

**SHORNE PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on  
14<sup>th</sup> January 2021 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

**101. To receive any declarations of interest**

None received.

**102. To approve the minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

The minutes were **AGREED** as a true record by all Councillors.

**103. Any matters arising not otherwise on the Agenda**

Nothing received

**104. KCC notice to cut trees in The Ridgeway**

The remedial work was carried out by NPC Tree Surgeons on 30<sup>th</sup> December at a cost of £1,650 plus VAT. It is likely that there will be recurring expense in future years.

**105. Update on cleaning of Shorne War Memorial**

Mr Lane emailed the Rev. Ted Hurst on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020 proposing that the work is undertaken at the end of March or early April, depending on the financial situation at that time. As the Vicar is currently out of action, the email was forwarded to Church Wardens Dennis Usher and Jacqui Olid on 5<sup>th</sup> January. Mr Usher has responded and will provide assistance to enable the work to proceed.

**106. Update on proposals for upgrading the play area at Shorne Common**

Mr Lane has distributed an update report to Members in advance of the meeting.

An application for a grant of £5,000 was submitted to KCC on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2020, and the formal offer was received on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, kindly endorsed by Cllr Sweetland. It was agreed to proceed with the play area proposal and to accept the grant following email consultation with Members, and the remittance advice note was received on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

A Stage 1 grant application was submitted to Veolia Environmental Trust on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2020, and this was accepted as meeting their criteria on 30<sup>th</sup> November. The Stage 2 application needed to be submitted by 12.00 today, and was submitted yesterday, 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021. We will not know whether our application is successful until after 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

This was a complicated process, requiring evidence of public consultation, competitive quotations, and design drawings. Unfortunately functionality problems with the website delayed publication of a consultation, but details of the proposal were finally published on the website in early January and advertised on Facebook and noticeboards, and comments were invited. Over 60 emails were received, all in support of the proposals, with several offering contributions towards the cost, and a number offering help.

An application for a £15,000 grant from the National Lottery Community Fund was also submitted on 11<sup>th</sup> January, but it will take up to 12 weeks to receive feedback. A further request for funding has been submitted to Gravesham Borough Council as no response was received to the initial enquiry sent on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

At the previous meeting it was decided to proceed directly with Redlynch without the services of Maria Cook. However, Redlynch have been slow to respond as their initial contact was via Maria Cook, and they are not visiting site until tomorrow, so it was necessary to provide sketch plans and estimated costs with our grant application. It was agreed that we should keep the option open of re-engaging Maria Cook to progress matters in a timely manner if necessary. Now that the grants have been submitted, we have time to consider our options. Ms Clifton said Creative Play have been very helpful and Mr Lane asked her to arrange for them to visit site to provide proposals.

**107. Update on change of website provider**

At the previous meeting it was agreed to proceed with transferring the website to Town and Parish Websites.

The contract was signed and sent after the last meeting and Mrs Poole has had an update from Town and Parish Websites. Due to Christmas and the New Year the changeover has slightly been delayed but this should be completed next week. The new website address will be [www.shorneparishcouncil.org](http://www.shorneparishcouncil.org) which is owned by Shorne Parish Council, instead of [www.shornepc.kentparishes.gov.uk/](http://www.shornepc.kentparishes.gov.uk/) which is owned by KCC.

Mr Lane asked will we still be able to access the KCC address as this has been included in our grant applications. Mrs Poole said she will ask them to confirm this but KCC are stopping the website at of the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

**108. Update on proposals for licensing commercial activity on Parish Council property**

At the previous meeting it was agreed that the licensing and charges for Fitness Training would come into force from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021. However, Mr Lane reported that it has not been possible to progress this to date due to other priorities. It is also noted that commercial dog walking and puppy training services are being undertaken on Parish Council land. This was discussed and it was agreed that it would be unreasonable to license or charge for professional dog walkers crossing Parish Council land in transit, but we would need to consider this if dog training sessions were being held specifically on Parish Council land.

**109. Update on Shornemead Level Crossing**

On 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021, KCC advised that the order closing Footpath NS368 across the level crossing has been extended for a further 2 years until the 11th January 2023. Mr Theobald noted that they had received the approval of the Secretary of State, which is required under the regulations when seeking a closure of more than 6 months, so strictly speaking they should have obtained the Secretary of State's approval for the previous extension. Mr Theobald will contact Network Rail to find out how they are progressing with the planned works. Mrs Lindley has had conversations with Thames and Medway Canal Association regarding Network Rail's suggestion that the road crossing might be closed, which would potentially mean very heavy vehicles would drive along the canal bank, and is following this up.

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

Mr Theobald reported he is still waiting for a third quote as the contractor has not responded to the tender enquiry. Mr Bugg will provide Mr Theobald with contact details of an alternative contractor tomorrow. Mrs Poole reported that businesses are already booking up now for March/April/May.

