

SHORNE PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on
26th November 2020 on Zoom**

PRESENT

Mr R Lane (Chairman)
Mr R Theobald
Mr Bugg
Mr R Hardy
Ms Clifton
Mrs S Lindley
Mrs L McCluskey
Mr C Rea

APOLOGIES

Parishioners in attendance: None in attendance

80. To receive any declarations of interest

None received.

81. To approve the minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 8th October 2020

The minutes were **AGREED** as a true record.

82. Any matters arising not otherwise on the Agenda

Nothing received

83. KCC notice to cut trees in The Ridgeway; to approve order to proceed

On 23rd October 2020, KCC issued letters requiring Shorne Parish Council to cut back trees in Shorne Recreation Ground and Shorne Common Rough, to provide 0.5m clearance and 5.2m headroom in The Ridgeway, primarily for Redroute double deck buses. This was requested to be carried out within 28 days, but subsequently extended to 3 months. It was noted that Conservation Area approval notification is not required for works needed to comply with the requirements of the Highways Act, although it is advised to give the Planning Authority 5 days' notice.

Mr Lane attended a video meeting with KCC on 10th November, and it appears that the Parish Council has no option but to comply. Mr Lane submitted a note and quotations received to Members on 19th November, and requested approval to place an order with NPC Tree Surgeons who submitted the lowest price. This was **agreed**.

84. To consider cost of cleaning of Shorne War Memorial

Earlier this year, the Rev. Ted Hurst contacted Mr Lane with a view to launching a public appeal to meet the cost of refurbishing Shorne War Memorial for the centenary commemoration. The Commemoration was postponed due to COVID-19. However, Mr Theobald pointed out that the Parish Council is responsible for maintaining the war

memorial. Mr Lane has inspected the war memorial. It appears to be in reasonably good condition, although heavily encrusted with algae, lichen, etc. This is not unusual.

Mr Lane approached a number of approved memorial conservationist companies for their recommendations and quotations, and submitted a note and the three quotations received to Members on 19th November. Mr Lane requested Members to consider whether to proceed with the works, and if so to give approval to placing an order with P&S Property Management who submitted the lowest price. This was **agreed**. It was proposed that the works should be undertaken at the end of March or early April, depending on the financial situation at that time.

85. To consider proposals for upgrading the play area at Shorne Common

Cllr Sweetland contacted Mr Lane on 21st October to advise that he may be able to provide a grant of £3k - £5k towards the cost of upgrading Shorne Common Play area, but the money would only be available for a limited period. On 29th October Ms Clifton and Mr Lane met Maria Cook of Craigdene Ltd, who undertakes the annual inspections of the play equipment, on site to discuss possible requirements. Maria identified Veolia as another potential source of grant funding, but the deadline for applications is 3rd December. Mr Lane has also submitted an initial grant availability enquiry to Gravesham Borough Council, but no reply has been received.

If we wish to proceed with upgrading the play area, Maria Cook has offered to project manage the scheme, including providing support with the design and selection of the equipment, getting quotes and assessing play value, and overseeing the installation including play surfacing. For this she is proposing to cap her fee at no more than £1,000. In the meantime, Maria has obtained quotations from 3 suppliers at an initial fee of £50 to enable us to prepare budgets and apply for grants if we decide to proceed. Mr Lane submitted a paper including indicative prices to Members on 18th November. In view of the short timescales, Members were requested to determine a working budget and to approve the submission of grant applications based on estimates obtained.

The existing equipment was obtained second hand approximately 25 years ago and no longer meets modern requirements. Options and indicative prices ranging from £12,205 to £20,002 had been obtained from Redlynch, Action Play, and Schoolscapes for rustic-style equipment, since it was felt that this would complement the environment. Members discussed the options available. Mr Lane and Ms Clifton felt that the £15,725 Redlynch Lappset Troll's Shelter option provided good play value and appealed to a wider age group than other options. Mr Lane reminded Members Council that it was not just the cost of equipment, but also the cost of the safety surfacing.

