

Ordinary Meeting of Shustoke Parish Council
7.30pm Monday 31st October 2022
at
Shustoke Village Hall

MINUTES

Present: Councillors N Cole (Chair), B Chandler (Vice Chair), G Dupree, L Dupree, G Farr,
G Noble
Clerk – David Jeans

At the start of the meeting, the Chair congratulated Councillor L Dupree for her Halloween initiative which had been very well received and which had attracted over 40 children from the Village.

1. Apologies and Approval of Absences

1.1 All Councillors were present.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 It was agreed this would be agenda-specific.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held 22nd August 2022 had been circulated. Councillor Cole proposed that the minutes be adopted, seconded by Councillor Chandler, and this was agreed by Councillors present.

4. Matters arising

4.1 There were no matters arising not covered within the main agenda.

5. Contributions from the Public (Maximum 30 minutes)

5.1 No members of the public were present.

6. Village Crime and Disorder Issues

6.1 Councillors had previously queried whether Severn Trent might be persuaded to abolish car parking charges to reduce the incidence of visitors parking in narrow residential streets. The Clerk reported that the Council's main contact had apparently left the Organisation and he had not yet had a reply using the general contact process. He would continue to attempt to find the relevant individual. The Chair advised that Severn Trent operated a 'What'sApp' group which could be used to communicate with the Company.

Action – Clerk

6.2 Councillors discussed the need to consult with residents of Reservoir Drive concluding that any policy decision would need to be part of the published agenda for a Council meeting at which residents could make representations.

7. Financial Report and Strategic Objectives 2023/24 and Beyond

7.1 The Clerk had circulated a copy of the latest 2022/23 budget position which the Chair signed during the meeting.

7.2 The Clerk had also circulated a copy of the Council's accounts for the period up to 31st October 2022 plus a bank reconciliation for the 2022/23 half-year. The Chair proposed acceptance of the financial report, seconded by Councillor L Dupree and agreed by Councillors present. The Chair signed the documents.

7.3 The Chair was presented with recent invoices and a payment schedule for the period 23rd August 2022 to 31st October 2022, which he signed and which were countersigned by Councillor Chandler.

7.4 The Clerk had circulated a discussion paper asking Councillors to consider the Council's strategic objectives and their financial implications in advance of the 2023 precept discussion which needed to take place at the December 2023 Council meeting.

7.5 Following discussion, Councillors identified the following strategic priorities and projects:-

- i) Continuation of the plan to provide children's and adult play / activity equipment.
- ii) New vehicle and pedestrian gates – recreation ground.
- iii) Continuation of adequate horticultural services throughout the Village.
- iv) Annual tree survey.
- v) Investment of £2000 per annum to reserves.

8. Planning Matters

8.1 The Clerk had circulated details of a planning application for a dropped kerb at 45 Church Road.

8.2 Following discussion, Councillors agreed that the Council should actively support the application and to notify the Planning Authority accordingly.

Action – Clerk

9. Horticultural Services and Handyperson Activities

9.1 The Clerk reported he had sent further messages to the managing agent of the rented houses in Croxall Drive seeking repayment of the repair costs for the shared fencing, as previously agreed with the agent. He would continue to chase the amount owed.

Action - Clerk

9.2 The Clerk had requested a quotation for the current contractor to continue for periods of both a further year and a two-year period. He advised that Councillors could alternatively decide to seek prices from other contractors. Councillors agreed to retain the current contractor, subject to the contract price. The Recreation Ground Working Group would meet with the contractor

to agree minor alterations to the schedule of work within the contract. The area close to the Hall pedestrian gate would also be included in the future contract.

Action - Recreation Ground Working Group & Clerk

- 9.3 Councillor Cole reported that a small team had worked on the Village Hall surrounds and made considerable improvements. He formally thanked former Councillor R Pugh, Councillors G and L Dupree and their families and friends for the work that had been undertaken.
- 9.4 The Clerk had contacted the Chair of the Allotments Committee in respect of the condition of planters in Church Road which the Allotments had agreed to maintain. He outlined the response from the Chair. Councillors asked the Clerk to respond accordingly.

Action – Clerk

10. Recreation Ground

- 10.1 Councillor L Dupree provided an update on the progress of the Recreation Ground Working Group and outlined the options available to the Council. Following discussion, Councillor Cole proposed that the Council should proceed with the perimeter track and bespoke adult trim trail, subject to the receipt of a detailed quotation. This was seconded by Councillor Chandler and agreed by Councillors present.