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

- (a) Resurfacing. Mr Bugg has requested prices from three contractors, two have replied with quotes and the third is due tomorrow. The quotes include lifting the two manhole covers and white lining, and they have both indicated that we should have a disabled bay. It was proposed that this should be at the front of the car park next to the path.
- (b) Vegetation at the back of the car park. This work was carried out in December.
- (c) Verge between the car park and Manor Field. Buzz Gardens have been unable to help due to the pandemic, so Mr Bugg has looked again at the area, and considers that if we reduce the level at the car park side to same level as footpath there would be no runoff of water, and it can be returned to a shrubbery. Mr Bugg proposed to obtain prices for excavation, clearing away the rubble, replacing it with topsoil and planting shrubs. This was agreed.

**112. Vacancy for Councillor**

Three enquiries have been received. Mr Lane suggests that we should wait until the end of January and then arrange to interview applicants shortly after. Interviews will need to be held online by video conferencing.

**113. Planning & Highways Committee update**

The last meeting was on the 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and the next one is on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021. In this time we have had 8 Planning Applications. One of these is an appeal against the refusal of planning permission to build on the land adjacent to the See Ho.

Nuralite was considered at GBC's Planning Committee on the 6<sup>th</sup> January. Mrs Lindley spoke on behalf of the Parish Council and Mr Lane spoke as Ward Councillor. The meeting lasted over 3 hours, it was a difficult and disappointing decision, and was approved in principle but with some further discussions about conditions including a requirement to consult with the Parish Councils involved.

Mrs Lindley and Mr Lane attended a meeting with KCC Highways on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020, which included discussions on the village gateway, the extension of the Pear Tree Lane 30 mph limit which is progressing slowly, and the extension of The Ridgeway 30 mph limit which KCC is resisting. The Forge Lane yellow line consultation ended on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021, and general representations were submitted included a summary of the results of our local consultation.

The Gravesham Local Plan Regulation 18 Stage 2 Consultation ended on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020. This was unsatisfactory as it consisted of large documents interconnected with each other, reference to other documents, and it was not easy to go through or to respond to.

The London Resort DCO application has been submitted and we await to hear whether it is accepted before it will be published.

The Medway Housing Infrastructure Fund and Future Hoo consultation is in progress. This is important as it will increase housing and impact transport infrastructure. The proposed curve to connect the Hundred of Hoo railway line to Higham Station has been cancelled due to cost.

Nothing to report on Lower Thames Crossing, pending the likely resubmission of the DCO application in April. The utility investigation work is continuing.

Trooli have been laying broadband cables in various areas, in Manor Field they had dug a trench the full length of the pavement. If any areas have been left in a poor state this should be reported to KCC.

Mrs Lindley requested approval of the revised cost for bollards to deter parking on the verge outside Shorne Woods Country Park. Two options were considered, one was for 36 bollards from the Country Park a position opposite the A2 slip road, and the other was for 58 bollards from the Country Park to the motorway bridge. It was agreed that we should opt for the 58 bollards. Mrs Lindley will liaise with the Country Park with regards to their contribution to the cost, and will ascertain the design with KCC.

#### **114. Update from the Footpaths, Properties & Greens Committee**

- (a) Recreation Ground. Ms Clifton provided an update on the situation regarding the gravel that was applied to the surface at the Recreation Ground. A resident had asked to put their old gravel into the Recreation Ground to help fill the dips and puddles at the entrance, but unfortunately their contractor put a mixture of soil and gravel onto the ground. The resident was requested to instruct the contractor to remove the spoil but this was not possible so they were asked to instruct the contractor to put Type 1 down to compact the area but they were not prepared to do this. Another resident who is a builder is now going to put Type 1 down and compact it free of charge.
- (b) Mill Hill Lane driveway enquiry. Ms Clifton gave an update on the resident's enquiry to form an entrance to their driveway across Parish Council land at Mill Hill Lane. Following a site meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> December attended by Mr Bugg, Mr Theobald, Mrs McCluskey and Ms Clifton, the resident has now requested to form a bell-mouth at the entrance to Mill Hill Lane. As this would result in moving the footpath sign, Ms Clifton has contacted Mr Pelham who has confirmed this is acceptable. We need to see drawings of the proposal before considering this. Mr Bugg will contact the resident asking for the information to review at the next Footpath Committee Meeting.

- (c) Footpath NS169. Mrs McCluskey reported that LTC have made a mess of this footpath and lots of complaints have been received by Mrs McCluskey which have been reported to Eva. Andrew Watson has also been in contact with Mr Lane. Part of the problem is that the well-established route of the footpath used by walkers does not conform to the route shown on the Definitive Map, therefore neither KCC nor LTC will accept responsibility for reinstating the ‘unofficial’ route. KCC has advised the owner that he needs to install two stiles and re-establish the definitive route. Mr Lane said that this may be across land owned by others and it seems pointless if walkers do not use it. It is understood that the farmer Mr Robert Shove will arrange for the ‘unofficial’ route to be reinstated.
- (d) Shorne Common. Ms Clifton reported that the tree remedial work in Shorne Common was completed on 30<sup>th</sup> December 2020.
- (e) Crabbles Bottom. Ms Clifton reported that the fencing repairs were carried out on 4/5<sup>th</sup> January 2021.
- (f) Recreation Ground gate. Ms Clifton reported that the new gate has been installed and preservative will be applied when the weather improves. Mr Lane will then fix the new sign to the gate.
- (g) Buzz Garden. Ms Clifton reported that Kent Wildlife were unable to continue with their plan due to COVID-19 and other projects they needed to complete. Ms Clifton has been advised that there are other projects to improve green areas on verges which they would support us on, and they will let us know what they are.