It was **agreed** to proceed with seeking grant funding on this basis. Formal approval of the placing of orders for equipment and installation within these parameters can be approved or ratified at a subsequent meeting. It was decided to engage directly with suppliers.

86. To review recommendations, costs and approve change of website provider

Our current website provider Cantium will no longer support the website from 1st January 2021. Mrs Poole has carried out research, and submitted her recommendations on 19th November. KCC subsequently wrote to the Parish Council on 20th November with another option, and extended the website support until 31st March 2021. Details of this offer were circulated on 21st November. Members were invited to consider the

options, note the costs, and to approve the selected website provider. Mrs Poole presented the two options: Option 1: Town & Parish Websites - £499 + £285 set up costs, £200 per year; or Option 2: Aubergine - £900 set up costs, £199 per year. Mrs Poole recommended Option 1 and this was agreed by Members. Mrs Poole will contact the provider and arrange for the website to be transferred across.

87. To receive any update on the repainting of the railings in The Street

Mr Theobald reported that two quotations have been received, and a third is awaited. Mr Theobald will contact them to see if they intend to quote, if not he will seek another bidder so that orders can be placed in readiness for carrying out the work in Spring 2021.

88. To receive any update on the resurfacing of the car park at the village hall

Mr Bugg reported that he is meeting a resurfacing contractor on site next week, which will be the first of three. The remedial work on the shrub area at the rear of the car park has not been carried out yet, and Mrs Poole will contact Colin Lawrence to find out when this will be done. Mr Bugg has obtained an indicative estimate of £2,150 for resin surfacing of the area between the car park and Manor Field. Ms Clifton has sent photographs of the area to Celia Davies to see whether this would be a suitable location for a Buzz Garden.

89. Vacancy for Councillor

No election was called, and the co-option advertisement has now been published and posted on noticeboards, with a provisional closing date of 31st December 2020.

90. Planning & Highways Committee update

(a) Approval of bollards in Brewers Road

The Planning & Highways Committee met on 12th November 2020. At the Budget & Finance meeting on 22nd October it was agreed in principle to proceed with the installation of wooden bollards to protect the verges outside the Country Park from illegal parking. The indicative estimated cost was £2,700 of which the Country Park has agreed to contribute half. The post-design estimate may be higher. Members **approved** expenditure up to £3,000 of which Shorne Parish Council may be required to pay £1,650, depending on final costs. If it is significantly higher, further approval may be required.

(b) Lower Thames Crossing

Mrs Lindley reported that the DCO application has been withdrawn. The Planning Inspectorate was not satisfied with the information provided with the application. Additional details will be published following a meeting between the Planning Inspectorate and Highways England.

(c) Nuralite

The planning application may be brought before Gravesham Planning Committee on 16th December 2020. Concerns regarding the potential impact on the environment and of traffic on local roads were discussed.

There have been no planning applications since the last Planning Meeting on the 12th November 2020.

91. Update from the Footpaths, Properties & Greens Committee

(a) Buzz Garden

Ms Clifton reported that she has been in contact with the Buzz Garden people and has suggested the strip of land between Manor Fields and the Village Hall car park, with raised beds. We are waiting to hear back from them. Ms Clifton has also said we may be interested in Malthouse Lane verge being planted if permissible.

(b) Crabbles Bottom

Mr Gozzett has carried out a free cut of the orchard area using his new machinery, and has also cleared the bushes between the meadows. Ms Clifton is still waiting for AGS to repair the fencing. AGS have received delivery of the fence posts but are awaiting the rails.

(c) Shorne Common

The new memorial bench has been installed, and the old bench has been cleaned, oiled, and secured to the ground. Mr Lane has also fitted the plaque to the bench. Mr Vilday has re-installed the bollards, but there are a few others that are rotting which will need attention soon.

The Arboriculturist survey has been carried out at Shorne Common, and has identified a large branch overhanging the old bench and a few dead elm trees that need removing. Ms Clifton is awaiting quotes to carry out this work.

