had been arranged.

11. Recreation Ground Play Equipment

11.1 The Clerk reminded Councillors that quotes had been sought for the removal of the existing play equipment and making good, but only one quote had been received, despite subsequent contact with a second potential contractor. He advised that in view of the relatively low expenditure involved, the quote could be accepted by Councillors if they felt no further quotes were likely without excessive delay or inconvenience.

11.2 Councillors agreed that the situation was exceptional and resolved to consider a single quote. Following discussion, the quote was accepted, and the Clerk asked to inform the contractor, accordingly.

11.3 Councillors Gough advised that a plan for new play equipment had been received from one contractor who had sent the quote directly to the Clerk. She anticipated a second plan in due course. In view of the likely cost additional funding would need to be sought through grants or sponsorship.

11.4 Councillor Chandler proposed that Councillor Gough continued to liaise with potential suppliers on behalf of the Council, distancing herself from any subsequent discussion of quotations. This was seconded by Councillor Cole and agreed by Councillors present.

12. Road Safety Issues

12.1 No response to the Council's queries had been received from Councillor Hayfield nor Warwickshire County Council.

13. Reports from County and Borough Councillors

13.1 No County or Borough councillors were in attendance.

14. Report from Village Hall Management Committee

14.1 Councillor Cole provided a report on behalf of the Village Hall Management Committee which had recently met to discuss and agree a Hall risk assessment to allow events to be held subject to the required mitigation measures.

14.2 Several regular hirers had yet to return but the number of bookings was slowly growing.

14.3 Councillor Cole was optimistic that the coronavirus-related grant would be received from the Borough Council.

15. Reports from Parish Councillors

15.1 Defibrillator

15.1.1 The Clerk confirmed that completion of the transfer of ownership of the telephone kiosk to the Council was still awaited, but was dependent upon BT staff returning to office based working. There was no target date known.

15.1.2 Councillor Gough confirmed that the defibrillator currently installed inside The Plough could be relocated to the outside of the building. Councillor Cole suggested a new machine might be placed on the outside of the Village Hall but following discussion, Councillors agreed that Councillor Gough should continue negotiations with The Plough for its machine to be re-located.

16. Correspondence

16.1 Village CCTV signs

16.1.1 A resident had proposed that the Council considered the installation of CCTV signs as a deterrent. Councillors had been asked to consider the proposal prior to the meeting.

16.1.2 Following discussion, Councillors were not in support of the proposal and the Clerk was asked to notify the resident accordingly.

16.2 Securing the Recreation Ground Against Traveller Encampments

16.2.1 The Clerk had circulated details from a company providing physical means of protection of recreation grounds from travellers and unauthorised encampments.

16.2.2 Following discussion, Councillors were not in favour of making contact with the company.

16.3 Dog Deposits – Recreation Ground

16.3.1 The Clerk had received queries in respect of dog walkers not clearing up their dogs' deposits. He had initially referred the enquiries to the Borough's Dog Warden Service which includes an online reporting system. However, following enquiries with the Borough, it was ascertained that the Dog Warden Service has not operated for some time for reasons not connected with coronavirus. The Clerk had contacted Councillor Wright suggesting the NWBC website was updated.

16.3.2 Councillor Gough understood that details of complaints were forwarded to Environmental Services but was not aware of what action was subsequently taken.