Action – Councillor L Dupree & Clerk

- 10.2 Councillors agreed that the Council's reserves could not be reduced too far, and significant additional installations would need to be dependent on further fund raising.
- 10.3 Council L Dupree advised the Council that a dead tree along the recreation ground driveway represented a potential danger and she had obtained a quote for its prompt removal. Councillors agreed that the urgency of its removal prevented further quotes being sought, and approved the quotation provided. The Clerk was requested to ask the contractor to remove the tree immediately.

Action - Clerk

- 10.4 As requested at the previous meeting, the Clerk had checked the insurance cover for the remaining play equipment. The insured sum was £100 based on the value of the equipment as entered in the Council's asset register. The insurance excess was a standard £250. The Insurance Company would need to be advised of any new play equipment installed, and there might be an increase in premium and the sum assured would need to cover replacement costs.
- 10.5 The form of sponsorship certificate for Jubilee trees had been agreed, and Councillors agreed to inviting the recipient and her family to the December Council meeting for its presentation. Councillor Cole offered to make a home visit if attendance at the Council meeting was not practicable.

Action – Clerk

11. Road Safety Issues

- 11.1 The defective road signs had been repaired. No other issue was raised.

12. Climate Change Issues

- 12.1 Councillor Noble advised that ‘Warm Welcome’ events would now be held in the Church Hall, Nether Whitacre. The Chair advised that the Village Hall was available for similar events and grants were available. A first Shustoke event in January was suggested and Councillor Noble agreed to work with Councillor Cole to develop the initiative.

Action – Councillors Noble and Cole

13. Warwickshire Association of Local Councils

- 13.1 Councillor Chandler outlined the recent activity of the North Warwickshire Area Committee and its status as an independent body feeding into WALC. A new constitution would be discussed at the NWAC December meeting. WALC was looking to increase the number of directors from 5 to 10.

14. Developments in Local Government Impacting on the Parish Council or Shustoke

- 14.1 The Clerk had attended a recent Reference Group meeting on Highways issues, which had been very useful. Councillor Chandler encouraged other Councillors to register for the online sessions.

15. Reports from County and Borough Councillors

- 15.1 No County nor Borough Councillors were present. It was agreed this agenda item would move to the start of Council meetings.

Action - Clerk

16. Report from Village Hall Management Committee

- 16.1 An update on the Village Hall was provided by Councillor G Dupree who reported that a very healthy set-up was now in place following the pandemic close-down. The Management Committee had discussed its budgets for future years and how surplus funds might be used. Proposals would be placed before the Trustee body at the next meeting. Refurbishment of the kitchen was likely to be the next project.

17. Reports from Parish Councillors

- 17.1 Councillor Chandler reported that the Patient Participation Group was yet to restart following its suspension during the pandemic. She suggested that the clerk should write to the practice manager seeking clarification.

Action - Clerk

- 17.2 Councillor Noble reminded Councillors that the Council had previously made a contribution to the Church Christmas Tree fundraising effort and asked for a further donation for 2022. Councillor L Dupree offered to decorate the tree and on a proposal by Councillor Chandler, seconded by Councillor Farr, the Council agreed a £30 donation.

Action - Clerk

18. Marketing and Communication

- 18.1 Councillor Noble sought contributions from Councillors for the next edition of ‘Connecting Four’.

18.2 Councillors proposed mention of the work undertaken around the Village Hall, Councillor L Dupree's Halloween event, and the forthcoming Clerk's vacancy.

19. Recruitment of Parish Clerk

19.1 The Clerk had circulated a possible process and timetable for recruiting a new Parish Clerk in 2023 alongside a draft job description and person specification.

19.2 Councillors agreed that a panel would be established comprising Councillors Cole, Chandler, Farr and G Dupree. The current Clerk would be attached to the panel to provide support as required. The panel would meet in November to finalise the recruitment package, and to confirm the detail of the process and its timetable.

Action – Recruitment Panel + Clerk

20. Correspondence

20.1 The Clerk had circulated relevant correspondence to Councillors.

The meeting closed at 10.10pm.

I certify that these minutes, comprising five pages and an attached payment schedule covering 23rd August to 31st October 2022, represent a true record of the ordinary meeting held on 31st October 2022.

_____ **Chair** _____ **Date**