(d) Shorne Recreation Ground

Ms Clifton reported that the height barrier padlock has now been fitted but we are still waiting for the new gate to be fitted.

(e) Michael Gardens

Mrs McCluskey reported that she and Messrs Hardy and Rea had a meeting with Martin Wates from Gravesham Borough Council at Michael Gardens, and requested tables and benches. Mr Wates agreed to install one picnic table out of GBC's budget in this financial year after Covid restrictions are eased, and a second one in 2021 financial year provided no anti-social behaviour occurs. This will save expenditure from the Parish budget.

Mr Rea reported that there were a lot of families using the park during the meeting and the use of gym equipment was discussed. Mr Wates agreed to look into circuit training equipment within the park, which GBC may agree to fund. This would need to be low maintenance with no moving parts to avoid noise disturbance to local residents.

(f) Footpaths NS169/167

Mrs McCluskey has spoken to Eva Simunovic about NS169 and NS167 which were damaged by Highways England's contractors. Eva advised that the footpaths would be repaired using Type 1 aggregate, but this has only been partly carried out so Mrs McCluskey will be in contact with Eva to get this finished. Mr Lane asked to be copied in on the correspondence along with Mrs Lindley.

92. Finance Report and Audit Update

Date	Description		Amount	VAT	Total
	B/F		£15,321.75	£764.19	£16,085.94
05/10/2020	DD	Vodafone	£19.38	£3.87	£23.25
07/10/2020	DD	Nest Sept Pension	£57.52	£0.00	£57.52
27/10/2020	BACS	Earth Anchors	£637.00	£127.40	£764.40
27/10/2020	BACS	All Seasons	£220.00	£0.00	£220.00
27/10/2020	BACS	S Poole Oct Salary	£994.11	£0.00	£994.11
24/10/2020	BACS	Tom Gozzett Inv 135/136	£1,199.00	£0.00	£1,199.00
27/10/2020	BACS	P Clifton Expenses Blakes	£80.00	£16.00	£96.00
27/10/2020	BACS	H & P	£244.60	£48.92	£293.52
			£18,773.36	£960.38	£19,733.74
Date	Description		Amount	VAT	Total
	B/F		£18,773.36	£960.38	£19,733.74
04/11/2020	BACS	S Poole Expenses Computer Allowance	£200.00	£0.00	£200.00
04/11/2020	DD	Vodafone	£15.02	£3.00	£18.02
04/11/2020	BACS	AGS Hoarding & Fencing	£370.00	£74.00	£444.00
10/11/2020	DD	Nest Oct Pension	£60.25	£0.00	£60.25
20/11/2020	DD	Eslip	£12.40	£2.48	£14.88
23/11/2020	DD	Invicta Arboriculture	£200.00	£0.00	£200.00
23/11/2020	BACS	All Seasons Garden Maintenance	£285.00	£0.00	£285.00
23/11/2020	BACS	Tom Gozzett	£430.00	£0.00	£430.00
30/11/2020	BACS	S Poole Nov Salary	£817.94	£0.00	£817.94
	BACS	Mr Lane Expenses (plaque)	£10.27	£2.05	£12.32
			£21,174.24	£1,041.91	£22,216.15

Mrs Poole has been in communication with PKF Littlejohn who had some queries relating to the previous year. Mrs Poole was unable to help them with some of the queries so Mr Lane asked to see the email along with Ms Clifton to see if they could help, as the deadline to get the certificate back to the Parish Council is the 30th November.

93. To receive report from Borough Councillor R Lane

The extension of the 30mph speed limit in The Ridgeway has been brought back onto the agenda of Gravesham Joint Transport Board on 2nd December. The Nuralite application is likely to be considered at the Planning Committee on 16th December 2020.

94. To receive any report from County Councillor B Sweetland

Nothing to report.