**115. Finance Report**

Date	Description		Amount	VAT	Total
	B/F		£20,387.55	£1,039.86	£21,427.41
03/12/2020	<b>DD</b>	Vodafone Ltd	£16.26	£3.25	£19.51
04/12/2020	<b>DD</b>	Nest	£60.25	£0.00	£60.25
21/12/2020	<b>DD</b>	Eslip	£19.00	£3.80	£22.80
29/12/2020	<b>BACS</b>	C W Lawrence	£240.00	£0.00	£240.00
29/12/2020	<b>BACS</b>	S Poole Dec Wage	£817.94	£0.00	£817.94
			£21,541.00	£1,046.91	£22,587.91
Date	Description		Amount	VAT	Total
	B/F		£21,541.00	£1,046.91	£22,587.91
06/01/2021	<b>DD</b>	Vodafone Ltd	£16.26	£3.25	£19.51
07/01/2021	<b>DD</b>	Nest	£60.25	£0.00	£60.25
	<b>BACS</b>	Mr Lane Expenses	£10.27	£2.05	£12.32
	<b>BACS</b>	NPC	£1,650.00	£330.00	£1,980.00
	<b>BACS</b>	NPC	£200.00	£40.00	£240.00
			£23,477.78	£1,422.21	£24,899.99

**116. Report from Borough Councillor R Lane**

At the Strategic Environment Cabinet Committee Meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020, Cllr Lane complained that the Emerging Local Plan Partial Review consultation had not been discussed with Committee Members.

Gravesham Joint Transport Board unanimously re-endorsed the request for the extension of the 30 mph speed limit in The Ridgeway on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020, but KCC still do not agree. This was discussed in further detail with KCC at the video meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

At the Planning Committee on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021, the Nuralite industrial development was delegated to the officer to grant planning permission, subject to finalisation of Section 106 agreements in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of GBC's Planning Committee, who will consult Higham and Shorne Parish Councils.

**117. To receive any report from County Councillor B Sweetland**

Nothing to report.

**118. Correspondence requiring action**

An email was received from Jan Guyler, Head of Legal Services for GBC, seeking the views of the parish councils on the recommendation by the Committee on Standards in Public Life that "complaints about the conduct of a parish councillor towards a clerk should be made by the chair or by the Parish Council as a whole, rather than the clerk in all but exceptional circumstances". Mrs Lindley commented that the concise wording of the recommendation from the Committee on Standards in Public Life did not fully convey the reasoning behind it, as set out in the text of their document, that reporting by the Clerk direct should not be needed as the relevant/all the Councillors should report themselves to the GBC Overview and Scrutiny Committee when appropriate. Mrs Lindley felt that adding a few words of explanation to the GBC document, to put the recommendation in context, might aid understanding and help with implementation. Mr Lane pointed out that this is the wording of the recommendation from The Committee on Standards in Public Life, and it was unlikely that GBC would change it, but he was happy to leave it to Mrs Lindley to draft the response to GBC.

**119. General matters raised by Members for discussion**

- (a) Off-road motorbike nuisance. Mr Rea reported that this matter has been particularly bad since the lockdown, it has been reported to the Police by Mrs McCluskey, Mr Hardy and Mr Rea. They are accessing Thong Lane from a field and are not registered for use on the public highway, and the access they are using could cause an accident. Mr Lane agreed to contact the Police to arrange a meeting to discuss the issues.
- (b) The SID has stopped displaying speed messages to oncoming traffic. It has been removed and is awaiting collection and repair by Westcotec.
- (c) At the previous meeting, Mr Lane undertook to invite feedback via Facebook about the options for the phone box at Chestnut Green from residents, although it was acknowledged that this may not be a representative audience. Comments received were very mixed and inconclusive, ranging from adopt the phone box to leave it alone. It is proposed to take no further action but to keep the matter under review as we may need to adopt the phone box at short notice.

- (d) Mrs Lindley reported that there was an accident at Shorne crossroads this week which was reported to Councillors via email. Mr Lane also mentioned the accident at the same location in December.
- (e) Ms Clifton reported that the notices on the noticeboard had Shorne crossroads were still in place, and had not been removed by an unknown person as frequently happens.

**Date of next Parish Council meeting.** 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021 via Zoom.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.20