95. Proposal to licence fitness club sessions at Shorne Recreation Ground

It was noted that there has been a further post on Facebook advertising fitness sessions. Gravesham Planning has confirmed that there are no planning constraints.

At the previous meeting, it was agreed to proceed with the licensing proposal. Members were requested to review the draft licensing agreement and the suggested charges, and to let him have any comments or suggested changes by the next meeting. Mr Bugg and Ms Clifton sent comments, and it was agreed that the licensing and charges would come into force from 1st January 2021.

96. To receive any update on possible options for bus shelters

Mr Bugg said that we should get a structural design carried out before carrying out any work, and we should budget £500 for this and at least £2,000 for the work at each bus shelter. Mr Bugg queried whether we need planning permission. Mr Rea queried whether we should arrange for more frequent cleaning rather than spend this amount of money. Mr Lane said that it would need weekly cleaning and would not deter the inappropriate activities. Ms Clifton said that grants are available for refurbishing old bus shelters, the grant is about £2,000. It was suggested that perhaps signage and CCTV camera could deter the inappropriate activity. Ms Clifton also suggested that we fit a lockable door on the noticeboard to prevent people removing Parish Council notices.

97. Confirmation and approval of 2021/22 Precept request

At the Budget & Finance meeting on 22nd October, it was noted that the planned expenditure for 2021/22 was £38,890. This did not include any expenditure on the trees in The Ridgeway, cleaning of the war memorial, or any upgrade of the children's play equipment, although it included an allowance of £6,000 for an unspecified project. At the meeting, it was proposed to increase the precept to £38,890, an increase of 2%. Shorne currently has the second lowest precept in Gravesham, and Members were invited to consider this.

Mr Theobald asked if Mr Lane is proposing that it should be increased. Mr Lane said he was happy with the proposed 2% increase, but we may need to apply a larger increase next year to permit further investment in the parish and to safeguard against future caps being applied. The £38,890 precept for 2021/22 was confirmed.

98. Correspondence requiring action

Lady Eleanor Page Educational Charity:

It is noted that the Lady Eleanor Page Educational Charity has submitted its annual accounts. Up to three trustees are nominated by the Parish Council to the charity, although there are only two at present. Assuming that Members are content to continue with the existing trustees, they were invited to consider the appointment of a third trustee. Robin Theobald offered to become a Trustee, and this was agreed.

Gravesham Greenbelt Protection Campaign:

Mr Lane has circulated an email received from Alex Hills of CPRE Gravesham District regarding the establishment of the above group. They are now delivering leaflets in

Istead Rise, Meopham, Higham, and Sole Street. Members were invited to consider the Parish Council's level of association with the group, and nominate representative(s). Mrs McCluskey thinks we should be involved as other Parish Councils are involved. Ms Clifton and Mr Hardy volunteered to represent Shorne Parish Council.

99. To consider adoption of the telephone box at Post Office Green

Mr Lane asked Members to consider whether we should now approach BT regarding the adoption of the booth. Mrs Lindley reported that she has previously stated in representations that the Parish Council would adopt the phone booth as a last resort, and has emailed Avril at Gravesham Borough Council who confirmed that nothing further has been received from BT. There have been no new notices in the box. Future uses suggested included a book exchange and a wifi point. Mr Lane proposed to invite feedback from residents via Facebook, although it was acknowledged that this may not be a representative audience.

100. General matters raised by Members for discussion

Mr Theobald has been asked by a resident whether they can use the section of Shorne Common adjacent to Briar Cottage to play boules. The area they are looking for is a flat grass area. Mr Lane cautioned about causing unnecessary disturbance to neighbouring residents. Mrs Lindley reminded members that this is common land, and asked Mr Theobald to get more information on what they need on the land. After further discussion, Mr Theobald said that he would advise the resident that the enquiry did not receive a favourable response.

Members noted that Mrs Poole will be in hospital from 11th December 2020 for an operation and gave her their best wishes. Mrs Poole wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Date of next meeting. Parish Council Meeting on 14th January 2021 via Zoom.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.37